

CLARION UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA
Inter-Office Correspondence

Date: May 14, 2014

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

From: Mr. Rogers J. Laugand III, Director of Minority Student Services

Re: **2013-2014 Martin Luther King Jr. Program Report**

PROJECT TITLE

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Committee
“The Dream: 50 Years Later”
2013-2014

Committee Members:

Mr. Rogers J. Laugand III, Co-Chair
Dr. Philip Terman, Co-Chair
Dr. Peggy Apple
Dr. Greg Goodman
Dr. Cahndice Matthews
Ms. Heather Kirkwood-Mazik
Mr. Joseph Croskey
Ms. Kelly Ryan
Mr. Mark Franchino
Dr. Wayne Swanger

MAIN SOURCE OF FUNDING: President’s Office

Other Co-Sponsors: Minority Student Services, Office of Social Equity, and English Department.

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 November to April.

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 2013 and 2014 semesters, 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 all persons who clearly demonstrated Dr. King's wide interest in social equity. 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, social media and student organizations.

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:**

National Mix It Up Day, October 29, 2013

The Bully Project Documentary (Equity Week), November 11, 2013 (100+ attended)

Earl Tilford, MLK Community Celebration, January 23, 2014 (300 attended)

Howard Hanson, Poet, January 28, 2014 (90 attended)

Darrick Rizzo, Motivational Speaker & Author, February 4, 2014 (170 attended)

Dr. Michael Miller, Motivational Speaker & Author, February 18, 2014 (150 attended)

Derrick Hayes, Motivational Speaker, March 24, 2014 (75 attended)

Kazim Ali & Richard St. John, April 3, 2014 (60 attended)

Diana Hume George, Poet, April 17, 2014 (75 attended)

CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, the committee was successful in providing programs that were educational in nature and consistently coincided with our theme. Because the committee wanted to attract a diverse population and increase participation, members sought to provide events from a variety of areas. As a result, the programs were well attended reaching out to diverse audiences across the campus and community. Based on the evaluations that were turned in, 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
2013-2014**

Program	Honorarium	Food	Hotel/ Travel	Printing	Total
The Bully Project Documentary /Social Equity	\$500				\$500
MLK/Community Celebration Earl Tilford			\$701		\$701
Howard Hanson	\$1,500			\$81	\$1,581
Darrick Rizzo		\$97		\$84	\$181
Dr. Michael Miller	\$1,000	\$88	\$113	\$84	\$1,285
Derrick Hayes	\$1,500	\$231		\$39	\$1,770
Kazim Ali & Richard St. John	\$500			\$34	\$534
Diana Hume George	\$,1000			\$34	\$1,034
Model UN Conference	\$200				\$200
Mix It Up Day					
Total	\$6,200	\$416	\$814	\$356	\$7,786