

Martin Luther King awards given to those who improve community

12 honored in ceremony

By Prentiss Findlay
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A photo of President-elect Barack Obama got the biggest cheer from an auditorium full of Burke High School students Monday at the annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Picture Awards.



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Local elected leaders presented 12 people with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Awards on Monday at Burke High School. The awards are given to those who improve their community.

But the adults on stage noted that it was the work of King on behalf of civil rights that paved the way for the election of Obama. "Did you think you would live to see a time in this country when a black man would be elected president?" asked Christine Osborne Jackson, retired executive director of the YWCA of Greater Charleston. "Young people, let this be a light to you. This is your time to rise up. This is the year that you must know that you can do anything. This year, Obama is your light. Let it make a difference to you."

A dozen recipients were honored at the Picture Awards, which began in 1998 under the auspices of then newly elected Charleston City Councilman Wendell Gilliard. The honorees Monday received two large framed black and white photos of King in recognition of their work to improve the community and keep King's dream alive.

Previous story

[Joining the crowd; Obama's Inauguration](#), published 01/11/09

"If we don't remember our past, then we don't have any future," Gilliard, now a state House representative, said in an interview. He told the students, "You ought to give God the thanks and

glory that you are living to see this day." He noted that King's widow, the late Coretta Scott King, attended the Picture Awards in 2004.

City Councilman James Lewis said, "Without King and his dream, people like me would not have been on Charleston City Council. This is setting a good example for the young people."



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'This year, Obama is your light. Let it make a difference to you,' said Christine Osborne Jackson, retired executive director of the YWCA of Greater Charleston.

Recipients of the award included former state Rep. Jimmy Bailey.

"Nothing has ever meant as much to me," Bailey said.

Other Picture Awards recipients were entrepreneur Beverly Gadson-Birch; developer and builder Mike Bennett; Jerusalem Baptist Church Deacon William Carter; Dorchester and Charleston counties former Teacher of the Year Roslin Jenkins Fields; Burke High School senior Benjamin Hanna; retired Charleston police officer Grace McDowell; Charleston City Council member Robert Mitchell; Lottie Otto, a mentor to underprivileged teens; the Rev. Alfreda Owens; businessman Jay Patel; and Charleston Police Capt. Gregory Whitaker.

LOWCOUNTRY KING-OBAMA EVENTS

The Lowcountry has more than a week's worth of events planned to celebrate the legacy of Martin Luther King Jr., as well as the upcoming inauguration of Barack Obama, including:

- **WEDNESDAY**, 7:30 a.m., Gaillard Auditorium. The YWCA of Greater Charleston will hold a Business and Professional Breakfast featuring remarks by Voorhees College President and South Carolina civil rights figure Cleveland L. Sellers Jr. The breakfast is open to the public, but tickets cost \$25 and may be purchased from the YWCA at 106 Coming St. in Charleston. For tickets or more information, call 722-1644 or e-mail rodgerskywca@bellsouth.net.
- **SUNDAY**, 4 p.m., 25 Morris St. The YWCA of Greater Charleston will hold its 37th annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Trident Area Ecumenical Service, "Remembering the Life and Legacy of Martin & Coretta" in the Morris Street Baptist Church. Congregations from more than 15 churches are expected to take part. For more information, call 722-1644.
- **SUNDAY**, 4 p.m., 7396 Rivers Ave. in North Charleston. The Charleston Symphony Orchestra Gospel Choir will pay tribute to Martin Luther King, Jr. through music with historical audio and video footage in the Mount Moriah Family Living Center. The performance is free and open to

the public, but tickets are being given out at the Gaillard Auditorium box office in Charleston, Mount Moriah Family Living Center and at North Charleston Cultural and Civic Center (formerly Sterett Hall).

- **MONDAY**, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, 11 a.m. The Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Federal Holiday Parade begins at Johnson Hagood Stadium and winds its way through downtown. The parade will be televised by WCBD-TV, and a "Youth Speak-Out" at Charleston Progressive School will be held immediately after the parade ends. For more information, call 722-1644.
- **JAN. 20**, 5 p.m. The Charleston Inauguration Celebration Affair will be held the Alfred Williams Community Center, 4441 Durant Ave. in North Charleston. The event will feature large-screen TV broadcasts of inaugural events, live entertainment, guest speakers, food, dancing and a 3-foot-tall cake in the shape of the White House. Admission is free, but donations will be accepted to partly benefit the Lowcountry Food Bank. Those planning to attend are asked to call 478-4462 or e-mail saudersragina@yahoo.com
- **JAN. 24**, 10 a.m., Lincoln High School in McClellanville. The Dream 5K Run & Walk will begin to celebrate the King holiday and Barack Obama's inauguration. It costs \$10 to register (\$15 after Saturday). For more information, call 887-3944.

Don't see your event? Call 937-5771.

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