



News Release

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MLK, Jr. Commemoration Society invites students to participate in art, dance, essay and oratorical contests

TULSA, Oct. 4, 2022 – The Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemoration Society is encouraging Tulsa-area students to participate in art, dance, essay and oratorical contests in celebration of Dr. King’s legacy of unity, justice and love. The contests are part of a weeklong celebration that culminates in the Tulsa MLK Parade that will take place on January 16, 2023. This year marks the 44th Anniversary of the parade, with the theme “*We Are Stronger When Working Together.*”

Contest details are as follows:

- **Youth Art Contest**, grades K-6: Students are asked to create an illustration based on one of three themes that characterizes Dr. King’s life and work – Love, Peace or Unity – and what the theme means to them. The illustration must be completed in paint, colored pencil and/or crayon on an 8-1/2” x 11” blank sheet of paper (sorry, no ink or pencil drawings, and must not be folded). Top three entries will be awarded, with 1st Place winning \$175; 2nd Place - \$125; and 3rd Place - \$75. All three winning drawings will be prominently showcased in the MLK Souvenir Book. The deadline for entries is Wednesday, November 30, 2022. For the contest entry form and details, visit www.mlktulsa.com/schoolcontests.
- **Interpretative Dance of Peace Contest**, ages 18 and younger: Individuals and team ensembles are encouraged to create and perform an interpretive dance with the theme of “Peace.” Dancers will be judged based on accuracy, showmanship, choreography and performance. Performances will take place on Saturday, Dec. 3, from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. at Oklahoma State University-Tulsa, 700 N. Greenwood Ave., in the auditorium. Prizes will be awarded as follows: 1st Place - \$500; 2nd Place - \$350; and 3rd Place - \$200. Winners will perform at the MLK Student Awards Celebration on Friday, Jan. 13, 2023, at Boston Avenue United Methodist Church. Please contact Emonica Reagan-Neeley at emonica.reagan@okstate.edu with questions.
- **Essay Contest**, grades 6-8: Middle school students are asked to write a 350-500 word essay on the topic, “I live my life as a reflection of Dr. King’s dream by . . .” Essays are judged based on

originality/creativity, clarity, use of facts or specific examples and other criteria. Prizes will be awarded as follows, with the winners reading their essays at the Student Awards Celebration in January 2023: 1st Place - \$250; 2nd Place - \$225; 3rd Place - \$200; 4th Place - \$175; and 5th Place - \$150. Contest entries should be mailed to: MLK Essay Contest; Attn: Pauline Harris; P.O. Box 14025; Tulsa, OK 74159-1025; or they may be emailed to harripa2@k12.tulsaschools.org. The deadline for essays is Wednesday, November 30. For full contest details, visit www.mlktulsa.com/schoolcontests.

- **Oratorical Contest**, grades 9-12: High school students are asked to memorize Dr. King’s iconic “I Have a Dream” speech for a chance to showcase their oratorical skills. Contestants will perform in person on Friday, December 2, from 9:30 a.m. to Noon at Oklahoma State University-Tulsa, 700 N. Greenwood Ave., in the auditorium. To enter, students should submit their name, phone number and email address to Nekki Reagan-Neeley at emonica.reagan@okstate.edu. Contestants will be judged on clarity, quality, delivery, stage presence and memorization skills. No notes may be used during the performance. Prizes will be awarded as follows, with the 1st Place winner performing at the Sunday Commemorative Service on Jan. 16, 2022: 1st Place - \$1,000; 2nd Place - \$500; and 3rd Place - \$350. The 2nd Place winner will be featured at the Student Award Celebration on Jan. 13. Previous 1st place winners are ineligible. ONE Gas is the official sponsor of the Oratorical Contest.

The Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Commemoration Society, Inc. is a Tulsa, Oklahoma-based 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization focused on honoring and preserving the works and ideals that Dr. King practiced. The society has provided programming, leadership development, civic engagement and opportunities for artistic expression involving more than 20,000 boys and girls in Tulsa County and the surrounding area since it was founded in 1978. The Society has awarded \$120,000 in scholarships over the past three decades to local high school graduates aspiring to achieve Dr. King’s dream.

Each year, over 100 entries participate in the Tulsa MLK Parade with themed floats, music and marchers. Historically, thousands of people attend the parade that begins at the corner of N. Detroit Ave. and John Hope Franklin Blvd. and meanders through historic Greenwood Avenue to Archer, ending near ONEOK Field. The parade will be televised live on KTUL/Channel 8 at 11 a.m. CT.

For parade information or sponsorship inquiries, visit www.mlktulsa.com, call 918-492-9495 or email at mlktulsa@gmail.com.

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