



Contact: Bettie Cadou 317/940-9822
Holly Baker 317/940-9821

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WORLD RENOWNED FOSSIL HUNTER SPEAKS AT BUTLER UNIVERSITY

INDIANAPOLIS—Dr. Maeve Leakey, who has made recent headlines with the discovery of a possible new fossil human ancestor, will speak at Butler University as part of the Visiting Writers Series on Wednesday, April 4, at 7:30 p.m. in Atherton Union Reilly Room, 704 W. Hampton Dr. The event is free and open to the public.

The fossilized skull was discovered in 1999 by a research team led by Leakey excavating on the western side of Lake Turkana in northern Kenya. By naming the find *Kenyanthropus platyops*, Leakey and her team proposes that this nearly complete skull and partial jaw represents a completely different genus and species.

“*Kenyanthropus* shows persuasively that at least two lineages existed as far back as 3.5 million years,” Leakey said in a statement issued by the National Museums of Kenya in Nairobi, where she heads the paleoanthropology division. Daughter-in-law of the late Louis and Mary Leakey, she married their son Richard and carries on the field work with their daughter Louise, a doctoral student who is learning the family business in an office just two doors down from her mother.

Mother and daughter make expeditions to Turkana each summer, often working on opposite sides of the lake in the dried riverbeds. As they cut through the earth, these waterways pulled into the open the contents of sediment that, in the Great Rift Valley, can be quite old.

“What we do is divide them,” Leakey said of how they work. “She works up to 3 million, or 1 ½ to 3. And I work from 3 to 4 million.” For them, geological time is shop talk.

For further information, contact Susan Kenyon, associate professor and director of anthropology, 317/940-9497.