

► **Diversity Week**

SEPT. 26, 2008  
2:00 – 2:50 PM AT  
URI, KINGSTON, RI

► **Theatre Plans**

CENTER TO  
COMMISSION A PLAY  
ON GEORGE WILEY

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# George Wiley *legacy*

A SPECIAL NEWSLETTER FOR THE  
GEORGE A. WILEY LEGACY PROJECT

Alice Dzen Gross, upon joining the George Wiley Center Board of Directors in early 2007, used the medium of a workshop at the University of Rhode Island's Multi-Cultural Diversity Week to explore the life work of George Wiley. "I grew fascinated with his story and wondered if his ideas were too radical to be preserved by the mainstream press," she stated. After a successful event at which Henry Shelton, founder of the George Wiley Center, and Dr. Bernard Lafayette shared their memories, our interest in making his life work known to adults and school children in Rhode Island grew. We are taping our URI Multi-Cultural Diversity workshop this year, and plan to raise awareness about him using film & drama.

## Does George Alvin Wiley's Organizing Work Matter Today?

The George Wiley Center is hosting a workshop for the URI student population to acquaint them with George Wiley and inspire them to fight for social justice. Alice Dzen Gross will lead a ten-minute symposium, engaging the audience in a discussion exploring the question: Does George Wiley's life-work matter today?

Henry Shelton will also share his personal memories of Wiley as he is being interviewed by Ricardo Pitts-Wiley.

This will demonstrate the 'oral interviewing' techniques that Ricardo follows as one of his many research tools for developing a dramatization of the crucible moment in the lives of leading figures of the civil rights movement.

Ricardo then will perform an acting sample of a one-man play he wrote, followed by his narration of the process he followed in its creation.

The George Wiley Center is in the midst of raising funds and involving volunteers to assist with the research, required for the development of a script for a one-man play commemorating George Wiley. Our goal is to fund Ricardo's creation and initial performance of a play, which the George Wiley Center can then take on the road. Family and friends – be on alert as the project develops!



*Wiley Family picture (1936)*

## MIXED MAGIC THEATRE WATCH

Ricardo Pitts-Wiley is an accomplished African American actor, director, playwright and composer. For eighteen years he was a member of the Trinity Repertory Company in Rhode Island. In January of 2003 he and his wife Bernadet formed Mixed Magic Theatre & Cultural Events, dedicated to presenting a diversity of cultural & ethnic images and ideas on stage. He has been an Artist in Residence at URI. Ricardo has already successfully written and performed three one-man plays about African Americans. One of these plays, "When Fate Comes Knocking," celebrates the life and times of Martin Luther King through the eyes of the people who knew him. A similar approach is planned for developing the play about George Wiley.