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## Two-day event to focus on sustainability, social justice

By HUNTER FRINT Special to the the Daily News 1 hr ago

Religious and educational leaders will come together with other community members for a two-day event to discuss social responsibility and sustainable practices that can be implemented in Bowling Green.

The Interfaith Dialogue on Earth Care is scheduled to begin Friday.

This is the sixth annual public event organized by Western Kentucky University's Philosophy and Religion Department. Day one is from 6 to 9 p.m. Friday at WKU's Jody Richards Hall. Workshops continue from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Saturday at the Islamic Cultural Center at 2140 Morgantown Road.

Although the department hosts a similar event each year, this year it decided to emphasize the workshop, or discussion, aspect of the event. Bella Mukonyora, a WKU professor of religion, said the goal is to create a deeper understanding in the diverse community of Bowling Green.

“This is the first workshop where the idea is to share ideas and see how they can get implemented because the outcome should be social changes that are recognizable and easy to notice,” Mukonyora said.

To kick off the event Friday, there will be a screening of “Dirt! The Movie,” the 2009 documentary about the importance of soil, sustainability and the environment.

The Rev. Roger Mohr of the Unitarian Universalist Church, Roger Dennis from WKU’s agricultural department, Amy Nemon from WKU’s geography and geology department and Ian Hamilton from the Student Government Association will lead a discussion panel.

Day two of “Dialogue on Earth Care” will include several discussions led by various religious and community leaders on sustainability, ecology and religion. There will also be informational discussions on implementing sustainable practices in the community.

Aramark will provide breakfast and lunch.

Mukonyora said the event was created after many diverse people expressed an interest.



“They are interested in holding interdisciplinary dialogue across our differences as a culture in order to have a more sustainable and just society,” she said.

University co-sponsors include the Office of International Programs (Year of Bosnia), Office of Research and Creativity, Office of Sustainability, SGA and the departments of biology, communication, diversity and community studies, geography and geology, history, public health and social work.

Bowling Green community-based co-sponsors are the Islamic Cultural Center, Christ Episcopal Church, First Christian Church, St. Joseph's Catholic Church, The Presbyterian Church, State Street Baptist Church, State Street United Methodist Church and the Unitarian Universalist Church.

The registration fee is \$15 or \$10 for students. Registration can be completed online at WKU's event page under the Sustainability and Social Justice Workshop event, or by contacting Mukonyora at [bella.mukonyora@wku.edu](mailto:bella.mukonyora@wku.edu).

Registration will also be available at 5:30 p.m. Friday at Jody Richards Hall.

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## **Wes Swietek**

Wes Swietek is the Bowling Green Daily News News Director.

