



# Lunchbox Learning

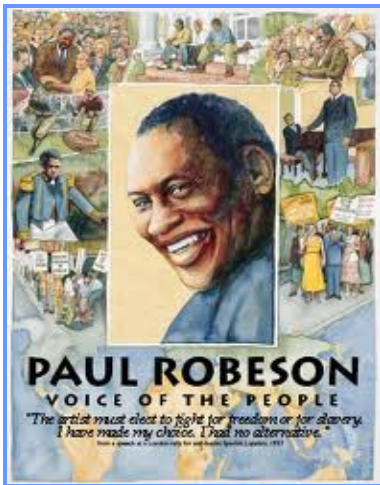


Meeting Room  
Wayne Public Library  
461 Valley Road  
(973) 694-4272 ext. 5210

Everyone is welcome!  
Coffee, tea & cookies are provided.  
You can bring your own lunch.

Seating is limited—first come, first served

Groups please call in advance-  
Contact Deborah:  
973-694-4272 Ext. 5408



**Doors Open 12:00 p.m. - Lunchtime  
Program 12:30 - 1:30 pm**

**Wednesday, February 8, 2012  
Evelyn M. Hershey  
New Jersey's Paul Robeson and  
the Civil Rights Movement**

Paul Robeson was the son of a former slave, born and raised during a period of segregation, lynching, and open racism. He earned a 4-year scholarship to Rutgers University, where he became a member of the prestigious Cap and Skull Honor Society, played four varsity sports (baseball, football, basketball, and track), won speech and debate tournaments, and managed to graduate valedictorian of his class. He then had a short successful professional career in football. He earned a law degree but, cut short his legal career when a secretary refused to take dictation from him due to the color of his skin. He turned to acting. He starred in Shakespeare's *Othello*, the musical *Showboat*, and films such as *Jericho* and *Proud Valley*. He was one of the top performers of his time, earning more money than many white entertainers. His concert career spanned the globe: Vienna, Prague, Budapest, Berlin, Paris, Amsterdam, London, Moscow, New York, and Nairobi. Robeson's travels opened his awareness to the universality of human suffering. He believed that artists should use their talents and exposure to aid causes around the world. He used his rich bass voice to speak for independence, freedom, equality for all people. His philosophy drove Robeson to Spain during the civil war, to Africa to promote self-determination, to India to aid in the independence movement, to London to fight for labor rights, and to the Soviet Union to promote anti-fascism. It was in the Soviet Union where he felt the most free and no discrimination in contrast to the United States.



While Robeson's activist role increased abroad he met dissent and intimidation in the United States. His outspokenness about human rights and his pro-soviet stance made him a prime target of the militant anticommunists. In 1950 his passport was taken away by the State Department taking away his right to travel and earn income abroad. His career in the United States suffered due to bigotry.. He fought vigorously to get his passport back, taking his cause up to the Supreme Court, where he finally won in 1956, but it was too late to save his career.

**Evelyn Hershey is the Education Director of the American Labor Museum. Ms. Hershey has been with the museum since its inception in 1988.**

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