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Editors and News Directors: If you are interested in a telephone interview with Michael Eric Dyson, the keynote speaker, before he arrives in New Hampshire, contact JerriAnne Boggis at (603) 862-0693. A downloadable photo is available at http://unh.edu/news/img/dyson_michael_300.jpg.

DURHAM, N.H. — The University of New Hampshire presents its 18th annual Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration from January 24–30, 2008. This week-long celebration based on the theme "Holler if you hear me: Race, Culture and, Democracy" will focus on King's work for a free and just democracy. Michael Eric Dyson, social analyst, hip-hop intellectual, ordained minister, radio commentator, bestselling author and Georgetown University professor, is the keynote speaker for commemorative address and featured panelist for the educational panel.

Dyson, a prominent African American scholar, has been named by *Essence* magazine as one of the 40 most inspiring African-Americans and by *Ebony* magazine as one of the 100 most influential black Americans. He has been nominated for the prestigious NAACP Image Award three times – and has won it twice.

While Dyson has taught at some of the nation's most prestigious universities, including Brown, UNC at Chapel Hill, University of Pennsylvania and Columbia, his influence has carried far beyond the academy - into political conventions and union halls, prisons and bookstores, church sanctuaries and lecture stages across the world. Dyson has also taken the media by storm through appearances on *The Today Show*, *ABC News Nightline*, *The O'Reilly Factor*, *The Tavis Smiley Show* and *Real Time with Bill Maher* – and he has galvanized star appeal on such shows as *Rap City*, *Def Poetry Jam* and *The Colbert Report*. Dyson is also the host of the syndicated radio show, *The Michael Eric Dyson Show*, which addresses social, cultural and political issues in a contemporary vein.

Dyson's scholarship has won him legions of admirers and has made him what *The Washington Post* terms a "superstar professor." His fearless and fiery oratory led the *Chronicle of Higher Education* to declare, that with his rhetorical gifts, he "can rock classroom and chapel alike." *Vanity Fair* magazine has described him as "one of the most graceful and lucid intellectuals writing on race and politics today."

Dyson will deliver his keynote address, "Dr. King for the 21st Century", on Tuesday, Jan. 29, at 7 p.m. in Johnson Theatre at UNH's Paul Creative Arts Center. Dyson's talk will present a King far more radical than the one trotted out for mainstream consumption on the third Monday of every January. "We must rebel," he says, "against the varieties of amnesia that compete to reduce King to an icon for the status quo or a puppet of civil and social order."

In addition to Dyson's address, the event will feature African drumming and dance, spoken word presentation, and a step performance by Dartmouth College Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. A reception and book signing with Dyson will follow the presentation.

Other events honoring Martin Luther King, Jr. at UNH include:

January 24, 6 p.m., UNH Memorial Union Building-Photo Art Exhibit

In Search of Democracy: A Refugee Story. Exhibit introduces seven refugee families who came to New Hampshire in search of a more secure union and the ideals put forth by democracy: All people are created equal and have the right to security, liberty, prosperity, and the pursuit of happiness. Photos were done by students from the University of New Hampshire, McIntosh College, and the New Hampshire Institute of Art.

January 27, 4 p.m., St. Georges Episcopal Church, Downtown Durham-Spiritual Celebration

Soul and Spirit of Democracy. An inter-faith celebration that affirms, supports, and highlights the spiritual foundation that Martin Luther King, Jr. brought to his work and life. This is a spirited gathering with a message through song, drumming, Chautauqua presentations, music, poetry, dance, words and candle lighting.

January 29, 12:30 p.m., Strafford Room, Memorial Union Building-Education Panel

The Rap on Democracy: Culture, Power, and Social Change. The education panel will examine King's radical legacy through the politics of rap, woman-centered politics at UNH, and political work in the New Hampshire legislature and Nigerian elections. Panelists include Michael Eric Dyson, UNH History Professor Harvard Sitkoff, The Honorable Jackie Weatherspoon and UNH student Cait Vaughan.

January 31, noon, Granite State Room, Memorial Union Building

Student Activism Fair The Act Now Campus Activism Fair seeks to not only raise awareness around the global plight of refugee and immigrant populations--particularly those resettling in the local area-- but also to provide student and community activists the chance to explore a range of service opportunities that are in direct support of the refugee and immigrant populations of New Hampshire.

All events are free and open to the public. Parking is free after 6 p.m. and on weekends. For updated information about the events visit:

http://www.unh.edu/diversity/mlk_celebration.html or call JerriAnne Boggis at (603) 862-0693. Call (603) 862-0693 for information about accessibility.

- 30 -

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