

“Injustice
anywhere is a
threat to justice
everywhere.”

9th Annual

**CELEBRATION
OF DIVERSITY**

Awards Ceremony

January 16 | 5 pm

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“We may have all
come on **different**
ships, but we’re
in the **same**
boat now.”



Introductions



The Honorable Jill Upson is the Executive Director of the Herbert Henderson Office of Minority Affairs (HHOMA). She was appointed to this cabinet-level position in December 2018 after serving for four years in the West Virginia House of Delegates. Through her vision to employ a combination of informational and cultural initiatives, Upson has greatly expanded the impact of this agency statewide.

Shortly after taking leadership, Upson created, developed, and implemented the first major grant program at HHOMA. The community-based pilot project that she named **BRIDGE** (Building Resources In Diverse Geographic Environments), is providing a half million dollars in funding to underrepresented communities throughout West Virginia.

Elected twice to the West Virginia House of Delegates, Upson served as Vice Chair of Banking in addition to serving on various committees, caucuses, and commissions. Due to her steadfast leadership on criminal justice reform, Upson was recognized by the Governor of West Virginia with his Civil Rights Award.

Jill Upson holds the distinction of making state history as the first black Republican woman elected to the WV House of Delegates. She currently serves as Chair of the Martin Luther King, Jr. State Holiday Commission. She also serves on the Governor's Complete Count Commission which assists the United States Census Bureau. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, at the request of the Governor, Upson formed and Chairs the COVID-19 Advisory Commission on Racial Disparities. She also successfully spearheaded all weekly minority testing sites in multiple locations throughout the state between May and November 2020.

Director Upson earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from Shepherd University. She is married to retired Navy Commander Kelvin Upson and is the mother of DJ and Chandler.

Introductions



Patricia A. Wilson, Chair of the Education Department at West Virginia State University, is the only Commissioner of the West Virginia Martin Luther King Holiday Commission, who has served continuously on the Commission since its inception in 1985. West Virginia was one of the first states to create a Martin Luther King State Holiday Commission via an Executive Order by Governor Arch Moore. Mrs. Wilson serves her community by being an active member of the First Baptist Church of Charleston, W.Va., life member and First Vice-President of the Charleston Branch of the NAACP, life member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., President and National Recording Secretary of the Charleston Branch of the National Association of University Women, HHOMA Advisory Board, member of the Tuesday Morning Group, Life Member of the West Virginia State University Alumni Association, and President of the Washington High Alumni Association.

Mrs. Wilson has one son, Marshall Petty, and is the proud grandmother of six grandchildren. Her husband, Wayman Wilson, is principal of Chandler Academy. She has been an educator for fifty years, having served as a teacher and administrator in Kanawha County Schools, Counselor at Marshall University, and working in the Education Department at her Alma Mater, West Virginia State University, since 2000.

In her service to the MLK Commission, she has served as Chairman of the Awards Committee for the Poster and Essay Competition and the Living the Dream Awards. She commends the Wheeling YWCA for its continued service in the Essay and Film Competition. She is also proud of the continued affiliation of Beta Beta Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., for coordinating the Poster Competition and annually serving as hostesses for the Awards Luncheon which has been held annually for the winners of the Poster and Essay Competition.

37th Annual Project on Racism Contest



The Annual Project on Racism Contest is designed to celebrate the life and legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr. while encouraging students' creativity through art, essay writing, musical expression, and film.

Eligibility

Poster

West Virginia students from grades K-12 could enter the poster contest. The art must have focused on the following quote from Martin Luther King Jr.: "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

The original art must have been created with pencil, crayon, pen and ink, watercolor, acrylic, serigraph woodblock, photography, or mixed media. The artist must have explained the style and the selected media on the entry form.

Essays, Film & Music

The competition was open to any student from grades 1-12 attending public, private, parochial, or home school in West Virginia. Students under the age of 20 enrolled in a high school correspondence/Test Assessing Secondary Completion program in the state could also enter.

All entries must have focused on the following quote from Martin Luther King Jr.: "We may have all come on different ships, but we're in the same boat now."



Program of Virtual Awards Ceremony



Greetings & Introduction

The Honorable Jill Upson

Chair of the Martin Luther King, Jr.

State Holiday Commission

Executive Director,

Herbert Henderson Office of Minority Affairs

Awards Announcements

Patricia Wilson

Chair of Education Department,

West Virginia State University

Commissioner, Martin Luther King, Jr.

State Holiday Commission

Poster Awards

Essay Awards

Film Awards

First Place Film Presentation

Song Awards

First Place Song Presentation

Ending Remarks

The Honorable Jill Upson

Acknowledgements

End of Ceremony

Poster Award Recipients



Grade 9-12

1st Place

Zoey Davidson

Lincoln County High School
9th Grade
Mixed Media on Canvas

2nd Place

Dannah Pauley

Lincoln County High School
9th Grade
Mixed Media

3rd Place

Rian Hoalcraft

Robert C. Byrd High School
9th Grade
Pencil

Grade 6-8

1st Place *(Group Entry)*

Kinleigh Bell & Dakota Adkins

Hamlin PK-8 School
6th Grade
Acrylic

2nd Place *(Group Entry)*

Aivah Spence & Laney Nelson

Hamlin PK-8 School
6th Grade
Acrylic & Colored Pencil

3rd Place *(Tie)*

Landon Gillespie

Hamlin PK-8 School
7th Grade
Colored Pencil

Fallon Parker

Hamlin PK-8 School
7th Grade
Graphite & Marker



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- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Essay Award Recipients



Grade K-5

1st Place

Helen Miller

Ansted Elementary School
5th Grade

2nd Place

Reid Boswell

Spring Mills Primary School
2nd Grade

3rd Place

Paxton Matthews

Bethlehem Elementary School
3rd Grade

Grade 9-12

1st Place

Devan Boyles

Parkersburg High School
12th Grade

2nd Place

Alaina Fry

Hedgesville High School
10th Grade

3rd Place

Jonathan Nguyen

Greenbrier East High School
10th Grade

Grade 6-8

1st Place

Audrey Ferguson

Warwood Middle School
8th Grade

2nd Place

Nicholas Lilly

Shady Spring Middle School
8th Grade

3rd Place

Julia Dunaway

Tridelpia Middle School
7th Grade

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Film Award Recipients

1st Place *(Group Entry)*

**Hunter Kelley, Everett Poole, Xander Plute,
Nico Hoellwarth, Almira Ramazanova, Abolaji Oke,
Nick Earls, Cole Grimm & Sam Gorence**

Linsly School
11th & 12th Grades

2nd Place

Kate Blackwood

Bridgeport Middle School
7th Grade

3rd Place

Kinsley Edgmon

West Liberty Elementary School
5th Grade



Song Award Recipients

1st Place

Juanita Garcia

Linsly School
11th Grade

2nd Place

Julian Skasik

Bridgeport High School
11th Grade



Thank You to Our Sponsors



Martin Luther King, Jr.
State Holiday Commission



Herbert Henderson
Office of Minority Affairs



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Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

eliminating racism
empowering women
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West Virginia DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION



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