

HONORING DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Free

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poverty are statistically less likely to go to college. Adults and students at Roosevelt are not OK with that. They are rallying around the recognition that education is a civil right. And starting in January, they'll show what they mean in words, service and deeds."

The "Freedom Riders, Fighters & Writers Exhibit" was designed to accomplish the following goals: to inform and inspire local citizens about the role the Freedom Rides played in the Civil Rights Movement; to honor Portland's local Freedom Riders and Fighters; to engage local audiences in exploring ways to take a stand for social justice; to support local students' travels to historic black colleges and civil rights sites; and to provide an opportunity for Roosevelt students to advance and highlight their writing and presentation skills.

The students, under the direction of Roosevelt's Writing and Publishing Center facilitator, Kate McPherson, spent the summer and fall of 2011 conducting oral history interviews with two Portland-area Freedom Riders, as well as other local men and women engaged in social justice work. They also interviewed staff in Mayor Sam Adams' office, The Oregonian and Powells Books to learn about public service, journalism and career choices. Material gathered through these interviews provided inspiration for the creation of poems, narratives and artwork for the exhibit as well as to improve their writing and research skills.

First person contacts with individuals involved in social justice work provided powerful experiences for understanding historical events and community problems. Roosevelt student Dorian Erich says, "To be a Freedom Fighter does not mean to be something extremely big or perfect...Becoming a Freedom Fighter will change lives for [a] better future."

Student Hana Kent adds, "You can be a freedom fighter by just speaking up and raising awareness and issues in our community...This class has taught me so much. I not only know how to be a freedom fighter, but it's made me a better writer too."

For the University of Portland students, the project provided a valuable opportunity for practical experience outside the classroom that will help them become better teachers in the future. One UP student remarked that the first person contacts opened her eyes to the reality of some of the students' difficult lives. Seeing the students come to realize how much they are capable of doing also provided many rewards.

In March 2012 Roosevelt students plan to tour historic black colleges and Civil Rights Movement sites throughout the South. The complete schedule of exhibit locations, dates and times plus a downloadable booklet made by the students may be found at www.pps.k12.or.us/schools/roosevelt/401.htm. Donations to help defray expenses for the students' tour can also be gratefully accepted at the website.



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and everyday life like the great Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
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Thank you, Dr. King.*



Safeway salutes all the boys and girls who have found themselves, thanks to Dr. King's belief in equality and brotherhood. We value the importance of his mission, and that is why we embrace equality and diversity throughout our business and support organizations that do the same.

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