Diversity: Tag, You’re It!
Friday, March 16, 2007
Dale Lake Auditorium
Texas Township Campus
7:30 – 4:00

7:30 – 8:05 Conference Check-in

8:15 – 8:20 Welcome, Marilyn Schlack, President, KVCC

8:20 -9:20 The Slippery Slope from Middle Class to Working Poor
Dr. Christian Weller, Center for American Progress

Being “middle class” used to evoke visions of a comfortable lifestyle: a good job, a nice house, security, stability. Recently many folks who consider themselves to be “middle class”, and those who are striving for it, are finding it harder and harder to achieve and/or maintain that comfortable lifestyle. Dr. Weller will share his research on the “squeezing” of the middle class in America and the ever-shrinking resources available to middle class working people.

9:20 – 10:20 The Slippery Slope from Middle Class to Working Poor
Panel Discussion: Dr. Christian Weller, Senior Fellow, Center for American Progress, Roger Miller, Director of Financial Aid, Kalamazoo Valley Community College, Robert Doud, Vice President of Public Affairs & Development, Bronson Hospital, and Jean Kimmel, Associate Professor, Department of Economics, Western Michigan University

The wealthy don't need safety nets. Government programs and private agencies work to provide safety nets for the poor. But what about the ever increasing pressures faced by the middle class? This panel will discuss issues faced by more and more middle class Americans as they slide towards becoming the working poor.

10:20 – 10:35 Break

10:35 - 11:35 Women in Islam: Debunking the Myth
Nehad Heliel, Professor of Translation, University of Alexandria, Egypt, and Gulnar Husain, Executive Vice-President of the Michigan Festival of Sacred Music, Director of Muslim Youth Choir

Picture this: She drives a Ford station wagon, leads a local Girl Scout troop, shops at the Gap and just attended her 20-year high school reunion. She also wears a head scarf in keeping with her Muslim faith. Professor Heliel and Gulna Husain will discuss the role of women in Islam in light of the religious text and teachings as opposed to cultural traditions.

11:35 - 12:35 Building Religious Tolerance
Mustafa Mughazy, Professor of Arabic, Western Michigan University, Elder Daniel Cunningham, founder of Greater Faith Empowerment Center (GFEC) and Math Professor at Kalamazoo Valley Community College, Michael Rocklin, Site Director for Battle Creek/Kalamazoo, Siena Heights University

This panel will discuss a variety of issues from their unique perspectives as a Muslim, Christian, and Jew, including issues such as the impact of television and the Internet on organized religion, in what ways religion has become big business, the dynamics between men and women in religion, how do religious institutions gain or lose power when they assimilate the beliefs of other cultures, etc. This session is designed to align with the National Honor Society’s (Phi Theta Kappa) theme for 2006-07: Gold, Gods and Glory.
12:35 - 1:45  Lunch & Entertainment

1:45 - 2:45  **Bridging the Ages**
Giant Dreams Studio Puppet Theater

This unique presentation features giant puppets (we’re not kidding!) providing a fresh view of the present through the eyes of the old. They’ll share their wisdom, frustrations, advice, and secrets through humor, song and dance.

2:45 - 3:45  **Bridging the Ages**


This panel will address physical, emotional, financial abuse of the elderly, Medicare and insurance issues they face, as well as scams, fraud, and identity theft perpetrated on seniors. Amber Markley, will share her perspective on age discrimination issues faced by Y Generation.

3:45 - 4:00  **Closing Remarks and Evaluations**