

## Martin Luther King, Jr. Family of Schools gives new expression to Dr. King's life

In celebration of the first Martin Luther King national holiday Jan. 20, some 30,000 students and educators from 35 U.S. schools associated with his name are giving new expression to the civil rights leader's ideas.

The schools are part of the Martin Luther King Family of Schools Network, a National Education Project made possible with the support of American Can Company, and together they have been working on special projects and activities to demonstrate what Dr. King's legacy means to a new generation of young people.



To commemorate Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday, the Martin Luther King Family of Schools Network's eighty foot by 10 foot "Weaver of Dreams" presentation quilt was dedicated at the Martin Luther King, Jr., Center for Non-violent Social Change during "King Week," Jan. 14. The quilt, composed of 35 distinct quilting blocks submitted by MLK Network school children from all grades, elementary through high school, artistically demonstrates the significance of Dr. King's legacy to young people today. Above, volunteers Edith Cherry, left, and Irma Berrios, right, work with needle and thread to unite representative quilting blocks submitted by school children throughout the nation.

"After a year of preparation and development," said Carolyn Jones, chairman, Martin Luther King, Jr., Family of Schools Network Steering Committee, "students, faculty, and school administrators in communities across the nation are ready to celebrate Dr. King's birthday." Network activities include "Collector of Dreams" essays, a unique patchwork "Weaver of Dreams" quilt, a conflict-resolution project to reduce physical and verbal violence in schools; and a new documentary film outlining Dr. King's philosophy and nonviolent approach to social justice.

"None of this would have been possible without the hands-on involvement and financial support of American Can Company," Jones said. The Network's activities are positive steps toward realizing Coretta Scott King's vision of a

'working holiday' in honor of her late husband," she added.

The "Collector of Dreams" writing project has students describing their "dreams" and those of people they have interviewed. Representative responses will be circulated throughout the Network, via a quarterly publication published by American Can Company and designed to be a forum for exchanging information among the schools nationwide. Author Alex Haley is honorary chairman of "Collector of Dreams" guidelines committee.

The "Weaver of Dreams" presentation quilt involves students designing and sewing individual quilted squares according to size and shape specifications developed by quilting artist Marie Wilson. A volunteer quilting team is joining the squares to complete the oversize hanging quilt, which was dedicated on Jan. 14 at the Martin Luther King, Jr., Center for Nonviolence Social Change in Atlanta, GA. The quilt will then be exhibited at various U.S. sites during the year.

Because of the need in public schools and communities, a pilot conflict-resolution program to reduce physical and verbal violence by applying Dr. King's philosophy of nonviolence, was launched in November at Martin Luther King, Jr., High School in New York City. Student government representatives have taken the lead at the school, and by working with Dr. Claudwell Thomas, chairman, Department of Psychiatry, at the King-Drew Medical Center in Los Angeles, CA, and Parent Association presidents from some Network schools, they are implementing strategies for reducing violence and stress at school, home, and in the workplace.



Coretta Scott King, center, president, Martin Luther King, Jr., Center for Non-violent Social Change, recently discussed her husband's philosophy of non-violence with students from schools in Atlanta, GA. Cameras were rolling, because the dialogue is part of a new documentary film, "Heroes: The Legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr." The 30-minute film, with its Classroom Discussion Guide, will be released to schools throughout the nation during January 1986.

Titled *Heroes: The Legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*, the documentary film records testimony of people involved in Montgomery and Birmingham demonstrations and present day students, to relate Dr. King's philosophy to problems faced by today's youth. The film, underwritten by an American Can Company Foundation grant, will be distributed in videotape format to Network schools in early January. Teachers' guides will accompany the videotapes.

Applauding the Network's efforts to get students and teachers involved in spreading Dr. King's legacy, Coretta Scott King, president of the Martin Luther King Center for Nonviolence Social Change, said, "By involving students and faculty from schools throughout the nation, the Network is helping to make this holiday what it should be—a day of doing, a day of reflection and education, a day of getting involved in nonviolent action for achieving humanitarian goals."



Shown here is the gold coin foil stamp issued in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. It is one of a collection of worldwide stamps paying honor to this great humanitarian and Nobel Peace Prize winner.

## AFT marks King Day with radio campaign

The American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and its affiliates are sponsoring a myriad of activities ranging from a national radio advertising campaign to posters, lesson plans and films focusing on the life and times of the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in honor of the first official holiday observance of the civil rights leader's birthday.

Beginning in mid-January and timed to the federal holiday observance of Jan. 20, the AFT will be airing a 60-second paid and public service radio spot which pays tribute to Dr. King who would have turned 57 on Jan. 15.

The realization that today's elementary and secondary school students were not alive during the civil rights movement of the 1960s and were not actual witnesses to the teaching and work of Dr. King prompted the AFT to design a 60-second radio spot on the lessons society can learn from his enduring struggle.

The spot incorporates the thoughts of a junior high history teacher, an actual clip from a King address to an AFT meeting in New York in 1964 and a closing tag line from a Washington, DC teacher who salutes Dr. King and others working to keep the dream alive.

The District of Columbia teacher, Donal Leace, has been a dedicated follower of Dr. King over the years. A teacher in the DC schools for eight years, Leace participated in the 1963 March on Washington and performed at numerous King rallies held in the nation's capital. Leace teaches television history and acting at the Duke Ellington School for the Performing Arts.

In declaring 1986 the year of "Living the Dream," AFT President Albert Shanker said approximately 500 radio stations around the United States will be airing this spot as a public service announcement during 1986.

"While most adults remember his pioneering work as if it took place only yesterday, young Americans today view the growth of the civil rights movement as a history lesson. Dr. King is viewed almost as a charac-

ter in a book, rather than a charismatic leader whose message is still vital today," said Shanker.

He added, "The AFT, recognizing this problem among our students, hopes this spot can bring Dr. King's message to light in a context students—and in fact, all Americans—can understand."

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