

Youngstown

#TeachTruth

Freedom School



2024



SOJOURN

60th Anniversary



FREEDOM SCHOOL IN YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO
IN CELEBRATION OF THE SIXTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF
MISSISSIPPI FREEDOM SUMMER IN 1964

PRESENTED BY MAHONING VALLEY SOJOURN TO THE PAST

Youngstown Freedom School will be one week long, June 17-21, from 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM in the fellowship hall of St. John’s Episcopal Church on Wick Ave. Lunch will be served.

Mississippi Freedom Summer was organized mainly by SNCC (Student Nonviolence Coordinating Committee) and CORE (Congress of Racial Equality). The goal was to bring to Mississippi 1000 college students to help register voters and set up freedom schools, libraries, clinics. The job of organizing the freedom schools was given to Staunton Lynd, who later lived in the Youngstown area.. Forty-one schools were set up across the state with the goal of getting one thousand students. Over three thousand students came eager to learn. College students were the teachers with older students in the classes helping the younger students. The average age was 15. The oldest student was 82. There was little money and there were fewer supplies. Books were sent by donors in the North since Blacks were not allowed in the libraries. Students were taught reading, Black history, government, citizenship, and the importance of voting. Students were expected to take what they learned each day and share with their families in the evening. The first 500 volunteers were trained in Oxford, Ohio, beginning June 16, 1964. They arrived in Mississippi on June 21st, and that day three civil rights workers were murdered by the Klan. Juneteenth is June 19th. That is the date slaves were freed in Texas in 1865. The 19th of June has become a national holiday.

The goals of the 2024 Youngstown Freedom School are for students:

- To gain knowledge of Freedom Summer and Freedom Schools of 1964
- To learn more about Black history of Youngstown and Mahoning Valley
- To learn the Principles of Nonviolence and begin to incorporate them into their daily lives
- To develop critical thinking skills
- To develop research and writing skills
- To work for social justice through nonviolence means, right now
- To find their voices

Youngstown Freedom School is open to anyone from fifth to ninth grade, who completes the application. The application is on the website: www.mvsjourntothepast.com.

We will use Sojourn members as mentors for the students and pay them a stipend.

Participants will be given a book on Freedom Summer and a self-esteem book written by one of our speakers. They will also be given a tote bag with a journal for their reflections. At the end of each day, students will write their thoughts/questions/daily take-aways in their journal.

We will have numerous presenters during the week. (See [attached flier](#).) They include:

Alice Lynd – history of Freedom Summer

Harambe dancers

Freedom songs

Vince Shivers – local Black history

Karen Schubert – interpreting art

Keith Lamar – author, activist in solitary confinement in Youngstown prison

Cherie Eldridge – positive affirmation

The week will end with a picnic in Glenwood Community Park.

For more information, contact Penny Wells at pennywwells@sbcglobal.net or 330-207-4467.