

Jonathan D. Weinzapfel

Counsel

jonathan.weinzapfel@FaegreBD.com

Direct +1 317 237 1440

Faegre Baker Daniels LLP 300 North Meridian Street • Suite 2700 Indianapolis • Indiana 46204-1750 Phone +1 317 237 0300 Fax +1 317 237 1000

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To whom it may concern:

As Mayor of the City of Evansville, Indiana, from January 2004 through December 2011, one of my many duties was to preside over our city's "Celebration of Diversity Distinguished Lecture Series". This program provides an opportunity for civic and community leaders to highlight our city's growing diversity and commitment to strengthening our collective bonds. It had the full support of our community's most influential companies and leaders. Typically, the program would consist of a reception for our guest speaker, his or her presentation, and a question and answer session to end the evening. Previous guest speakers have included former Indianapolis Colts Head Coach Tony Dungy, Earvin "Magic" Johnson, Gen. Colin Powell, Marlee Matlin, and Rosie Perez to name a few.

In 2011 our committee chairperson suggested that we try a different kind of event. She had heard of a social justice comedy called "The Black/Jew Dialogues" that was touring the country. Their show acts as a jump off point for discussion about our country's cultural differences and similarities. After some investigation and conversation with the producers of the show; she thought that it would not only make for a good community event, but that the program could be expanded to also include cultural sensitivity training for sponsoring businesses, community organization and law enforcement agencies. In addition to the public event and the cultural sensitivity training, the program was expanded further to include a special assembly at one of our local high schools.

Over the course of the six days that "The Black/Jew Dialogues" were in Evansville, the comedy duo did radio and television interviews, attended synagogue and church services, and conducted more than a half dozen workshops for area public and private sector professionals. Their time culminated with a community-wide performance with a customized video featuring many of the individuals they had met during their week in Evansville. More than 1,500 people attended the event and discussion which was roundly praised and enjoyed.

I would highly recommend this program to anyone looking to bring innovative, educational and entertaining programming to their community. For what we typically paid for a one night event, we were able to offer our community multiple opportunities to laugh, learn, and open up the lines of ideas and communication in a wholesome and productive way.

I would consider "The Black/Jew Dialogues" money well spent!

Sincerely,

Jonathan Weinzapfel