

PRESS RELEASE

Contact: Dan Armstrong
(847) 749-9675
darmstrong@njhumanities.org

July 24, 2024

New Jersey and Mississippi Humanities Councils Team Up to Commemorate the 60th Anniversary of Freedom Summer with Atlantic City Event August 20

The year 2024 marks the 60th anniversary of Freedom Summer, a pivotal campaign aimed at registering Black voters in Mississippi. While most of the movement's work was concentrated in the Magnolia State, New Jersey played a crucial role in the path to voting rights.

In commemoration, the New Jersey Council for the Humanities (NJCH) and the Mississippi Humanities Council (MHC) will host an event on **Tuesday, August 20, at 7:00 p.m.** The event, to be held in the Fannie Lou Hamer Event Room at Stockton University's Atlantic City Campus, will feature a panel discussion of the historic events that took place in New Jersey.

The panel will include four esteemed veterans of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party: Euvester Simpson, Dr. Roy DeBerry, Dr. Leslie McLemore, and David Dennis, Sr.

Event Highlights

During Freedom Summer, the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP) was established to challenge the segregationist one-party rule of the Mississippi Democratic Party. In August 1964, the MFDP sent an alternate slate of delegates to the Democratic National Convention in Atlantic City, NJ, to contest the seating of the segregationist delegates.

This struggle, broadcast nationwide, exposed the severe injustices and violence faced by Black Americans. A defining moment was Fannie Lou Hamer's powerful testimony before the Credentials Committee, where she recounted the brutal treatment of Black citizens attempting to exercise their right to vote. Although President Lyndon Johnson interrupted the live broadcast, Hamer's testimony was later shown in full, leaving an indelible mark on the civil rights movement. Despite not achieving the seating of the full MFDP slate, the occasion is now recognized as a moment critical to gaining the civil rights victories that followed.

The event is free and open to all, but space is limited, and RSVP is required. RSVP to secure your seat for an evening of reflection and discussion on this pivotal moment in history at njhumanities.org/freedom-summer.