The Robert M. Bell Center for Civil Rights in Education, established at Morgan State University, unites research, teaching, training and advocacy on integral civil rights issues in education at the pre-kindergarten, elementary, secondary and postsecondary levels. It is instituted for the identification and study of current issues and challenges related to equal educational opportunity, particularly with respect to African American and other minority students seeking real and meaningful opportunities for educational excellence and advancement.

The Center convenes the needed intellectual capacity by bringing together academia, the legal profession, advocacy groups, policymakers, civic and community leaders and organizations, and students to develop and promote substantive research and collaboration of research, strategies, remedies, solutions, programs, public policy initiatives and appropriate legal and community-based advocacy necessary to overcome obstacles to educational achievement, eliminate continuing policies or practices that foster discrimination or perpetuate segregated conditions in education, and enhance educational opportunity for all students regardless of race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status or background. Its mission and purposes are national in scope, providing critical leadership, resources and focus to the relevant educational issues at home and in communities throughout the nation.
The World Premier of All the King’s Horses: The Story of Gwynn Oak Amusement Park is Convened for the Purpose of Commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the Desegregation of Gwynn Oak Amusement Park and Understanding the Collaborative Effort of People of Good Will, Including Blacks, Whites, Baptists, Catholics, Jews and Gentiles in an Effort to Dismantle Racial Prejudices, Segregation and Exclusion in Public Accommodations. During the Racially Charged Era of 1960s Baltimore. This Program is a Collaborative Effort between Filmmakers Pete and Beverly O’Neal and the Robert M. Bell Center for Civil Rights in Education.

OPENING:  Introduction and Overview: Pace J. McConkie, Director, Robert M. Bell

2:00-2:30  Center for Civil Rights in Education; Pete and Beverly O’Neal, Filmmakers

SESSION I:  World Premier: All the King’s Horses: The Story of Gwynn Oak Amusement Park

2:30-3:30  This documentary chronicles the efforts of many ordinary, everyday people to desegregate the privately-owned recreation facility during Maryland’s racially charged and turbulent civil rights era.

Buried in the memories of old timers and elder statesmen, the images of the opening of the park to Blacks are unknown to many. While the Civil Rights Movement is typically referenced in relation to events that happened in Deep South Alabama, Mississippi and Georgia, battles also were waged here in Maryland.

The year 1963 was a restless time in the State, from Baltimore, where Morgan State College students staged protests at the Northwood Shopping Center’s movie theater and lunch counters, to the bucolic Eastern Shore town of Cambridge, where racial unrest erupted.

Blacks were not alone in the struggle. Blacks marched side by side with Whites and Jews, priests, rabbis, ministers, businessmen, teachers and students. Many of these unlikely protesters were not the targets of discrimination. Yet they left their comfortable homes, businesses and busy lives to join the fight for freedom; they were jeered, spat up on and even beaten. This documentary attempts to capture the essence of not only their struggle, but also their motivation to be engaged in the fight. Pete and Beverly O’Neal have amassed more than 15 hours of eyewitness accounts and personal narratives from those involved in the desegregation of the park. All sides are included, those who were allowed in to those who were not. Original photographs are from the Baltimore Afro-American and the now defunct News American Newspapers, newly uncovered film footage and artifacts stored in garages.

SESSION II:  Panel Discussion: Remembering the Fight to Desegregate Gwynn Oak Amusement Park and What it Means for Us Today

3:30-3:40  Introduction of Moderator: Simone R. Barrett, Administrative Specialist, Robert M. Bell Center for Civil Rights in Education

3:40-5:00  Moderator: Dr. Edwin T. Johnson

Interim Dean, College of Liberal Arts , Morgan State University

Panelists:  Reva Lewie
Charles Mason
John Roemer
Gilbert Sandler
Lydia Wilkins

ADJOURNMENT:  Pace J. McConkie, Director, Robert M. Bell Center for Civil Rights in Education

Photographs courtesy of the Baltimore Sun and Baltimore Afro-American Newspapers