



Office of General Services

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LEGACY OF DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. TO BE CELEBRATED IN ALBANY ON JANUARY 15, 2018

Grammy and Tony Award-Winning Vocalist Ms. Jennifer Holliday to Perform at Annual MLK Memorial Observance

RoAnn Destito, Office of General Services Commissioner, today announced that the New York State celebration of the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. will be held on January 15, 2018 at 9:15 a.m. in the Empire State Plaza Convention Center. Lola Brabham, Acting Commissioner of the New York State Department of Civil Service, and SUNY Chancellor Kristina M. Johnson will present remarks during the program. The public is invited to attend the free program in observation of Dr. King's birth. The Be a King Volunteer Fair will begin at 8:30 a.m. at the base of The Egg; a musical prelude will start in the Convention Center at 9:15 a.m.; and the program will begin promptly at 9:45 a.m.

"I join Governor Cuomo in inviting everyone to come to or watch the live video of this important New York State tradition at the Empire State Plaza of celebrating the life of Dr. King and Mrs. Coretta Scott King and enjoying the talented performers and inspiring speakers who come to this event to honor our nation's most important civil rights leader," Commissioner Destito said. "The global theme for this year's commemoration is 'MLK50 Forward: Together We Win With Love For Humanity,' marking the 50th anniversary of Dr. King's assassination and the founding of The Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change. It is a perfect time to recommit ourselves to keeping Dr. King's dream alive."

"I am pleased to join Governor Cuomo and OGS Commissioner RoAnn Destito in inviting everyone to the Annual MLK Memorial Observance to celebrate the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his unrelenting commitment to civil rights and human dignity," said Acting Civil Service Commissioner Lola W. Brabham. "Today and every day, let us recommit ourselves to the values Dr. King championed and follow his example by making a positive difference in our own communities."

This year's celebration will include a special performance by Ms. Jennifer Holliday. The Grammy and Tony Award-winning Ms. Holliday has been proclaimed a Broadway legend by critics and fans alike. Her show-stopping, heart-wrenching performance of the torch ballad "And I am Telling You, I'm Not Going" in the 1981 smash hit "Dreamgirls" is considered one of the all-time best performances in a Broadway musical. The iconic role made Holliday a household name and introduced her big, soulful voice to the world.

This year's keynote speaker is Dr. Wintley Augustus Phipps. Born in Trinidad, West Indies and raised in Montreal, Quebec, Canada, Dr. Phipps is a world-renowned vocal artist, pastor, motivational speaker, and education activist. He is the founder, President, and Chief Executive Officer of the U.S. Dream Academy, Inc., a non-profit, national after-school program that provides mentoring and tutoring around the country to children of incarcerated parents and children falling behind in school.

The event will also include a number of musical tributes to Dr. King from local and regional performers, including the Dr. King Community Choir and Ensemble directed by Marcelle Johnson, the Staging Youths' Future, Inc. youth theater company, the Green Tech High Charter School Drumline and Ensemble, and The SUNY Schenectady Jazz Ensemble.

Following the formal program, the City of Albany "Beloved Community March" will begin at the Plaza Concourse entrance on Madison Avenue. The march will conclude at the King Monument in Lincoln Park with a wreath-laying ceremony. A CDTA bus will be available for those requiring transportation to the monument.

An Albany City Hall Carillon Concert will take place at noon.

There will also be several additional activities taking place at the Empire State Plaza, including:

- Empire State "Be A King" Volunteer Fair.
- Empire State Dr. King Quilt Display.
- Dr. King Statewide Children's Art and Essay Exhibit.
- Commemorative Dr. King birthday cake and cookies provided by Price Chopper and Market 32.
- A CanStruction exhibit by the Girl Scouts of Northeastern New York – all canned food items from this display will be donated to the Food Pantries for the Capital District.

To honor Dr. King's message throughout the year, a number of events are held to remind people of his vision for the community. These include The Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Statewide Food Drive held December 15, 2017 to February 15, 2018, the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Statewide Children's Literacy Drive held February 20 to April 10, and the 2018 Dr. King Statewide Career Fair on April 12.

The Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Observance will be broadcast live, beginning at 10 a.m. on January 15:

- Online at www.nyking.org.
- Capital District Region: Spectrum, channel 16 or 18, depending on the viewer's location.
- New York Metro: CUNY-TV, channel 75, 24, 106, or 108 depending on the viewer's location.
- Rochester and Finger Lakes Area: Spectrum, channel 98.

- Syracuse, Central NY, and Mohawk Valley: Spectrum, channel 98 in Syracuse and Onondaga County, and 96 in Utica, Rome and Ilion.

The memorial observance will be rebroadcast on Mid-Hudson Cablevision channel 58 on: Thursday, January 18 at 8 p.m.; Friday, January 19 at 1 and 8 p.m.; Saturday, January 20 at 7 p.m.; and Sunday January 21 at 10 a.m. and 7 p.m.

For up-to-the-minute information on the celebration, visit www.nyking.org, follow @NYSMLK on Twitter, and like our New York State Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Observance facebook page.

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