



## Office of the Will County Board

Herbert Brooks, Jr., Speaker

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 17, 2013

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# **Board celebrates life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**

*Encourages residents to participate in a day of service*

JOLIET, IL – The Will County Board today paid tribute to the life of civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and remembered the vital role he played in American history. Dr. King would have turned 84 years old on January 15.

“Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was a modern American hero whose leadership encouraged people of all races to rise up against injustice,” said Speaker Herbert Brooks, Jr. “Together, we should continue to follow his dream and advice ‘to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood.’”

Dr. King is largely credited with helping to create the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. From 1957 to 1968, he traveled 6 million miles, gave 2500 speeches, and wrote five books as well as dozens of articles. He is famously known for his 1963 speech, “I Have a Dream,” delivered in front of the Lincoln Memorial.

“Dr. King’s dream was and still is a call to all Americans to change their hearts by refusing to judge people by their skin color, national origin, race or religion,” said board member Denise Winfrey (D-Joliet). “Because he made a commitment to peacefully fight for the basic principle that all men and women are created equal, laws were changed and a world of opportunity was formed for millions of Americans.”

The Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to Dr. King in 1964. In 1983, 15 years after his assassination, President Ronald Reagan signed a proclamation making the third Monday of every January a public holiday to celebrate Dr. King and what he stood for during his life.

“By helping to ensure all men and women were treated equally in the eyes of the law and by their fellow citizens, Dr. King ended up paying the ultimate price for his courage,” said board member Ken Harris (D-Bolingbrook). “We are forever grateful for his life and sacrifice.”

President Obama has called for a National Day of Service on Saturday, January 19, to coincide with Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service on Monday, January 21, that honors the legacy and spirit of Dr. King. Locally, the University of St. Francis and Community Services Council of Will County are co-sponsoring the MLK Day of Service on Monday. Speaker Brooks will address students as well as members of the community before they do service work for United Way agencies.

“To better our communities, I encourage all Will County residents to not take a day off, but instead, take a day on by volunteering for one of the many not-for-profit organizations in our county,” said Speaker Brooks.

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