

THE TOMORROW PLAN SPEAKER SERIES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Monday, October 22, 2018

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Speaker Rue Mapp: Where Black People and Nature Meet

Rue Mapp recalls hearing police helicopters outside her office in downtown Oakland, Calif., when racial tensions broke out in the streets in the days following the grand jury decision not to charge the police officer involved in the shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Mo. She felt she had to do something – but what?

Mapp – the founder of Outdoor Afro and the next speaker in The Tomorrow Plan Speaker Series – decided to organize a hike into a redwood forest in Oakland Hills. There, she found African Americans felt safe to share perspectives and ideas, and they came out feeling resolved about the actions they would take within their families, workplaces, and communities.

“We were doing what African Americans have always known we can do, and that is to lay down our burdens, down by the riverside,” Mapp recalled in a recent TEDx Talk. “I realized that nature is not only a teacher – it is a healer.”

Connecting people to nature is the central theme to Mapp’s calling, and it will be the focus of her talk in Greater Des Moines. She started Outdoor Afro as a blog in 2009, and it has since grown to a national, not-for-profit network of outdoors leaders who train volunteers to connect people with nature. Outdoor Afro is active in 30 states and has reached more than 35,000 people through its events.

Mapp’s talk is timely for Greater Des Moines. Leaders of Capital Crossroads, a vision plan for Central Iowa, have committed to using a diversity, equity and inclusion lens when envisioning, designing and implementing projects across the region. One of those projects aims to reconnect people to the metro’s 150 miles of rivers and creeks as envisioned in the Greater Des Moines Water Trails and Greenways Master Plan.

The Tomorrow Plan Speaker Series is an implementation strategy of The Tomorrow Plan, a plan for the sustainable development of Greater Des Moines. For more information, please visit dmampo.org/the-tomorrow-plan/speaker-series.

DETAILS

Friday, November 2

11:30 a.m. – Lunch

11:45 a.m. – Historical preview

12 – 1 p.m. – Keynote with Mapp

1 – 1:30 p.m. – Q & A with Mapp

State Historical Building

600 E. Locust St., Des Moines

RSVP & LUNCH

Please RSVP.

Bag lunches from Cafe Baratta’s

available for purchase. Please

register online:

tikly.co/events/3138

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