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### **THE HUMAN LIBRARY: REAL PEOPLE - REAL CONVERSATIONS**

March 27, 2019- What if you had the chance to acquire knowledge and understanding of contemporary, real life issues from those who live them? What if, through face to face dialogue, assumptions, stereotypes and prejudices could be challenged? The public is invited to do just that at the Goffstown Public Library on Sunday, April 7<sup>th</sup> from 1-3 pm when they will hold their fourth Human Library event. Visitors will have the unique opportunity to check out and converse with “human books” who have volunteered to share their personal stories and answer questions about their lives, experiences and perspectives. By providing a safe, respectful environment in which to conduct these conversations, it is the hope of the Human Library organization that a culture of acceptance will be cultivated.

From a diverse catalog which includes the first LGBTQ elected official in their town, a woman who was raised in the state’s orphanage and foster care systems, a gun rights advocate, and a young woman living with Borderline Personality Disorder, guests or “readers” will be able to have one on one, 20 minute conversations with these and other human books. Each book has a compelling story waiting to be told. Each has encountered adversity, and each has been the subject of marginalization or discrimination because of their lifestyle, religion, differing abilities or gender identification. The Human Library puts these real faces, real names and real stories to the old adage, “Don’t judge a book by its cover.” Past human books have included a drag queen, lesbian rabbi, formerly homeless veteran and a blind social worker.

*“We are very excited to be hosting our fourth Human Library and once again be part of this ever-growing global movement, with events being hosted around the world. Being a vehicle for the public to explore the humanity of different lifestyles or belief systems and choices is part of our job. To be able to do that through face to face interaction makes it all the more meaningful.”*  
– Dianne Hathaway, Director, Goffstown Public Library. This year, our Human Library event is part of our Courageous Community Conversations Across Difference initiative, in partnership with St. Anselm College, St. Matthew’s Episcopal Church, Crispin’s House Coalition for Youth and the Granite State Organizing Project.

The Human Library was conceived in 2000 by a Danish youth organization called Stop the Violence in response to intolerance and resulting violence within their communities. The concept quickly gained a foothold and since then, Human Libraries have been held in over 70 countries around the world. The initiative arrived in the US in 2008 with pilot programs in Washington and California. For up-to-date information about the Human Library project’s activities around the globe, follow them on Facebook or check them out at [www.humanlibrary.org](http://www.humanlibrary.org).

For more information about the event scheduled at the Goffstown Library, please visit [www.goffstownlibrary.com](http://www.goffstownlibrary.com) or call Dianne Hathaway at 497-2102.

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