

CLARION UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA
Inter-Office Correspondence

Date: June 13, 2000

To: Dr. Diane L. Reinhard, President
Dr. Jocelind Gant, Assistant to the President for Social Equity

From: Rogers J. Laugand III, Chair
Martin Luther King Jr. Committee

Re: **1999-00 Martin Luther King Jr. Program Report**

CC: Dr. Joe Grunenwald, Provost
Dr. George Curtis, Vice President for Student Affairs
Dr. Marilynn Mikolusky, Dean of Student Life Services
Dr. Stanton Green, Dean, College of Arts & Science
Dr. Gail Grejda, Dean, College of Education & Human Services

PROJECT TITLE

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Committee
Moving Into the New Millennium
Special Events 1999-2000

Committee Members:

Mr. Rogers J. Laugand III, Chair
Ms. Diana Anderson
Mr. Ralph Critten
Ms. Portia Diaz-Martin
Dr. Robert Girvan
Mr. Patrick Hicks
Mr. Scott Horch
Dr. George LaRue
Dr. Todd Lavin
Dr. William Stine

Ex-officio Member

Dr. Jocelind Gant

New Members: Dr. Legene Quesenberry, Mr. Sean McDonald

MAIN SOURCE OF FUNDING: President's Office

Other financial contributors: College of Arts & Science, College of Business Administration, Minority Student Services, Office of Social Equity, Panhellenic Council, President's Commission on the Status of Women, President's Commission on Affirmative Action, Provost Office, Residence Life, and Student Life Services.

ABSTRACT:

The Martin Luther King Jr. Committee coordinated sponsored and co-sponsored university-wide and community programs that were meant to nurture Clarion's social diversity campus/community climate. The project was designed to enhance awareness of Dr. King's beliefs and actions as inspiration for our efforts in fostering a just, multicultural and understanding community. The commemorative endeavors took place from October to March.

GOAL STATEMENT:

The Martin Luther King Jr. Committee maintains that the breadth of Dr. King's heritage as a national and international leader is a largely untapped resource. Consequently, we provided a series of programs that focused on Dr. King's dream of achieving a truly inclusive human community. Some interests of Dr. King that celebrate the enriching potential of social diversity include fair educational opportunities, ending human violence, moderating intolerance,

expanding good work opportunities for all citizens, and the moral/ethical foundations of human behavior. Programs developed in these domains in cooperation with various academic and student affairs departments seemed appropriate for the committee to cooperatively sponsor.

OBJECTIVE:

To enhance the positive effects of a just, multicultural and understanding environment in the spirit of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the committee intended to:

- (a) Identify scholars, activist and performers whose work, in our opinion, contributed to the celebration of human diversity. As appropriate, some of these persons were invited to Clarion University to share their ideas and experiences with the campus community through various educational modes.
- (b) Ensure that these guests were exposed to as many students, faculty, staff and community members as possible to encourage "conversations of respect" (Hill, 1991) and build bridges toward human harmony. These discourses focused on the concept of social equity as represented in Dr. King's thoughts and by his participation in social change organizations.
- (c) Support responsible social activism to enhance social justice that Dr. King's example represented. The range of possible involvement was demonstrated by the variety of guests supported by the committee.

TARGET GROUP:

The target groups were those individuals who were misinformed about those who were different from them and lacked the understanding and appreciation of a diverse community. The committee sponsored programs that served the purpose of breaking down stereotypical images about "others" among the administrative, student, faculty, staff and community bodies. In the final analysis, the campus and community population was targeted.

THE PROBLEM:

The Clarion campus community has worked with varying degrees of success to create a curriculum and complimentary program that serves to "educate the total student regardless of race" (Taylor, 1986). This statement illustrates, however, that minority status has been often conceived as residing in only one marginalized social category like race or gender. Dr. King's concern with the content of one's character and the nature of power in society transcends a focus on narrow bases of inequality; his vision constructed a broader and more complex conception of social equity.

The Martin Luther King series is meant to further educate the campus and the community about the concerns for uniqueness, empowerment, commonality, and interdependence that Dr. King recognized as crucial in order to fully celebrate the diversity of human experience in a pluralistic democracy. One of our main concerns is the need for us to unify as a total community.

METHODOLOGY:

The committee met the objective (a) in the following manner: During the spring semester, we worked with various departments and organizations to suggest, coordinate initiatives, and help sponsor appropriate programs. Each scholar, activist, or performance addressed a theme found in Dr. King's teachings. The following criteria was utilized in the selection process:

- (1) Preference was accorded to resource persons of a particular minority status, or to the interaction of more than one marginalized category. However, all persons who clearly demonstrated Dr. King's wide interest in social equity were utilized as a resource to the committee. In addition, those studying various topics that spoke to civil rights were invited to share their knowledge.
- (2) Overall, the resource persons included both sexes. Additionally, they were representative of disciplines and pursuits that provided substance to Dr. King's thinking e.g., history, economics, and political science.

For each visit, contracts were negotiated via the candidate's agent or through personal contacts in order to get the most favorable terms for Clarion University.

Our approach to objective (b) was as follows: The manner of exposure and interaction varied depending upon the type of presentation and arrangements made by the primary sponsor. We encouraged the resource persons to be invited to attend classes in their respective fields and interact informally with students, administrators, faculty, and staff. The Martin Luther King Jr. Committee functioned as follows:

- (1) Identified and assisted other groups in finding respective scholars and performers.
- (2) Developed program activities and assisted others when possible.
- (3) Provided follow-up actions to related programs.
- (4) Assessed the effectiveness of sponsored programs.
- (5) Promoted the participation of the campus and community members. The committee ensured that the series were broadly advertised through newspapers, radio, posters, faculty, and a comprehensive brochure.

Objective (c) was met by making available information about participation in organizations and activities that related to the relevant theme (s). We asked each guest or group to suggest appropriate solutions to problems of social inequality as a crucial part of every presentation.

FEASIBILITY AND COST-EFFECTIVENESS:

The prospects of keeping this undertaking successful are good especially with respect to the presence of qualified personnel at Clarion to assist in implementing each year's version of the project. The major constraint for the proposed King Committee program during a particular year is fiscal. It can be quite difficult to secure reasonably priced programs, high quality guests interacting at appropriate times with significant numbers of the campus community. Extensive negotiating and organization on our part coupled with contributions from other campus departments and the good will on the part of the presenters or agents played a critical role in providing effective commemorative activities. **The schedule of events included the following:**

October 12, 1999 Hart Chapel

Dr. Alvin Poussaint

Psychiatrist

Topic: "Legacies and Future of the Civil Rights Movement"

Attendance: 200

November 15, 1999, Hart Chapel

Jennie Kwan

Performer

Topic: "Faces of America"

Attendance: 248

January 25, 2000, Gemmell Multi-Purpose Room

Women of the Calabash

African Music

Rescheduled due to weather

February 8, 2000, Hart Chapel

Dr. William Julius Wilson

Harvard University Professor

Topic: "The World of the New Urban Poor"

Attendance: 220

March 27, 2000, Hart Chapel

Winona LaDuke

Activist

Topic: "Native Struggle for Land and Life"

Attendance: 121

CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, the committee was successful in providing programs that were educational in nature and consistently coincided with our series theme. Because the committee wanted to attract a diverse population, members sought to provide a multiplicity of events (i.e. music, lectures, class visits, plays, etc.). As a result, the programs were well attended reaching out to diverse audiences across the campus and community. The events were rated very high and many individuals indicated an interest in having similar programs in the future.

Based on the feedback from the evaluations as well as the verbal feedback, the committee feels that the Martin Luther King Jr. Series was a great success. More specifically, we believe we accomplished the following:

- (a) Increased the scope of understanding from a humanistic perspective
- (b) Raised the multicultural awareness and appreciation for the richness of difference among all individuals
- (c) Combated the stereotypes that individuals may have about a particular group
- (d) Created ongoing dialogue on the issues of racial understanding, gender equality, and economic empowerment
- (e) Developed a program that the entire community has come to appreciate, and one that community members are eager to support in some form or fashion
- (f) Contributed to the infusion of knowledge and heightened awareness of commonalities among differences
- (g) Provided a catalyst for the examination of new knowledge about American history

The Martin Luther King series has become an established part of the university and community culture. It is a series of events that people look forward to seeing each year. The Martin Luther King series has become a great success but only due to the commitment of many people working together as a team. Through this team effort, the university has been able to provide educational programs that enrich the social, cultural and intellectual environment in which we live.

**BUDGET
1999-00**

Program	Honorarium	Travel	Hotel	Food	Total
Alvin Poussaint	\$5,800 Including Air		\$51.94	\$127.89	\$5,979.83
Faces of America	\$1,000				\$1,000
Women of Calabash	(Rescheduled) (\$5800)				
William Julius Wilson	\$6,000	\$1,065.23	\$51.94		\$7,117.17
Winona LaDuke	\$3,400 Including Air	\$70.63	\$73.14	\$53.11	\$3,596.88
Total					
Other	\$6.50 (Book)				\$6.50
Printing	\$304.86				\$304.86
Grand Total	\$16,511.36	\$1,135.86	\$177.02	\$181	\$18,005.24

