Portland-Area MLK Celebrations, Days of Service

United Way Celebrates 10 Years of Volunteer Service on the King Holiday

More than 2,000 volunteers will fan out this long weekend across the greater Portland metro area in service to the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. during the United Way's 10th annual weekend of service. Working with local non-profits and schools, volunteers will help out more than 70 community-based projects, lending nearly 6,000 hours of service and saving area nonprofits over $136,000 in staff time.

The MLK Weekend of Service, held Jan. 13 – 16, is an event of the United Way of the Columbia-Willamette and organized by the nonprofit's volunteer program, Hands On Greater Portland. The weekend is presented by Regence BlueCross BlueShield of Oregon and supported by Bank of America, The Boeing Company, Daimler Trucks North America, The Standard, Umpqua Bank, Portland General Electric and the Portland Trail Blazers.

The majority of these projects support United Way's agenda to invest in our region's kids so they are free from poverty and free to reach their potential. Volunteer projects include restoring and refurbishing classrooms, gardens and play spaces at schools and community centers, sorting food and clothing, and doing home repairs.

For a full list of volunteer activities, visit: www.unitedway-pdx.org/mlk-weekend-service-2017

Vancouver Ave First Baptist Church to Host 10th Annual Drum Major Celebration

On Jan. 14 and 15, Portland's historic Vancouver Avenue First Baptist Church and its community will host the 10th annual Drum Major Celebration.

This two-day commemoration consists of an awards program, the Salute to Greatness scholarship luncheon, held from 12 p.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, and an ecumenical service, titled "Where do We Go From Here: Conversations to Solutions" held from 2 to 4:15 p.m. Sunday.

Both events will be held at the Vancouver Avenue First Baptist Church — one of Portland's historic venues, and the church where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. addressed the community in November of 1961. The church is located at 3138 North Vancouver Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97227. Both Drum Major Celebration events are open to the public, and will take place in the church's Dr. & Mrs. O.B. Williams Fellowship Hall and Sanctuary respectively.

The term "drum major" comes from a sermon Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. gave on February 4th, 1968 at the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, Georgia. In his address, given two months before his assassination, Dr. King prophetically spoke of his own eulogy, asking that he be remembered "as a drum-major for justice, peace, and righteousness."

Honored at the Salute to Greatness luncheon from 12 to 2 p.m. Jan. 14, recipients of this year's Drum Major awards will include Wajdi Said and the Muslim Educational Trust; JoAnn Hardesty and the NAACP Portland Branch 1120; Julianne Johnson-Weiss and Stumptown Stages; Kay D. Toran and Volunteers of America Oregon; Jan Elfers and Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon; as well as Lou Radja and EduCongo. As part of the ceremony, six microscholarships will be awarded to local high-school students who have demonstrated a noteworthy commitment to their academic endeavors.

From 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Jan. 15, the 2017 Drum Major Celebration concludes with Where do We Go From Here: Conversations to Solutions — an ecumenical service dedicated to empowering the community while strengthening multi-cultural ties. The event will showcase a panel moderated by communications leader and broadcast-journalism veteran Bill Deiz. Panelists include Rabbi Michael Cahana, Congregation Beth Israel; Atty. Nkenge Harmon Johnson, Urban League President; Atty. Billy J. Williams, U.S. Attorney District of Oregon; Police Chief Mike Marshman, Portland Police Bureau; Jan Elfers, Executive Director, Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon; Wajdi Said, Director, Muslim Educational Trust; Atty. Rod Underhill, Multnomah County District Attorney; Nathaniel Williams, Unify Portland; Greg McElvey, Portland's Resistance; Kim Dixon, Enough is Enough; Presiding Multnomah County Judge Nan G. Waller; and Judge Adrienne Nelson. The program will feature greetings from Governor Kate Brown and Mayor Ted Wheeler. Entertainment will be provided by the renowned Pacific Youth Choir. The panel's discussion will explore how we can transform ideas into actions that manifest positive change in troubling times.

Both the luncheon and service are free and open to the public. However, a seat-reservation is recommended and can be acquired by calling the church office, at (503) 282-9496. Donations are strongly encouraged, and will be applied to future Drum Major microscholarships. Donations can be made directly to Vancouver Avenue First Baptist Church: Drum Major Scholarship Fund.

To learn more, visit Vancouver Avenue First Baptist Church online at http://vafbcpdx.org/, or the church's Facebook Events Page at http://ow.ly/5dWO307z3rJ.

Mayor Wheeler Will speak at MLK Commemoration Jan. 15

Mayor Ted Wheeler will be the featured speaker at the annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. observance at 4 p.m. Jan. 15 at Maranatha Church, 4222 NE 12th Ave. His theme, "Now More than Ever" addresses the recognition that the "end" of the Civil Rights era did not end the need to speak out and witness for equality for all people. The "Black Lives Matter" movement, and demonstrations of Native American

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