

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 29, 2017

Clip from new Hamer doc to be screened at civil rights conference

JACKSON, Miss. – A sample trailer from a new documentary on the life of civil rights icon Fannie Lou Hamer will be screened at the 12th Annual Veterans of the Mississippi Civil Rights Movement Conference this week in Jackson.

The conference, which begins Wednesday, March 29 and ends on Sunday, April 2, will be held on the Tougaloo College Campus. The trailer of the new film, Fannie Lou Hamer's America, will be introduced and presented by its producer and Fannie Lou Hamer's niece, Monica Land.

The screening of the trailer coincides with the theme of the civil rights conference: "Nobody's Free Until Everybody's Free: Fannie Lou Hamer's Mississippi and The Continued Freedom Struggle."

The conference celebrates Hamer's legacy and the upcoming centennial of her birth on Oct. 6, 1917, and will feature several civil rights activists including Hollis Watkins and Hamer's former manager, Charles McLaurin. Tours of Hamer's hometown and other critical locations in her life are scheduled for Friday, March 31, ending at the Hamer Memorial Garden and museum in Ruleville.

Fannie Lou Hamer's America, which details Hamer's life in her own words by means of audio and video footage and featuring many of her personal belongings, is currently in pre-production and is directed by Joe Davenport. Davenport's film, M.F.D.P outlined Hamer's formation of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party.

Keith Beauchamp, whose research and 2005 film on Emmett Till launched an FBI investigation, and the upcoming feature film, "Till", is the executive producer. Fannie Lou Hamer scholars and historians, Maegan Parker Brooks and Davis Houck are the lead researchers and writers. Houck was recently named Fannie Lou Hamer Professor of Rhetorical Studies at Florida State University.

"To be able to show our work to the veterans of the Mississippi civil rights movement is the highest honor," Houck said. "They shared blood, sweat and a lot of tears with Mrs. Hamer, and so to continue her mission with this documentary is profoundly important."

About the Veterans of the Mississippi Civil Rights Conference:

The conference is celebrating its 12th year of service and leadership in the ongoing pursuit of human rights. Organized in 2004, the mission of the VMCRM is to collect and archive oral histories of civil rights veterans across the county and to support persons actively using those stories to continue the pursuit of freedom, justice and equality.

Now one of the largest annual gatherings of civil rights veterans in the country, the annual event brings together legendary civil rights activists and historians, as well as students, community organizers, educators, film makers grassroots organizations and hundreds of others from across the country and beyond to discuss ways to continue positive change in society.