

From Flint to Westland: Bankole Thompson Takes Message of Hope, Economic Justice and Democracy to Michigan Communities

Following successful book conversation at the Flint Public Library, acclaimed journalist brings HOPE: On The Mountain Of Fear to Westland Public Library tonight

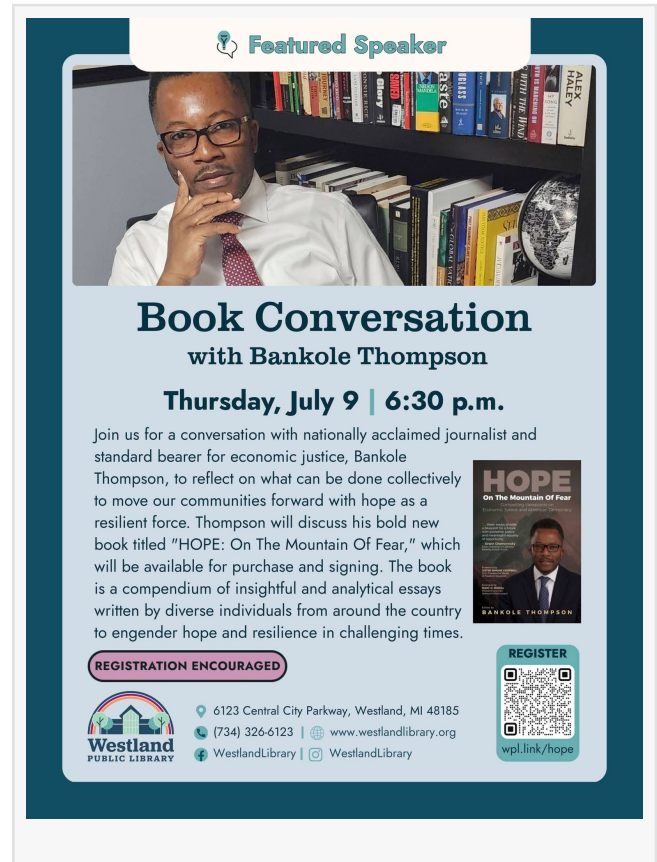
DETROIT, MI, UNITED STATES, July 9, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Following a successful community book conversation and signing at the Flint Public Library that drew a strong audience and media coverage, nationally acclaimed journalist, author and public intellectual Bankole Thompson will continue his series of public conversations this evening at the Westland Public Library.

The event begins at 6:30 p.m. and will center on Thompson's latest book, HOPE: On The Mountain Of Fear, a collection of essays examining some of the most consequential issues confronting American society, including economic justice, democracy, healthcare, homelessness, veterans care, mental health, education, entrepreneurship and the moral responsibility of leadership.

Thompson's recent appearance at the Flint Public Library was moderated by former Flint Mayor Karen Weaver and hosted in partnership with the Flint NAACP and the Black Leaders Forum. The event, which helped launch Flint's Juneteenth observances, drew significant community interest and was covered by local television media.

Tonight, the conversation moves from Flint to Westland.

Danielle Duque, an emerging leader who has already read HOPE: On The Mountain Of Fear and has expressed enthusiasm about the opportunity to engage Thompson on the book's central themes, will moderate the question-and-answer conversation.



Featured Speaker

Book Conversation
with Bankole Thompson

Thursday, July 9 | 6:30 p.m.

Join us for a conversation with nationally acclaimed journalist and standard bearer for economic justice, Bankole Thompson, to reflect on what can be done collectively to move our communities forward with hope as a resilient force. Thompson will discuss his bold new book titled "HOPE: On The Mountain Of Fear," which will be available for purchase and signing. The book is a compendium of insightful and analytical essays written by diverse individuals from around the country to engender hope and resilience in challenging times.

REGISTRATION ENCOURAGED

Westland PUBLIC LIBRARY

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wpl.link/hope

"From Flint to Westland, these conversations are ultimately about something larger than a book," Thompson said. "They are about the moral condition of our communities, the future of democracy and whether hope can still summon us to confront the inequalities and injustices that fear would have us accept as permanent."

Thompson said the decision to engage communities through public libraries reflects his conviction that libraries remain indispensable institutions in American democracy.

"Libraries are among the great pillars of the American experiment," Thompson said. "They are sanctuaries of knowledge, guardians of free thought and democratic institutions where people from every background can encounter ideas, challenge assumptions and imagine a different future. At a time when our nation is wrestling with profound questions about inequality, democracy and our common humanity, the work of libraries has never been more important."

Thompson expressed gratitude to the leadership of the Westland Public Library for hosting tonight's conversation and signing.

"I am deeply grateful to the leadership of the Westland Public Library for opening its doors to this important civic conversation," Thompson said. "The measure of a democracy is not simply found in its elections or institutions of government. It is also found in whether we continue to create spaces where knowledge is respected, difficult questions are welcomed and the next generation is encouraged to think seriously about its responsibility to the future."

The Westland appearance comes during a significant period of national engagement for Thompson.

In June, he delivered the opening Juneteenth keynote address at the 15th Annual National Civil Rights Conference in Detroit, where he spoke on the theme,



Tonight's moderator Danielle Duque with her copy of Bankole Thompson's latest book, *HOPE: On The Mountain Of Fear*



"The Battle for America's Story: Media, Power and Economic Justice." Days later, he addressed an exclusively Catholic audience at St. Paul of the Cross Passionist Retreat Center in Detroit on the theme, "Pilgrims of Hope in an Age of Fear: Faith, Economic Justice, and the Future of the Human Family."

His appearance in Westland also follows the announcement that Dillard University, the historic institution founded in New Orleans during Reconstruction, will use HOPE: On The Mountain Of Fear as required reading in three sociology courses beginning in the fall of 2026.

The book features contributions from a distinguished group of leaders and thinkers addressing critical issues facing society. Sister Simone Campbell, the nationally recognized social justice advocate and 2022 recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom, wrote the foreword.

A twice-weekly opinion columnist for The Detroit News, Thompson is widely known as "Detroit's Columnist of Conscience." He is a member of the National Press Club of Washington, D.C., founder and chairman of The PuLSE Institute, a national anti-poverty think tank headquartered in Detroit, and host of the podcast Bankole's Nation.

In 2023, Thompson became the first journalist in American history to serve on the National Board of Directors of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the historic civil rights organization founded by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and other civil rights leaders. He was nominated to the board by his longtime mentor, the late Rev. Dr. Bernard LaFayette Jr., a leading figure of the Civil Rights Movement.

In a rare distinction for a living journalist, the University of Michigan Bentley Historical Library established the Bankole Thompson Papers in 2015, preserving his journalistic and intellectual work for historical research.

Thompson's earlier work Fiery Conscience, which was reviewed by Forbes is listed as a reference work in the Jean Blackwell Hutson Research and Reference Division of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture in New York.

"As America marks its 250th anniversary, the question before us is not simply how far we have traveled," Thompson said. "The more urgent question is whether we still possess the moral courage to continue the journey toward a democracy worthy of its highest promises."

"From Flint to Westland, that is the conversation I am honored to carry into our communities. Hope must be more than a sentiment. It must become a summons to conscience, a demand for justice and a declaration that fear will not have the final word," Thompson added.

The book conversation and signing will take place tonight, Thursday, July 9, at 6:30 p.m. at the Westland Public Library.

BANKOLE THOMPSON

The PuLSE Institute

+1 313-800-0143

[email us here](#)

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