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The University of Toronto and Residential Schools: Coming to Truth, Seeking Reconciliation

Oct 26, 2009

A multi dimensional panel discussion about the role of education in aboriginal oppression featuring some of the University of Toronto's greatest minds and highlighting the ground breaking work of a recent graduate will be held tonight, Monday, Oct. 26, 6:30 p.m., at the Hart House's Debates Room.

Monica Dyer, an MA student in history will present her provocative paper: *The University of Toronto and Residential Schools- A Silent Partner*.

Thoughtful commentary on a number of compelling issues unearthed in the paper will be delivered by Darlene Johnston, professor of law at the University of British Columbia; Alan Hayes, director of the Toronto School of Theology and Michael Marrus, professor emeritus of holocaust studies, at the U of T's department of history.

These speakers will investigate and shed light on the ideas, practices and ethos behind a complex and contested history.

The hope is that "conversation will begin to open up a new dialogue that will allow the U of T to become a leader in creating a more holistic, mindful and inclusive way forward," said organizers of the free event.

The university also said it wants to play "an important, supportive role" in the work of the new Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and in "helping to re-imagine a new curriculum and a new understanding of aboriginal issues..." However, before it can do that, "many believe that the university should first acknowledge the truth of its own involvement" in the legacy of the residential schools," they added.

Following the presentation, the audience will be led in a discussion about the implications of Dyer's research and how the university can support the work of the TRC.

The event is sponsored by Hart House, in partnership with the U of T's Multi Faith Centre, faculty of law, department of history, Religion in the

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