

"Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'"

— Martin Luther King, Jr.



At Home Forward, we are committed to answering Dr. King's urgent question. We support participation of minority-owned, women-owned and emerging small businesses on Home Forward projects. Contact us to learn more about what we are doing for others and how you can get involved.

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Images of bloodied men, women and teenagers in 1965 who were beaten by police in Selma, Ala., for protesting voting restrictions shocked the nation.

'I Marched in Selma'

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

ents took him to a lot of the meetings. He said that out of his entire extended family, his parents were the first to try to register to vote.

Moore himself was arrested as a teenager on Jan. 19, 1965 when he joined his mother for a sit-in at the Selma courthouse to register to vote. Throughout the South, SNCC concentrated much of their efforts on getting young people involved with the Civil Rights Movement. On some days during those years, high school classrooms in Selma would clear out as students went to volunteer their time for Civil Rights work, Moore said. Dallas County Sheriff Jim Clark, a vocal opponent to integration in Selma, often wore military style clothing and worked with the Ku Klux Klan. Clark and his officers arrested the young Moore along with other protesters that day, the first time Moore went to jail fighting for the right to vote.

He recalled how police officers took him and his friend and neighbor Willie Travis Bonner to a cattle yard. There, police ordered the protesters to put their hands up against the barn walls. Officers told everyone to be quiet, and when his friend kept talking, a police officer took a 6 volt cattle prod to Bonner's leg until the skin broke and bled.

All of the arrested protesters were next taken to the Selma jail, Moore remembers.

"Lucky I had money on me; because I think they kept us in jail for three days or so," he said. "I was able to have the guards go to the vending machines and get some stuff out of them so I could eat. I also had a long jacket to sleep under. You have nothing to sleep with, just a bare cell."

On March 7, 1965, activists decided to march from Selma to Alabama's capitol, Montgomery in an event that would become known as "Bloody Sunday." The first leg of that journey meant crossing the

Edmund Pettus Bridge. Moore remembers the reaction by a sheriff's posse to the first attempt to cross the bridge:

"They shot the teargas, set the dogs and horses on us. I'd never smelled teargas before. It was scary. My eyes were watering. We just all took off and ran across the bridge and tried to get to the church. Matter of fact, when I went into the church, there was teargas in the church. I couldn't breathe in the church and I had to get out of the church."

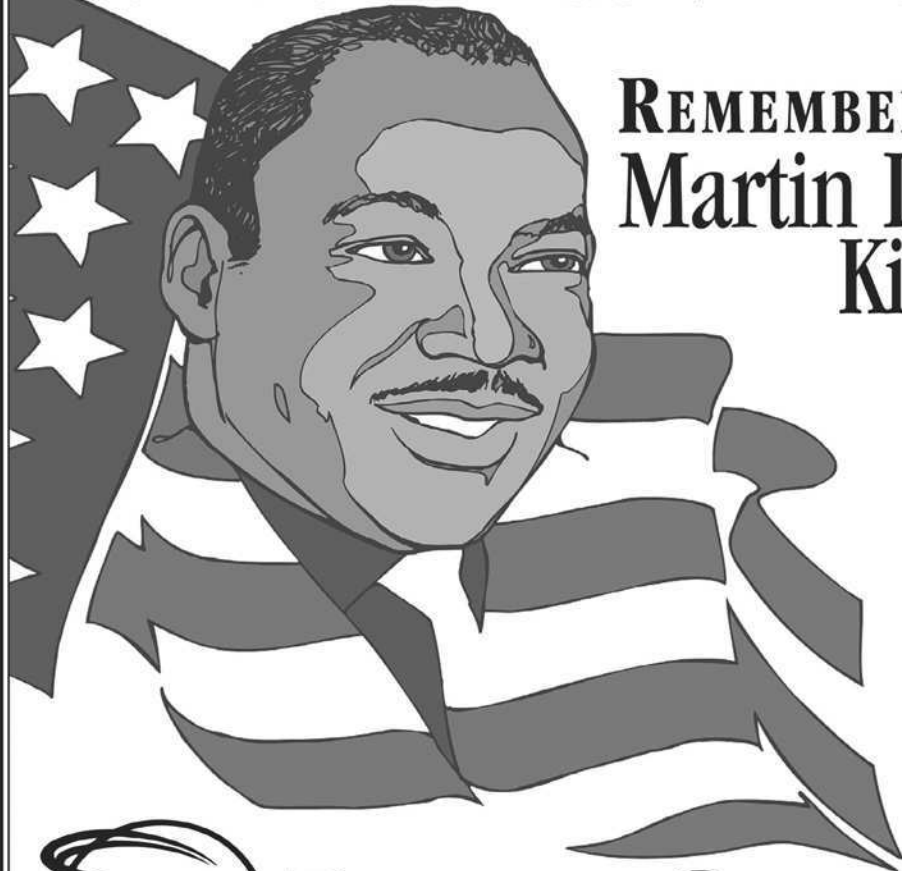
The images of beaten and bloodied men, women and teenagers shocked the nation and Dr. King was able to persuade President Johnson to pass the voting rights act.

Moore went on the final march from Selma to Montgomery, a 54 mile long journey made safe by President Johnson's National Guard troops who were sent to protect the Civil Rights protesters from Sheriff Clark and the Ku Klux Klan. By the end of the five day trek, Moore was exhausted. He snuck into a press tent, where he was offered food and comfortable rest. From inside the tent he heard the sounds and voices of an all-star concert put on by Harry Belafonte, Nina Simone and others.

As a student, Moore picked up a love for history which continues to this day. Swept up into a defining moment of strength and bravery in black history, Moore looks back, proud he was able to participate.

"I was young at the time and it was fun for a while, because they let you out of school. When they turned the dogs and teargas on us, it wasn't fun no more," he said. "The whole thing about it is that things do change. Since that happened, the same building that where my mom and dad tried to register to vote, where they blocked them, since then, there have been three black mayors. There's a black mayor there now."

WE CAN ALL MAKE A COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTION



REMEMBERING Martin Luther King, Jr.



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