



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Improving Community Police Relationships in the Wake of Post-Ferguson
Panel Discussion Hosted by the Georgia Psychological Association and the Unitarian Universalist
Congregation of Atlanta**

Atlanta, GA, February 9, 2015 — Both our country and our city have been in turmoil. The New Year has come, the Superbowl excitement is over and our lives must move forward. However, the events of Ferguson or New York City have not been removed from our minds nor our hearts. On Tuesday, February 17, the Georgia Psychological Association and the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta will host an open and engaging dialogue about social issues relevant to police and community relationships, with specific focus on factors which contribute to cultural mistrust between members of racial/ethnic minority groups and law enforcement.

Let us be *proactive* rather than *reactive*. Let us educate ourselves as we raise awareness and start a dialogue about changes that our communities need to help them thrive. Dr. Decia Dixon, the panel organizer and an Atlanta psychologist, hopes this discussion will “serve as a catalyst for one of many community grassroots events that promotes community as an agent and partner in promoting change rather than as a passive audience and voice.”

Included on the panel are:

- Dr. Heather McElroy - Board Certified Police and Public Safety Psychologist
- Tim Sharples - Police Officer for Smyrna Police Department
- Craig Jones - Civil Rights Attorney
- Pastor Anthony Makar - Pastor for Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta
- Dr. Louis F. Kavar - Professor of Psychology, Capella University; Ordained Minister, United Church of Christ
- Major Martin - Major for Office of Professional Standard - Atlanta Police Department
- Dr. Carla Moore - Clinical Services Coordinator, City of Atlanta-Atlanta Police Dept. Psychological Services and Employee Assistance Program

“I strongly encourage citizens of metro-Atlanta and surrounding cities to attend this event. Those who have a particular desire to engage in a critical discourse about how to strive for a community of inclusion will benefit greatly. This forum presents attendees with a tremendous opportunity to gain further insight on how to build stronger communities and community relations, paying specific attention to the marginalized and those who have a historical record or tense interactions with the police.” – Dr. Dixon

Advancing the profession of psychology in Georgia

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The event is free and open to the public. An RSVP is not required, but those who are interested may rsvp to amydietrich@gapsychology.org for reminders and specific directions. Doors open at 6:30pm with the panel discussion beginning at 7:00pm. The event location is the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta (1597 Interstate-85 Frontage Road, Atlanta, GA 30329).

To learn more about this event and the Georgia Psychological Association, please visit www.gapsychology.org/event/panel.

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Since 1946, the Georgia Psychological Association has been heralded as a leader in advocacy, a pacesetter for public education programming, a provider of quality continuing education opportunities and a proponent for the livelihood of psychology. Our referral network not only assists members, but provides the public-at-large the opportunity to connect with psychologists. The membership of the Association is comprised of psychologists, graduate and undergraduate students across the state of Georgia.

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