

Commission on Human Rights

KY Human Rights Commission will be at Russellville book-signing by editor of autobiography of first White House black female reporter, the late Alice Dunnigan of Kentucky

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The Kentucky Commission on Human Rights will be handing out posters and bookmarks of Gallery of Great Black Kentuckian Alice Dunnigan at a book-signing event held by the African American Heritage Center in Russellville, Ky. The book-signing will be at 2 p.m. (Central Standard Time), Feb. 19, at the African American Heritage Center, 252 South Morgan Street, in Russellville, Ky., 42276. The public is invited and there will be cookies and punch. No reservation is required.

Alone atop the Hill is an autobiography by the late Dunnigan of her life from childhood in rural poverty to her adulthood in education and journalism. Carol McCabe Booker, a former journalist and Washington D.C. attorney, has edited the work, and it is being re-released by the University of Georgia Press. Booker will be at the Russellville event and will sign copies for those who attend and wish to purchase the book.

In 1942, Dunnigan, a sharecropper's daughter from Kentucky, made her way to the nation's capital and a career in journalism that eventually led her to the White House. With *Alone atop the Hill*, Carol McCabe Booker has condensed Dunnigan's 1974 self-published autobiography to appeal to a general audience and has added scholarly annotations that provide historical context, according to the University of Georgia Press Company.

"Dunnigan's dynamic story reveals her importance to the fields of journalism, women's history, and the civil rights movement and creates a compelling portrait of a groundbreaking American," a reviewer of the University of Georgia Press publication said.

According to the publication press company: "In the book, Dunnigan recounted her formative years in rural Kentucky as she struggled for a living, telling bluntly and simply what life was like in a border state in the first half of the 20th century. Later she takes readers to Washington D.C., where she rose from a typist during World War II to a reporter. Ultimately she would become the first black female reporter accredited to the White House, to travel with a U.S. president, credentialed by the House and Senate Press Galleries, accredited to the U.S. Dept. of State and

the Supreme Court, voted into the White House Newswomen's Association and the Women's National Press Club, and recognized as a Washington sports reporter.

"A contemporary of Helen Thomas and a forerunner of Ethel Payne, Dunnigan traveled with President Truman on his coast-to-coast, whistle-stop tour. She was the first reporter to query President Eisenhower about civil rights. She provided front-page coverage for more than 100 black newspapers of virtually every race issue before the Congress, the federal courts, and the presidential administration. Here she provides an uninhibited, unembellished, and unvarnished look at the terrain, the players, and the politics in a rough-and-tumble national capital struggling to make its way through a nascent, postwar racial revolution."

Carol McCabe Booker is also coauthor with her husband, journalist Simeon Booker, of *Shocking the Conscience: A Reporter's Account of the Civil Rights Movement*.

Contact the Russellville African American Heritage Center at 270.726.4181 or Mary Ann Taylor of the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights at 502.566.9961 for questions about the event. Posters and bookmarks of Dunnigan and other members of the Gallery of Great Black Kentuckians are free and available to the public. Contact Taylor with requests for these.

The Kentucky Commission on Human Rights is the state government authority that enforces the Kentucky Civil Rights Act (Kentucky Revised Statutes Chapter 344), and, through its affiliation with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development, enforces federal civil rights laws.

The Kentucky Civil Rights Act makes it illegal to discriminate against people in the areas of employment, financial transactions, housing and public accommodations. Discrimination is prohibited in the aforementioned areas based on race, color, religion, national origin, gender, and disability. In employment, discrimination is further prohibited on the basis of age (40-years and over) and on the basis of tobacco-smoking status. In housing, discrimination is further prohibited based on familial status, which protects people with children in the household under the age of 18-years old, and it protects women who are pregnant. It is also a violation of the law to retaliate against a person for complaining of discrimination to the commission.

For help with discrimination, contact the commission at 1.800.292.5566. For information about the commission and civil rights, visit the website at www.kchr.ky.gov. From there, visit the commission Facebook and Twitter websites.