FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

“Women’s Human Rights in Focus”
International Education Week at UB, November 11-15

BUFFALO, N.Y. – October 25, 2013 – International Education Week (IEW) 2013 at the University at Buffalo will focus on women’s human rights. An annual UB tradition since 2001, IEW showcases the rich cultural diversity of the campus community, provides insightful analysis of issues of critical importance worldwide, and highlights the university’s international programs and outreach.

The keynote lecture will be presented by Liesl Gerntholtz, Executive Director, Women’s Rights Division, Human Rights Watch. An expert on women's rights in Africa, Gerntholtz has worked and written extensively on violence against women and HIV/AIDS in Southern Africa. Her work at Human Rights Watch has included documenting access to safe and legal abortion in Ireland, and sexual and gender-based violence in Haiti in the aftermath of the earthquake. Before joining Human Rights Watch, Gerntholtz worked for some of the key constitutional institutions promoting human rights and democracy in a post-apartheid South Africa, including the South African Human Rights Commission and the Commission on Gender Equality. A lawyer by training, she was involved in high-profile, strategic human rights litigation to promote women and children's rights, including a case that changed the definition of rape in South Africa.

Gerntholtz will speak on “Women’s Human Rights: The Unfinished Revolution” on Thursday, November 14 at 4:00 p.m. in Lippes Concert Hall in Slee Hall on UB’s North Campus. She will focus on the work of the women’s rights division of Human Rights Watch documenting abuses all over the world against women, specifically violence against women, women in conflict, maternal health and reproductive rights, economic rights and early marriage. She will relate the work of the division to the broader women’s rights movement – the long hauls, the heated advocacy battles won and lost, and the ground left to gain.
Prof. Christopher Lee of Canisius College will provide commentary on the IEW 2013 keynote film “Salma”, which will be screened at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 12 in the Student Union Theater, UB’s North Campus. The film portrays a young Muslim girl in India who was forced into seclusion once she reached puberty, forbidden by her family to study and pushed into marriage. Words became her salvation as she began covertly composing poems on scraps of paper, which were smuggled out of the house and into the hands of a publisher. Against all odds, Salma received numerous accolades and became a famous poet, which was the first step to discovering her own freedom, and challenging the traditions and code of conduct in her village. Salma’s extraordinary story is one of courage and resilience. She has hopes for a different life for the next generation of girls, but recognizes that familial ties run deep and change is slow.

Other IEW 2013 events will highlight UB’s international student population and feature the international efforts of UB faculty and students.

Helping the community understand the perspectives and traditions that international students bring with them to Buffalo is the goal of “Understanding International Cultures: Pakistan” and “Holidays Around the World: Singapore”.

The annual “Without Borders” lecture series, which highlights UB’s global reach, will feature “Social Impacts of Engineering”; “Different Cultures, Same Problem: Care of the Person with Dementia”; “Children’s Rights in India: A View from the Field”; and “An Investigation of Privacy and Severity Issues Regarding Personal Health Information Disclosure in South Korea”, to name a few.

At the “World View: Study Abroad Photo Contest and Exhibition”, a vibrant display of photos taken by UB students studying in all corners of the world will highlight the wide range of study abroad programs offered at UB.

Noontime performances and interactive displays by international student groups and community organizations will take place in the Student Union Lobby on Monday, November 11 and Friday, November 15. Boasting an impressive Lion Dance and featuring lively Russian folk, Bangladeshi hip hop, Bhangra and Middle Eastern dances, the performances will conclude with Kendo and Combined Martial Arts demonstrations, and the popular International Fashion Show. Evening activities will include a Global Game Night and Global Coffeehouse.
IEW events at UB are made possible through generous support from AT&T, Key Bank, M&T Bank, Bank of America, UB Alumni Relations, UB Undergraduate Academies, UB Asian Studies Program, Haylor, Freyer & Coon, Inc., UB Office of International Education, Grand Tours & Ridge Road Express, and the UB School of Public Health & Health Professions Office of Global Health Initiatives. The week’s events are organized by UB’s Office of International Student and Scholar Services.

For more detailed information and the complete International Education Week 2013 schedule, please visit www.buffalo.edu/intlservices/special_events.html.

With more than 6,000 international students, the University at Buffalo ranks in the top 20 of 2,700 accredited U.S. universities in international enrollment, according to the Institute of International Education (IIE). The University has exchange agreements with more than 80 institutions in over 30 countries.

The University at Buffalo is a premier research-intensive public university, a flagship institution in the State University of New York system, and its largest and most comprehensive campus. UB's more than 28,000 students pursue their academic interests through more than 300 undergraduate, graduate and professional degree programs. Founded in 1846, UB is a member of the Association of American Universities.

Contact Info:

Ellen Dussourd
Director, International Student & Scholar Services
University at Buffalo
Phone: 716-645-2258
Email: dussourd@buffalo.edu
www.buffalo.edu/intlservices/index.html

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