

UNIVERSITY LECTURE SEASON 2025-2026

BARSTOW EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING HUMANITIES SEMINAR

Democracy in the Developing World: A Photographic Journey with Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter

Public Lecture and Photography Exhibit

Deborah Hakes

Fourteen years of civil war devastated the country of Liberia in West Africa. Along the capital's main street in 2005, cars dodged 10 craters, families lived in bombed-out shells of buildings with roofs riddled with bullet holes, and U.N. tanks patrolled to ensure peace. People were hungry. They had no electricity or running water. The country reeled from 85% unemployment. In this setting, millions of people voted – walking hours to their polling station, some standing there overnight – to peacefully elect Africa's first female head of state, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, in an election observed by The Carter Center. Deborah Hakes traveled there with the Center, documenting not only the election but also the visit by former U.S. President Jimmy Carter and his wife, Rosalynn, through photography and writing. Over the next eight years, Hakes traveled to more than 20 countries with the Center, a dozen with the Carters. Her photographs have appeared in the New York Times, Associated Press, Atlanta Journal-Constitution, BBC, and more. Her lecture will focus on Nepal, Egypt, South Sudan and other countries. Hakes' stories are illustrated by her own photography.

Deborah Hakes leads marketing and communications for Georgia Public Library Service and was named Library Journal's 2020 Marketer of the Year. She is a communications leader with expertise in storytelling and building brands for nonprofits, public health and libraries. Hakes has a passion for amplifying the voices of those who do good and telling stories that drive people to take action. She has spent her career at state, national and globally focused nonprofit organizations. Currently at Georgia Public Library Service, she works to broaden awareness of the value of public libraries to build engagement and support, and she provides counsel to libraries to build their own communications expertise. Hakes holds a Bachelor of Business Administration from Saginaw Valley State University, a masters in journalism from Michigan State University and a graduate certificate in nonprofit leadership from Georgia College and State University. She is an alumnus of the SVSU Roberts-Gilbertson Fellowship.

The Barstow Excellence in Teaching Humanities Seminar was created to promote excellence in teaching and recognize scholarship in the humanities. The seminar was established through a gift from The Barstow Foundation, which supports education, health and human services agencies, and humanitarian causes with emphasis on the greater Midland area.

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THURSDAY | NOV. 6
6:00-7:00 P.M.
MARSHALL FREDERICKS MUSEUM
5:00-6:00 P.M. RECEPTION

STAND OUT
SPEAKER