



Commonwealth of Kentucky
Office of the Governor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Gov. Beshear, Lt. Gov. Luallen Participate in Celebration, Awards Ceremony to Honor Martin Luther King Jr.

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Jan. 15, 2015) – Governor Steve Beshear and Lieutenant Governor Crit Luallen today honored a Madisonville resident and several student writers, poets and artists during the state’s annual Martin Luther King Jr. celebration.

The Martin Luther King Jr. State Commission holds the event annually to highlight the life of King as a civil rights champion and to honor individuals who embody his spirit and energy.

“This celebration is a reminder each year that the work of Martin Luther King, which we honor with this remembrance, must live on through all of us,” Gov. Beshear said. “Whether it is in the essays, poetry or art from our young people, or in the ongoing work by citizen leaders who uphold King’s legacy in communities across the Commonwealth, we applaud those who keep his message alive.”

Lt. Gov. Luallen presented the annual Martin Luther King Jr. Citizenship Award to Timothy W. Thomas, of Madisonville, who represents the 1st Supreme Court District as a commissioner on the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights.

The award is given to an individual who demonstrates leadership and achievement in the principles of racial equality, interracial harmony and economic justice.

“Commissioner Thomas’ leadership and civic roles reflect characteristics of Dr. King and embody the spirit of this award,” said Lt. Gov. Luallen. “We present Commissioner Thomas with this award as a lifelong Kentuckian and leader in the African-American community who has proudly served in many different capacities over the years.”

Commissioner Thomas is involved with many different organizations and community services. He is in his second term on the African American Heritage Commission and is the president of the Hopkins County Joint Planning Commission. He is a member of the Madisonville Police Department Advisory Committee and president of the Kentucky State Crime Stoppers Association.

He a member of the Hopkins County/Madisonville NAACP, and the founder and host of the public service television program “Focus on Hopkins County.” He has been the recipient of numerous awards including the Governor’s Volunteer Impact Award in 1998.

At today’s event, Kentucky State University President Raymond M. Burse gave the keynote address.

Additionally, 27 elementary, middle and high school students from across the Commonwealth were honored with awards as winners of the Martin Luther King Jr. essay, poetry and visual art contest on the theme “In His Footsteps...The Dream Today.” Click www.ome.ky.gov for a complete list of the winners.

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