

Connecticut Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission

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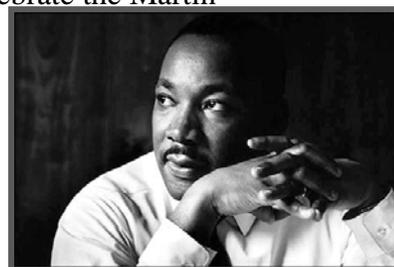
Press Release

Immediate Release

#01-03

State of Connecticut's Martin Luther King, Jr. Commission to host the 25th Annual MLK Awards

Connecticut was one of the nation's very first states to recognize and celebrate the Martin Luther King holiday. January 17, 2011 will mark the 25th anniversary of our nation's official recognition of the Martin Luther King Holiday. Connecticut's 25th Anniversary Celebration will be a major undertaking. **On Saturday, January 15, 2011, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission will host a black-tie gala in Hartford, Connecticut at the Hartford Marriott where over 600 guests will be welcomed.**



The evening will feature a cocktail reception, gourmet dinner, a keynote address by Dr. James Lewis and awards and recognition honoring six distinguished individuals; **Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro, Attorney General Richard Blumenthal and Supreme Court Justice Fleming L. Norcott, Jr.**, who have long been "Dream Makers" in their own right along with the recipients of the Annual MLK AWARDS

Dr. Leroy Williams-MLK Humanitarian Award,

Mr. Tomas Reyes-MLK Community Service Award

Mr. William Kilpatrick-MLK Leadership Award

Saturday's Gala program will also include performances by a **Special Guest Soloist** and an exclusive premier screening of a new documentary, "**Martin Luther King in Connecticut**" produced by Simsbury High School students telling the story of the two summers Dr. King spent in Connecticut during his youth, and how those experiences influenced his later life and mission.

On Monday, January 17, 2010 from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., the Connecticut Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission will hold the official state ceremony to commemorate the birthday of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

As in years past, the Governor, Legislators and all Constitutional Officers have been in attendance at this annual event honoring Dr. King. The Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission's Chairperson, Dennis J. King of Waterbury, will preside over Connecticut's annual tribute at the Capitol.

Former recipient of the State of Connecticut Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday Commission leadership award, Dr. James Lewis III will be the Guest Speaker for the event.

The ceremony will open with a Flag Ceremony by the Connecticut Valley Girl Scouts with the invocation being offered by the Reverend Bradford Howard Jr. The acclaimed Beulah Heights Praise Choir of New Haven will present gospel musical selections. The celebration is free to the public and will include a variety of presentations and the ringing of the state's replica of the Liberty Bell.

A benediction offered by Reverend King T. Hayes of Shiloh Baptist Church in Hartford will conclude the ceremonies. Children of the Sun World Drum/Percussion and Music Ensemble for Greater New Haven will perform after the ceremony. During this national holiday celebration, governors of states across the nation simultaneously ring replicas of the Liberty Bell in honor of Dr. King's birthday and in honor of the twenty-fifth anniversary, bells will be rung across the state of Connecticut at precisely 12:00 p.m.