



TOWNtalk

NEWSLETTER FOR EMPLOYEES OF THE TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL
VOLUME 20 ISSUE 2 • JANUARY 2024

Dream. Act. Achieve.

A MESSAGE FROM TOWN MANAGER CHRIS BLUE

This week, we will gather to commemorate the remarkable life and enduring legacy of Martin Luther King Jr. His tireless efforts towards social justice, equality, and peace continue to inspire generations and, as we reflect on his teachings, I wanted to think about how they align so very well with our RESPECT values.

Responsibility:

Dr. King believed in the power of individual responsibility to bring about positive change. Each one of us, as employees of the town, has a responsibility to serve our community with dedication and integrity. Let us strive to fulfill our duties

with a sense of purpose, knowing that our actions as individual employees can make a significant impact on the lives of our fellow residents.

Equity:

Dr. King fought relentlessly for equality, advocating for a world where every individual is treated with dignity and respect, regardless of their race, gender, or background. Let us embrace his vision of equity in our work. By promoting inclusivity, diversity, and equal opportunities for all, we can contribute to building a more just and harmonious community.



Safety:

Dr. King spoke passionately about the value of safety and the importance of creating a society free from violence and discrimination. As town employees, it is our duty to ensure the safety and well-being of our community members. Let us work diligently to promote a culture of safety, both within the workplace and throughout Chapel Hill. By prioritizing safety measures and fostering an inclusive environment, we can create a community that is secure and welcoming for all.

Professionalism:

Dr. King advocated for peaceful protests and encouraged individuals to express their grievances through constructive means. Dr. King's teachings emphasize the power of unity, collaboration, and effective communication, all of which are essential aspects of professionalism. His unwavering dedication to justice and equality serves as a timeless reminder that professionalism extends beyond the workplace and encompasses the broader goal of creating a just and inclusive society.

27th Annual Employee Celebration Program

11:30 a.m. Friday, January 12, 2024

Nate Davis, Sr. Gym at Hargraves Center, 216 N. Roberson St.

- **Welcome:** Lance Norris
- **History of the Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday (video):** Town Employees
- **Solo Performance:** Brentton Harrison
- **Spoken Word Presentation:** Chapel Hill Poet Laureate Cortland Gilliam and Youth Poets Ladionna Gaskin and Zan Coleman
- **Choir Selection:** East Chapel Hill High School Chorus
- **Guest Introduction:** Shenekia Weeks
- **Guest Remarks:** Danita Mason-Hogans
- **Award:** MLK Jr. Committee Members
- **Choir Selection:** East Chapel Hill High School Chorus
- **Town Manager's Remarks:** Chris Blue
- **Lift Every Voice and Sing:** All
- **Closing:** Joe McMiller

If you can't make it to Hargraves for the employee celebration, you can watch the event streamed live at youtube.com/live/U21ZVCVJbtw?feature=share

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Principles of Dr. King

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Brotherhood

Dr. King preached and practiced a philosophy of racial integration and would not give ground when faced with the call for separatism. He said: "When I speak of integration, I don't mean a romantic mixing of colors, I mean a real sharing of power and responsibility."

Action

Between 1955 and 1968, Martin Luther King Jr. helped change America. He brought to the world's attention how unfairly blacks were treated. He had the help of millions of Americans, but his strong leadership and unprecedented power of speech gave people the faith and courage to keep working peacefully even when others did not.

Justice

Martin Luther King Jr. made it clear that we all share a human and moral responsibility to join hands as brothers and sisters in the quest for social justice. What turned out to be his final protest march was a gathering of striking garbage workers in Memphis, Tenn.

Non Violence

In 1964, Dr. King became the youngest person ever to receive the Nobel Peace Prize. (He was 35.) King promptly announced that he would turn over all of the money he received along with the award (\$54,123) to help advance the civil rights movement.

Morality

"The time is always right to do what is right."
— Martin Luther King Jr.

Message from the Town Manager

(continued from p 1)

Ethics:

Dr. King's unwavering commitment to the principles of justice and fairness serves as a guiding light for us all. Let us hold ourselves to the highest ethical standards in our interactions with colleagues, stakeholders, and the community we serve. By treating each other with respect, honesty, and integrity, we can foster an environment built on trust and mutual understanding.

Communication:

Dr. King understood the power of effective communication in inspiring change. Let us follow in his footsteps and strive for open, honest, and compassionate communication with our colleagues, community members, and town leaders. By actively listening, engaging in dialogue, and seeking to understand different perspectives, we can foster a culture of collaboration and empathy.

Teamwork:

Dr. King recognized that progress is best achieved when individuals come together as a united force. Let us embrace the spirit of teamwork and collaboration in all aspects of our work. By harnessing the collective expertise, skills, and talents of our diverse workforce, we can achieve remarkable outcomes and create a stronger, more resilient Chapel Hill.

As we honor the legacy of Martin Luther King Jr., let us remember his teachings and apply them both in our daily lives and as employees of Chapel Hill. By embodying the values of RESPECT, we can continue Dr. King's work of building a more just, compassionate, and inclusive community for all.



DID YOU KNOW: Dr. King visited Chapel Hill in May 1960. He is pictured here speaking in Hargraves Community Center.

Honoring His Life and Legacy

Martin Luther King Jr. Celebrations from the Past

Want to look back at Martin Luther King Jr Employee Celebrations from years past? Visit https://youtu.be/Nthf2TkmavI?si=0_cKaqvimgPv6KZ6

Learn More

The Chapel Hill Public Library has a wide variety of publications about the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. Find out more about his life and the Civil Rights Movement through movies, books, eBooks, and audiobooks.

You can check things out to take home using the Library's lockers at University Place or download them to your personal device. Visit the library's website at chapelhillpubliclibrary.org, or ask a librarian for a recommendation. And remember, all Town employees can get a free library card, no matter where they live.

Documenting Local Stories

In the spring of 2016, the Orange County Training School/ Lincoln Alumni Association began a partnership with Chapel Hill Public Library to collect, record, and document stories of the local Black community that had previously been untold.

The methodology is based upon the critical oral histories technique that was developed at the Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University. The goal is to amplify history that is accessible, equitable, and relevant to today's world, that centers on the people who lived it.

To hear more from the amazing women of the civil rights movement and to learn about Chapel Hill history, listen to Re/Collecting Chapel Hill, a community history podcast by the Chapel Hill Public Library at ChapelHillHistory.org.



Community Honors Dr. King

Celebrate the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. with events happening around our area.

Saturday, January 13

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration

1–3 p.m., Carrboro Century Center, 100 N. Greensboro St.

This youth-led event strives to bring the community together to celebrate the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. with guest speakers, artwork, and videos. | [MORE INFO](#)

MLK: Celebrating the Legacy Through the Arts

2–5 p.m., W.D. Hill Recreation Center, 1308 Fayetteville St., Durham

Activities highlighting the components in the life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. including visual art displays, poetry open mic, community discussions, live performances, arts and crafts projects and more. The event is free and open to the public. | [MORE INFO](#)

Sunday, January 14

MLK Jr. Community Celebration

6 p.m., UNC Friday Center Grumman Auditorium

Doors open at 5:30 p.m. with coffee and dessert

This event features a keynote speaker, the Honorable Beverly Scarlett, entertainment, the MLK/Edith Wiggins Scholarship presentation, and the Bridge Builders and MLK Jr. Citizenship Awards. This event is free and open to the public. | [MORE INFO](#)

Monday, January 15

Interfaith Prayer Breakfast

7:15–9 a.m., Sheraton Imperial Hotel, 4700 Emperor Blvd., Durham

Doors open at 6 a.m.; breakfast available until 8 a.m. Program starts at 7:15 a.m. Keynote Speaker: Reverend Canon Sandye A. Wilson | [MORE INFO](#)



Did You Know?

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday has been observed as a U.S. federal holiday since 1986. Chapel Hill has observed the day as a town holiday since 1984. Chapel Hill was one of the first communities in North Carolina to declare Martin Luther King Jr. Day a municipal holiday.

Martin Luther King Day Celebration March

10 a.m., Gather at Peace and Justice Plaza, 179 E. Franklin St. March down Franklin Street to First Baptist Church for a program including speaker North Carolina NAACP President Deborah Maxwell, singing, and presentations. | [MORE INFO](#)

Book Harvest Dream Big MLK Day Book Drive Celebration

1–4 p.m., Golden Belt Campus, 800 Taylor Street, Durham Book Drive and Community Celebration | [MORE INFO](#)

Thursday, January 18

MLK Jr. Lecture and Awards Ceremony

6 p.m., UNC Memorial Hall

Keynote address by Michelle Alexander, presentation of the MLK Jr. Scholarship, the Harvey Beech Scholarship, and the MLK Jr. Unsung Hero awards. Free and open to the public. [MORE INFO](#)

Friday, January 19, 2024

MLK Jr. Unity Event & Showcase of the Arts

6–8 p.m., Carolina Union Great Hall

In honor of Dr. King's commitment to cross-cultural unity, the MLK Jr. Unity Event & Showcase of the Arts is an opportunity to recognize, appreciate, and support the various cultures, backgrounds, and identities that define Carolina's campus. Join us for performances from student organizations, a local marching band, and trivia. | [MORE INFO](#)

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Town of Chapel Hill
405 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

info@townofchapelhill.org or (919) 968-2743

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Staff Writers: Alex Carrasquillo,
Melanie Miller, Christina Strauch

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Please recycle.

