Bakersfield College Introduces Distinguished Speaker Series

Fifth in series of nine takes place on October 24th

The Bakersfield College Distinguished Speaker Series brings community leaders from around the world to Bakersfield, whose achievements have had national and/or international significance, to speak at Bakersfield College. This series will include nine speakers, each will host their own program. The events will take place throughout the remainder of the year and early 2020.

Crack in Creation: Gene Editing and the Unthinkable Power to Control Evolution

The fifth speaker of the series, Samuel H. Sternberg, will present his program on Thursday, October 24th at 10:00 AM, 2:00 PM, and 7:00 PM in the Levan Center located on the Panorama Campus. In addition, the 2:00 PM program will be livecasted to the Delano campus. Not since the atomic bomb has a technology so alarmed its inventors that they warned the world about its use. That is, until 2015, when biologist Jennifer Doudna called for a worldwide moratorium on the use of the gene-editing tool CRISPR—a revolutionary new technology that she helped create—to make heritable changes in human embryos. The cheapest, simplest, most effective way of manipulating DNA ever known, CRISPR may well give us the cure to HIV, genetic diseases, and some cancers. Yet even the tiniest changes to DNA could have a myriad, of unforeseeable consequences—to say nothing of the ethical and societal repercussions of intentionally mutating embryos to create “better” humans. Fellow researcher and writer, Sam Sternberg, will share the story of the enormous responsibility that comes with the power to rewrite the code of life.

Sternberg is an Assistant professor at Columbia University in the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biophysics, where he runs a research laboratory. Sam is a protein-RNA biochemist and CRISPR expert. He was a featured TEDMED 2015 speaker on the transformative potential of CRISPR—Cas9, and is actively involved in public discussions on the ethical issues surrounding genome editing of human cells.

The Remainder of Speakers throughout the Series

The Distinguished Speak Series consists of nine speakers from around the world that will come to Bakersfield College to discuss the significance of achievements. The schedule of remaining speakers is listed on the following page.
The Remainder of Speakers throughout the Series
Following Samuel H. Sternberg, these speakers will be arriving at Bakersfield College on the following dates:

- Jason Beardsley, An Apotheosis of America – Thursday, November 7, 2019
- Patrisse Khan-Cullors, When They Call You a Terrorist: A Black Lives Matter Memoir – Thursday, February 6, 2020
- Elaine Weiss, The Woman's Hour: The Great Fight to Win the Vote – Thursday, March 19, 2020
- Dr. Tony B. Iton, Building Healthy Communities – Thursday, April 2, 2020

For more information, please visit https://www.bakersfieldcollege.edu/studentevents/dss.

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Bakersfield College offers a rigorous and supportive learning environment that fosters students’ abilities to think critically, communicate effectively, and demonstrate competencies and skills in order to engage productively in their communities and the world, while simultaneously contributing to the intellectual, cultural, and economic vitality of the communities it serves.