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UNH Celebrates Martin Luther King Jr. Day Jan. 28-29

Elaine Jones, president of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, is keynote speaker

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DURHAM, N.H. -- The University of New Hampshire will celebrate the birthday of Martin Luther King Jr. with a two-day celebration, "Sharing the Dream: Peace, Equity and Change," Wednesday, Jan. 28, and Thursday, Jan. 29, 2004.



*Elaine Jones,
keynote speaker
([click here for bio.](#))*

Elaine Jones, president and defense counsel for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) Legal Defense and Education Fund, will give the keynote address Thursday evening.

Festivities begin Wednesday, Jan. 28, with "Community Services for Change" in the Granite State Room of the Memorial Union Building. From 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., faculty, staff and students can write letters, sign petitions, send Valentines and create posters while learning about dozens of community nonprofits and campus service organizations.

That evening at 4:30 p.m., the campus is invited to celebrate MLK Jr.'s dream at the "Sharing the Dream" dinner at Holloway Commons. Participants will dine on food from around the world, enjoying a selection of international cuisine that will highlight countries striving for peace, equity and change.

At 7 p.m., UNH will host a spiritual celebration at the Community Church of Durham on Main Street. The event will be an interfaith and spirited celebration of the life and legacy of MLK Jr. in song, readings, prayer, reflection and community. All are welcome at this event. For more information, call 862-1165 or e-mail waysmeet@msn.com.

Thursday's events include an interactive program, "Affirmative Action in Education: Brown to Michigan to UNH," from 2:30-4:30 p.m. in the Granite State Room of the MUB. Facilitated by Wanda Mitchell, visiting professor of education, the program will provide an outlet for the UNH community to explore the social and political contexts of affirmative action. Elaine Jones will join UNH representatives on the panel.

The culmination of the celebration will be the keynote address by Jones at 7 p.m. in the Johnson Theatre of the Paul Creative Arts Center, followed by a reception in The Art Gallery. In 1993, Jones became the first woman to head the Legal Defense Fund. She brought with her two decades of experience as a litigator and civil rights activist, as well as a passion for fairness and equality. Jones graduated from Howard University with honors in political science and she

served for two years with the Peace Corps in Turkey before being admitted to law school.

After joining the Legal Defense Fund, Jones became one of the first African American women to defend death row inmates. She was counsel of record in *Furman vs. Georgia*, a landmark U.S. Supreme Court case that abolished the death penalty in 37 states. She played a key role in securing passage of the legislative milestones of the Voting Rights Act Amendments of 1982, the Fair Housing Act of 1988, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1988, and the Civil Rights Act of 1991.

The keynote event will include performances by UNH students. Also, the three recipients of the first annual Social Justice Awards will be announced. A new award created by the UNH Diversity Team and the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration planning team, it honors the work of a student, a staff member and a faculty member who has demonstrated outstanding leadership, courage and role modeling in promoting social justice issues, such as diversity, equity and human rights, at the university.

UNH's 2004 MLK Jr. Day events are sponsored by: Office of Multicultural Student Affairs, President's Commissions, Office of Residential Life, Office of Student Life, UNH Campus Ministry, Counseling Center, Office of Affirmative Action Office, Partnership for Social Action, Health Services, Holloway Commons, English Department, Diversity Support Coalition and Admissions. For more information, please visit <http://www.unh.edu/insidescoop/mlk/index.html>.