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Summary Information

Repository: M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections & Archives
Creator: Michelson, Vera P., 1945-2019
Title: Vera P. Michelson Papers
ID: apap379
Date [inclusive]: 1976-2019
Physical Description: 11.0 cubic ft.
Physical Location: The materials are located onsite in the department.
Language of the Material: English
Language of the Material: English
Abstract: This collection documents the lifelong activism of Albany, N.Y. resident Vera Michelson, especially her work with the Capital District Coalition Against Apartheid and Racism.

Preferred Citation

Preferred citation for this material is as follows:

Identification of specific item, series, box, folder, Vera P. Michelson Papers, 1976-2019. M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University at Albany, State University of New York (hereafter referred to as the Michelson Papers).

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Biographical Note

Vera P. "Mike" Michelson (1945-2019) was a lifelong activist and organizer. Born in Northampton, Mass., she received her bachelor’s degree from Russell Sage College and then a Master of Science degree in Education from the University at Albany.
Michelson was an employee of the State of New York for many years at the Oswald D. Heck developmental center. She retired in 2004, previously serving as president of her CSEA (Civil Service Employees Association) Local #445.

In 1981, Michelson helped organize the Capital District Coalition Against Apartheid and Racism (CD-CAAR) which opposed the U.S. tour of the South African Springbok rugby team, including its visit to Albany, N.Y. This led to even greater national and international anti-apartheid work and travel for Michelson who testified before the United Nations and traveled to an African National Congress Conference in Zambia. In Albany and the Capital District, Michelson was involved with many efforts involving social and racial justice. She led CD-CAAR's efforts to stop police brutality; was involved with efforts to reform the criminal justice system; worked to bring LEAD (Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion) to Albany; served as a volunteer administrator for Urban Grief, which supports families and communities traumatized by violence; helped to found ROOTS (Re-Entry Opportunities and Orientation Toward Success), a group established by ex-offenders and supporters to mentor the formerly incarcerated; and was involved with SNUG anti-gun violence initiatives.

Predeceased by her parents, she was survived by her brother and sister-in-law David and Carmen, her niece and nephews and their families.

Content Description

This collection includes materials related to Vera Michelson’s life and work as an activist and organizer in Albany, N.Y. and beyond. The collection documents her organization of the Capital District Coalition Against Apartheid and Racism (CD-CAAR) and work with the Social Justice Center; her national and international work against apartheid; her helping found ROOTS (Re-Entry Opportunities and Orientation Toward Success), a group established by ex-offenders and supporters to mentor the formerly incarcerated; her support of SNUG anti-gun violence; criminal justice reform; and her work with LEAD (Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion) in Albany. The collection consists of meeting minutes, notes, reports, clippings, subject files, audio, video, resource materials, posters, banners, and correspondence.

Arrangement of the Collection

The collection is unprocessed and is likely disorganized. Individual items may be difficult to find.
Administrative Information

Publication Statement

M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections & Archives

Processing Information

The collection is currently unprocessed.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

David Michelson, brother of Vera Michelson, donated all materials in this collection to the M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections and Archives in June 2019.

Access

Access to this collection is restricted because it is unprocessed. Portions of the collection may contain recent administrative records and/or personally identifiable information. Please contact an archivist for more information.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Michelson, Vera P., 1945-2019
- Capital District Coalition Against Apartheid and Racism
- Albany, New York
- Social Activists and Public Advocates
- African Americans and Civil Rights Organizations
- Criminal Justice and Prisons