

Collaborating Community Organizations to Host
Martin Luther King Day Celebration
Monday, January 16, 2023 ~ 11am - 1pm
at the MassMutual Center



**Dr. King Day Collaborative Hosts Free Event at the
MassMutual Center**

SPRINGFIELD – Collaborating community organizations will host Springfield's 10th annual citywide Dr. King Day Celebration on **Monday, January 16, 2023 from 11:00am to 1:00pm in person at the MassMutual Center**. The event is presented by Martin Luther King Jr Family Services, Community Music School of Springfield, Inclusive Strategies LLC, Springfield College, Focus Springfield, Legacy Sounds, Springfield Public School, Urban League of Springfield, New England Public Media, and Springfield Cultural Partnership. The livestream event can be watched on the home page of Community Music School of Springfield and Focus Springfield's websites. **This event is free and open to the public.**

This year's theme is **Chasing the Dream, Arriving Together, and Standing in the Light**, and will engage hundreds of youth, community leaders, and artists with spoken word, dance, and music to reflect on the enduring legacy of Dr. King and the continued struggle for social justice in communities across the country.

"We're so excited to be a part of an event that we hope inspires people of all ages, races, beliefs, and backgrounds to move with joy, urgency and purpose towards the dream that is Dr. King's legacy," said Azell Cavaan, Chief Communications Officer for Springfield Public Schools

Artistic representation of Rev Dr. Martin Luther King Jr's image has been an important aspect of the MLK Day Celebration. For the past decade, the commemorative piece by artist Nelson Stevens was centered for MLK Day celebrations in Springfield. This year we'll celebrate Mr. Steven's legacy by passing the baton to local artist Sheldon Smith, who will unveil a 2023 artistic expression of Rev Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. This opportunity exemplifies both the MLK Day Collaborative's ethos of lifting up culturally relevant art by local artists and Mr. Steven's dedication to mentoring artists in creating public art. Each year,

for the next decade, the MLK Day Collaborative will feature a different local artist's rendering of Dr. King.

This year's celebration will feature live performances in the spirit of unity and in the bond of peace from over 500 Springfield youth. Performances include the Springfield CommUnity Chorale led by Vanessa Ford; an orchestral performance by the MLK Day Festival Orchestra, led by Marty Knieriem; and Springfield Public Schools/CMSS Sonido Musica students performing original compositions. New this year, prior to the main event, the Community Unity Art Expo led by Andrew Cade of the Urban League of Springfield and Karen Finn of the Springfield Cultural Partnership will be featured from 9:30-11am. Oratorical speaker, Miles Ellison Jeffries, will be one of the many speakers throughout the day that reflects on Dr. King's legacy of a beloved community.

This event is free and open to the public.

Contact:

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