



24th UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION FILM FESTIVAL
October 21-31, 2021 • Palo Alto • East Palo
Alto • San Francisco • Stanford University
unaff.org

PRESS RELEASE

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United Nations Association Film Festival Presents its 24th UNAFF Visionary Award to Barbara Lee and Harry Belafonte

The United Nations Association Film Festival (UNAFF) is proud to announce that its annual **UNAFF Visionary Award** will be presented to two extraordinary leaders in the community dedicated to human rights: unique public servant, **Congresswoman Barbara Lee**; and legendary singer, songwriter, musician and activist, **Harry Belafonte**. The award is bestowed to each of them in recognition for their life-long unwavering commitment to human rights; and their leadership, persistence, and vision, which inspired several generations to promote economic, racial and social justice, peace and move us forward to a better and more just society.

Barbara Lee is the subject of the UNAFF Opening Night selection, **BARBARA LEE: SPEAKING TRUTH TO POWER**, from filmmaker Abby Ginzberg. The screening on Thursday, October 21 at the Mitchell Park Community Center in Palo Alto will be accompanied by a special message from Congresswoman Lee.

The UNAFF Visionary Awards ceremony will be part of the UNAFF Closing Night event, on Sunday, October 31, at the Mitchell Park Community Center in Palo Alto. Representing Harry Belafonte to accept his award will be his daughter, actress and producer Gina Belafonte. She co-produced the documentary on her father **Sing My Song** that screened at the 15th UNAFF in 2012.

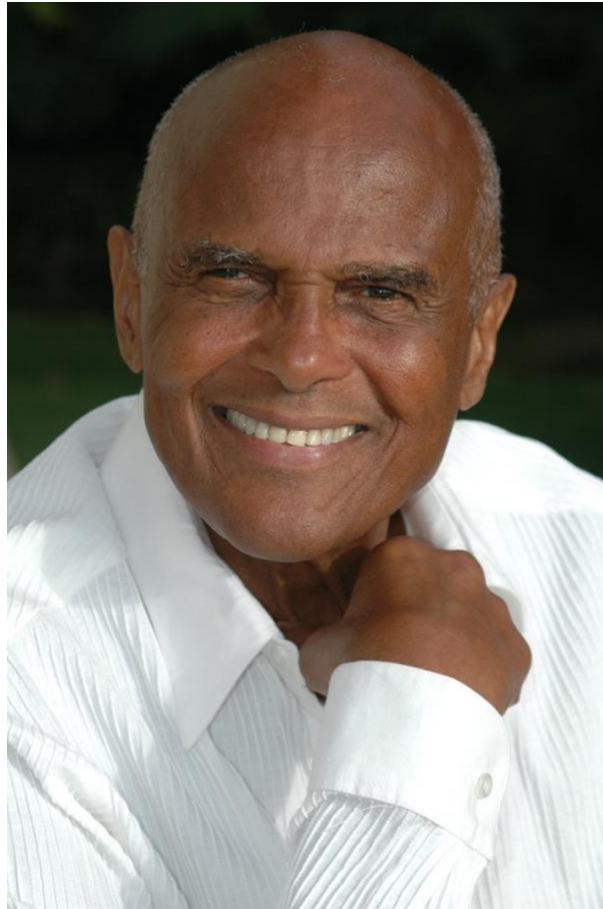


BARBARA LEE

A hero to the Bay Area, the nation, and the world, Barbara Lee has devoted her life to public service and important causes. As a young adult, and president of the Mills College Black Student Union, Lee invited Representative Shirley Chisholm to speak on campus and worked on Chisholm's 1972 presidential campaign, serving as her delegate at the 1972 Democratic National Convention. Also as a student, she was a volunteer at the Oakland chapter of the Black Panther

Party's Community Learning Center and worked on Panther co-founder Bobby Seale's 1973 Oakland mayoral campaign. After working for Congressman Ronald V. Dellums, Lee was elected to the California State Assembly; and later to the California State Senate. Lee's political agenda focused on issues such as education, public safety, environmental protection, health, labor, and women's rights. In 1998, she became the first woman to represent the State of California's then 9th Congressional District (now the 13th) in the U.S. House of Representatives.

As documented in the film **BARBARA LEE: SPEAKING TRUTH TO POWER**, in 2001, Congresswoman Lee received national attention as the only Member of Congress to oppose the authorization for the use of military force (AUMF) in the wake of the horrific events on September 11th. She stated that she voted no not because she opposed military action but because she believed the AUMF, as written, granted the president overly broad powers to wage war at a time when the facts regarding the situation were not yet clear. She warned her colleagues to be "careful not to embark on an open-ended war with neither an exit strategy nor a focused target."



HARRY BELAFONTE

Harry Belafonte combined his fame as an entertainer with a passion for bringing important issues to light. Born in New York City to immigrant parents from Jamaica, Belafonte popularized Caribbean music with an international audience in the 1950s, and was a best-selling recording artist, and sought after film actor. Belafonte's political beliefs were greatly inspired by the singer, actor and civil rights activist Paul Robeson, who mentored him. Belafonte was a constant presence in his support the Civil Rights Movement in the 1950s and 1960s, even when it threatened his entertainment career. He was one of Martin Luther King Jr.'s confidants, and personally financed many important initiatives like the 1961 Freedom Rides, as well as supporting voter registration drives, and helping to organize the 1963 March on Washington.

Over the years, Belafonte has been a leader in supporting many causes. In addition to his role as a goodwill ambassador for UNICEF, he campaigned to end the practice of apartheid in South Africa and has spoken out against U.S. military actions in Iraq. In the 1980s, Belafonte led an effort to help people in Africa. He came up with the idea of recording a song with other celebrities, which would be sold to raise funds to provide famine relief in Ethiopia. Written by Michael Jackson and Lionel Richie, "We Are the World" featured vocals by such music greats as Ray Charles, Diana Ross and Bruce Springsteen, and became an international hit, raising millions of dollars. Belafonte has achieved some of the highest

honors possible over more than a half-century in the public eye. He was a recipient of Kennedy Center Honors in 1989, the National Medal of Arts in 1994 and a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award in 2000. Additionally, in 2007 he was awarded the Chief Justice Earl Warren Civil Liberties Award, and in 2014 the Jean Hersholt Humanitarian Award at the Governors Awards.

UNAFF LISTINGS SUMMARY

24th UNAFF (United Nations Association Film Festival)

October 21-31, 2021

Venues:

October 21-25 & 30-31: Palo Alto, Mitchell Park Community Center, 3700 Middlefield Road

October 26: Stanford University, Stanford Medical School LKC

October 27: San Francisco, Roxie Theater, 3117 16th Street

October 28-29: Stanford University, Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies Encina Hall, 616 Serra Street

Ticket prices: **\$12 PER FILM SESSION** (1.5 – 3 hours per session)/ **FESTIVAL PASS – \$220** (all sessions, *excludes Opening and Closing Night Receptions*)/ free admission to discussion panels

Roxie program tickets: \$13

Tickets available at **STANFORD TICKET OFFICE**: <https://tickets.stanford.edu>

Roxie program on 10/27 tickets available at: <https://bit.ly/unaffroxie>

Film programs are announced and listed at www.unaff.org

For more information: www.unaff.org

E-mail: info@unaff.org

Phone: (650) 724-5544

Press photos are available at <http://www.unaff.org/2021/press.html>

Barbara Lee/Harry Belafonte photos:

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/h31wccabiaxsge2/AABMEGYN4cgwi29hVp_2s1VWa?dl=0

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FULL PROGRAM AT www.unaff.org

The award-winning United Nations Association Film Festival has grown to be one of the oldest and most respected documentary film festivals in the United States. UNAFF was originally conceived to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It was founded by Stanford educator and film critic Jasmina Bojic. In addition to providing early outlets for films, many of which have gone on to win major awards and accolades, UNAFF takes pride in creating a community forum for discovery and dialogue about different cultures, social issues and solutions. Over the years UNAFF has screened some of the most awarded and talked about documentaries in the industry, including eight that went on to win Academy Awards and thirty two that were nominated. In 2014 the ICFT (International Council for Film, Television and Audiovisual Communication of UNESCO) presented the UNESCO Fellini Medal to Jasmina Bojic, Founder and Executive Director of UNAFF, in recognition of her exceptional contribution in promoting the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights through the art of documentary film.

UNAFF's mission has expanded to broad, year-round programs that augment its reach. In addition to the annual film festival, UNAFF organizes panel discussions, initiates programs that engage children, students, seniors, veterans, hosts a traveling festival which keeps the films alive well beyond their initial festival showings and opens its doors to documentary film students and researchers.