

Four Area Organizations to Host Martin Luther King Day Celebration
Monday, January 15, 2018
11am - 1pm MassMutual Center, Springfield

SPRINGFIELD-Four area organizations will host this year's Dr. King Day Celebration on Monday, January 15, 2018 from 11:00am to 1:00pm at MassMutual Center, [1277 Main Street, Springfield](https://www.massmutual.com/locations/springfield). This event is free and open to the public. This year's theme "Lifting the Spirit of Healing and Unity" is a collaborative celebration hosted by Martin Luther King Jr Family Services, Community Music School of Springfield, D.R.E.A.M Studio and Springfield College. Governor Charlie Baker, Mayor Domenic Sarno and State Representative Bud Williams will speak at the event.

Music, song and dance performances will provide inspiration and reflection on the legacy of Dr. King and the continued struggle for social justice in communities across the country. The Dr. King Day Celebration seeks to bring our community together to work toward the dream Dr. King so eloquently spoke of over 50 years ago.

"In light of the uncertainties around race relations and the polarization of various groups who continue to feel marginalized, this celebration reminds us we have the opportunity to engage in simple acts--at school, at work, and in our families--that strengthen our community in the spirit of unity that defines the legacy of Dr. King," said Ronn Johnson, CEO of Martin Luther King Jr Family Services. "We must all speak out against intolerance and be change agents. The MLK Day Celebration inspires us reclaim the dream of a beloved community."

This year's celebration will be MC'd by Andrew Cade and Tashanea Whitlow and will feature performances by over 700 young people from Springfield including Sonido Musica/Springfield Public School Partnership programs; the Springfield Community Chorale, a culturally diverse group of singers with the mission to deliver gospel and inspirational music in the spirit of unity and in the bond of peace, led by Vanessa Ford; CMSS Martin Luther King Festival Orchestra led by Marty Knieriem; a dramatic performance by DREAM STUDIO; an oratorical selection by Michael Denson, (winner of the Alpha Phi Alpha 2017 Annual Senator Edward R. Brooke III Oratorical Contest) and much more. New this year, the pre-show will feature live painting by Dr. Imo Nse Imeh, Westfield State University Art History professor, and musical performances by Community Music School's New Orleans Brass Band.

The Dr. King Day Celebration is free and open to the public, and all ages are welcome. The Dr. King Day Celebration is accessible to the hearing impaired and MassMutual Center is handicapped accessible. MassMutual Center is located in downtown Springfield, close to public transportation. For more information please contact any of the partnering organization or visit their websites to get more information and details about the event. **#MLKDAY413**.

Sponsors include MassMutual Center, Springfield Cultural Council, Westfield State University, Massachusetts Cultural Council, Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts, Springfield College, Springfield Technical Community College, The UMass Center at Springfield, and the City of Springfield Department of Health and Human Services, New England Public Radio, Focus Springfield, The Republican/MassLive and WGBY.