

Press Release
October 10, 2007

Journalist Bill Kurtis to head Dole Institute Third Party panel discussion

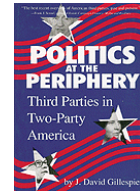


LAWRENCE — Polls show that voters are frustrated with “politics as usual” and are taking a closer look at alternatives to the Democratic and Republican parties. The Dole Institute of Politics at the University of Kansas will host a day of programming devoted to the discussion of this trend on Thursday, Oct. 25.

An afternoon panel with academic experts will examine the history and potential for third-party success in coming elections, and an evening roundtable moderated by KU alumnus and noted journalist Bill Kurtis will feature political practitioners working for third-party solutions to the nation’s problems.

“I’ve been struck by how many visitors to the Dole Institute comment on their feelings of alienation from the two major parties,” said Jonathan Earle, interim director of the institute. “I sense there is a lot of frustration out there that could lead to openings for alternative parties in the coming election cycles.”

The afternoon panel begins at 3 p.m. at the Simons Media Room and will feature Lisa Disch, professor of political science at the University of Minnesota and author of “The Tyranny of the Two-Party System”; John H. Aldrich, the Pfizer-Pratt university professor of political science at Duke University and author of “Why Parties?”; J. David Gillespie, professor of political science at the College of Charleston and author of “Politics at the Periphery”; and Bob Beatty, professor of political science at Washburn University and expert on Kansas’ three-party system. Earle, author of “The Free Soil and Republican Parties in 19th Century America,” will moderate the discussion.



The evening panel will begin at 7:30 p.m. in Hansen Hall and marks the first visit by Kurtis to the Dole Institute since its dedication in 2003. It will feature David Boaz, executive vice president of the libertarian Cato Institute; Unity '08 founders and political veterans Doug Bailey and Gerald Rafshoon; Richard Winger of the Coalition for Free and Open Elections; and Micah Sifry, author of “Spoiling for a Fight: Third Party Politics in America.”



Both programs are free and open to the public.