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MLK Activities On Jan. 21 Emphasize Service and Compassion

January 11, 2019

HIGHLIGHTS

- Winthrop University students will honor the legacy of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on Jan. 21 by participating in service projects on campus that will benefit York County residents.
- Students will be assigned to one of three service projects.



ROCK HILL, SOUTH CAROLINA — Winthrop University students will honor the legacy of the **Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.** on Jan. 21 by participating in service projects on campus that will benefit York County residents.

King, a Baptist minister and social activist, led the Civil Rights Movement in the United States from the mid-1950s until his assassination in 1968.

In observance of the MLK Day as a federal and state holiday, Winthrop classes are cancelled and offices are closed. Winthrop faculty and staff members will participate in the city of Rock Hill's annual prayer breakfast, while more than 250 students will spend their day off in what is the institution's largest annual one-day service event. An evening program also is planned.

"This is a great opportunity for our students to engage and build community with each other while also giving back to York County," said **Kinyata Brown**, assistant dean for diversity, engagement & inclusive excellence. "The Day of Service furthers our hope in humanity."

Winthrop's community service event will kick off at 10 a.m. in the Richardson Ballroom in the DiGiorgio Campus Center. Students will be joined by **President Dan Mahony** and **First Lady Laura Mahony**.

Students will be assigned to one of three service projects, including making mats for the homeless. The mats will be made from more than 4,000 plastic bags collected over the past few months from the campus, local sororities and churches. The other two projects will address hunger in the homeless community.

The students will conclude with lunch around 1 p.m., and share and reflect on their experiences. To follow the activities on social media, search **#WUMLK19**.

The community service event is coordinated by **Winthrop's MLK Committee**, which includes members from the Center for Career and Civic Engagement, Student Activities, Residence Life, and Office of Diversity & Student Engagement.

There also will be an evening program to remember the contributions by King. The 8 p.m. program in Dina's Place will include a speaker, selections from the Vision of Prayze gospel choir, readings of King's speeches and then a vigil. The sponsor for the activities is Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.

MLK Interfaith Prayer Breakfast

Adolphus Belk Jr., a Winthrop political science professor, is the keynote speaker for the city of Rock Hill's MLK Interfaith Prayer Breakfast. The annual event will take place at the First Baptist Church from 7:30 to 9 a.m. Tickets are \$15 and are available at Rock Hill City Hall's Human Resources office, Rock Hill Housing & Neighborhood Services and Rock Hill Police Department.

A native of Brooklyn, N.Y., Belk completed his graduate studies at the University of Maryland, College Park. He joined the Department of Political Science at Winthrop in 2003. Belk has taught courses on American government, black politics, public policy, and race and ethnic politics in the United States. He is also the former director of Winthrop's African American Studies Program.

Belk's research has concentrated on the politics of crime and punishment in the United States as well as white nationalism in American government and politics. His work has been published in The Journal of Race and Policy; Souls: A Critical Journal of Black Politics, Culture, and Society; The Journal of Political Science Education; The Journal of American Ethnic History; The Journal of the Center for Policy Analysis and Research (a project of the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation); and by the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, one of the nation's premier public policy institutions and the only one whose work focuses squarely on matters of interest to African Americans and people of color.

In addition, Belk has collaborated with Political Science Professor Scott H. Huffmon on several projects for the Center for Public Opinion & Policy Research (CPOPR), which conducts the widely respected Winthrop Poll. Together, they have constructed groundbreaking surveys on black political attitudes in South Carolina and across the entire southern region. National and international news organizations such as The New York Times, The Washington Post, National Public Radio, and the BBC have covered the results of the Winthrop Poll.

Finally, in 2009, Belk was named Winthrop's Outstanding Junior Professor, an award that recognizes excellence among assistant professors. In 2015, he won the Kinard Award for Excellence in Teaching, the university's highest teaching honor.

For more information, contact **Judy Longshaw**, news and media services manager, at 803/323-2404 or longshawj@winthrop.edu.

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