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## **City to celebrate Martin Luther King, Jr. with multiple events**

**Rocky Mount, N.C.-** The Martin Luther King, Jr. Commission, in conjunction with the city of Rocky Mount, will host events during the month of January honoring the legacy of one of the most prolific civil rights figures in history, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The overall theme for this year's events is "Wait No More."

The theater at the Imperial Centre for the Arts and Sciences will be the location for the annual MLK Oratorical Competition on Saturday, Jan. 9, 2016 beginning at 9 a.m. Students in grades sixth through eighth will speak on the theme, "Rough Places Made Plain," while speeches for contestants in grades ninth through 12<sup>th</sup> will focus on the "Wait No More" theme.

The pinnacle event of the month will be the 28<sup>th</sup> annual Unity Breakfast on Monday, Jan. 18, 2016 starting at 7 a.m. with breakfast at the Dunn Center for the Performing Arts on the campus of North Carolina Wesleyan College. The program at 8 a.m. will feature Douglas Tappin as the keynote speaker. Tappin is writer and composer of the musical, "I Dream."

Born in London to Jamaican parents, Tappin moved to Atlanta, Ga. in 2004 where, while working on a musical based on the life of the biblical King David, Tappin became aware of Martin Luther King, Jr. and King's significance to the Atlanta community during the Civil Rights Movement.

Inspired by what he learned, Tappin used his incredible talents to write, compose and co-produce "I Dream," a musical based on the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Directed by Jasmine Guy of "A Different World" and "The Vampire Diaries," the world premiere of "I Dream" on Atlanta's Alliance Stage was attended by Reverend Bernice King, Dr. King's daughter; Christine King Farris, Dr. King's sister and close colleagues of Dr. King, including Andrew Young, former U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. and mayor of Atlanta.

The musical debuted to critical acclaim and earned an award for *Outstanding World Premiere of a Play or Musical*.

Tappin is also a former commercial attorney who practiced in England for 11 years, and he is a Christian theologian with a master's degree from Atlanta's McAfee School of Theology.

Following the Unity Breakfast, volunteers will team together for the annual Day of Service projects. To participate in the Day of Service projects, call 252-454-1682, 252-972-1181, or send an e-mail to [kparkers@ncwc.edu](mailto:kparkers@ncwc.edu). All events are free and open to the public.

For more information on all events, please contact the Human Relations department for the city of Rocky Mount at 252.972.1181.

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