

## **PRESS RELEASE**

February 20, 2014

### **FREEHOLDER BRENDAN GILL HONORS THE DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., SCHOLARSHIP FUND, INC., OF MONTCLAIR ON ITS 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY**

(Newark, NJ) – The Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Scholarship Fund, Inc., of Montclair, which this year celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, was honored by the Essex County Board of Chosen Freeholders during its February 19, 2014, meeting at the Hall of Records. The Board’s commendation was sponsored and presented by District 5 Freeholder Brendan W. Gill of Montclair.



District 5 Freeholder Brendan Gill (2<sup>nd</sup> from left) of Montclair presents the Board’s Commendation to Stanley E. White (center), President of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Scholarship Fund, Inc., of Montclair’s Board of Trustees, in recognition of the Fund’s 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary during the Board’s February 19<sup>th</sup> meeting at the Hall of Records in Newark. Also pictured above are other members of the Fund’s Board of Trustees: (from l. to r.) Kathryn Allen-Curry, 4<sup>th</sup> Ward Councilor Dr. Renee E. Baskerville and Dr. Alfred Davis, Jr. PHOTO BY GLEN FRIESON GLEN FRIESON

“I have been familiar with the Fund for many years, have attended your annual breakfast event for probably the last 10 to 15 years, and know how respected this institution is within the Township of Montclair”, said Freeholder Gill. “It was established a quarter-century ago by the Montclair Council as a memorial to the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and to his message of peace, education and non-violence, and I can’t think of worthier purposes than those.” He went on to add, “As an MHS graduate and son of a long-time educator in the Montclair Public Schools, I am extremely proud of what you have done over the last 25 years, and of what you will continue to do, hopefully, for another 25 years!”

“It is nice to be recognized for what we are doing, and to know that people in the community are behind us”, said Stanley White, President of the Fund’s Board of Trustees. Fund Board Member Dr. Alfred Davis, Jr., added, “It’s just wonderful to see the support that the organization gets, especially from the Board of Education,

administrators and teachers who attend our event every year, and now from Freeholder Gill and the Board of Freeholders as well.”

The Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Scholarship Fund, Inc., of Montclair celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Breakfast held on Monday, January 20, 2014, at the George Inness Annex at Montclair High School.

In 1987, the Montclair Municipal Council appointed a commission to explore an appropriate memorial to the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and his message of peace and non-violence, that would serve as a living memorial of the esteem and respect the people of Montclair held for his dream. The following year, 1988, the Council approved a Resolution to establish the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Scholarship Fund, Inc., of Montclair to benefit African-American students graduating from Montclair High School.

The MLK Scholarship Fund is a non-profit, tax-exempt corporation with the sole purpose of receiving gifts and distributing same for scholarships to Montclair youth, and to establish an endowment that will also generate funds to be used for scholarships for future generations. To ensure community-wide participation, the Fund’s Board of Trustees is made up of representatives from the Township Council, the Board of Education, the Library Board, the N.A.A.C.P., the Clergy Association and the Chamber of Commerce, as well as three At-Large members elected by the appointed members.

The Fund is endorsed by the King Foundation in Atlanta, Georgia, and is supported by donations from individuals and organizations in Montclair and vicinity. Most recently, a generous donation of \$25,000 was received from the estate of Dr. Barbara T. Mason, who was a supporter of the Fund since its inception and was the first African-American school principal in the State of New York outside of New York City. Initially, the Fund offered students \$1,000 scholarships each, spread-out in smaller payments over four years, but today scholarship recipients each receive awards of \$1,000 per year, and the students remain connected to the Fund throughout their academic career as the Fund checks-in every semester to track their grades and offer its support.

The Fund’s current Board of Trustees is comprised of the following members: Helen C. Allen (At-Large); Kathryn Allen-Curry (NAACP); Carol Brown, Treasurer (At-Large); Ronald W. Brown (Board of Education); Reverend Andrew Butler, III (Montclair Clergy Association); Dr. Alfred Davis, Jr. (Chamber of Commerce); Florence Demming (At-Large); Katherine Nicholas (Library Board); and Stanley E. White, President (Township Council).

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