Award-winning author Eva Rutland to discuss her experience with civil inequality

Award-winning author Eva Rutland will lead an intimate, multi-generational discussion at Sacramento State about her life as told in her book *When We Were Colored: A Mother's Story*. The event will be held at noon Thursday, Feb. 16, in the University Union Redwood Room.

In her 2007 book, Rutland, the granddaughter of a former slave, gives a candid account of her experiences growing up and raising a family in Georgia during the '50s and '60s – when segregation was the norm and African Americans were second-class citizens.

“I want Sac State students and everyone else to know that people are people, we are all alike, and to please be kind to each other,” says the now-95-year-old Rutland, author of more than 20 novels and recipient of the 2000 Golden Pen Award for Lifetime Achievement.

The author will be joined by her daughter, *Sacramento Bee* associate editor Ginger Rutland, and granddaughter, Eva Fields, for the interactive forum.

“What I am most excited about is that Rutland’s life account will be presented across three generations,” says Margarita Berta-Avila, event organizer and professor in the Bilingual/Multicultural Education Department. “Mrs. Rutland’s daughter and granddaughter will join her on stage to share the story through different lenses and experiences lived.”

The dialogue is the latest in a line of events commissioned by the President’s Committee to Build Campus Unity, an effort encouraging active discourse among Sac State students, faculty and staff to bring the campus community closer together.

“It is quite important to include Rutland’s accounts because these are experiences that are still lived daily,” says Berta-Avila. “They might not be experienced in the same context as she did, but marginalization, lack of access, systemic inequity, discrimination, racism, sexism, heterosexism, etc., are still quite pervasive, be it on a university campus or in communities.”

Previous events have featured award-winning journalist Michele Norris, author of the University’s One Book selection, *The Grace of Silence*, and host of NPR’s “All Things Considered”; and Helen Zia, former executive editor of *Ms. Magazine*, whose writings have focused public attention on important matters of law and civil rights.

Berta-Avila says, “Through venues like Rutland’s, it is our goal to foster a safe space to dialogue, clarify, hear different perspectives, validate experiences and ultimately provide recommendations that will improve our own environment here on campus.”
Sacramento State is making a difference in California’s Capital Region and beyond. We offer a life-changing opportunity for our 28,000 students, preparing them to be leaders in their professions and communities. Our professors are known for their dedication to great teaching. And our location in the capital of the nation’s most populous state allows students to pursue unique internships and research.