

Philadelphia Martin Luther King, Jr.  
Association For Nonviolence, Inc.

# *40<sup>th</sup> Annual Awards & Benefit Luncheon*



Monday, January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023

12:00 Noon

Sheraton Downtown Philadelphia Hotel

Horizon Ballroom

17<sup>th</sup> and Race Streets, Philadelphia, PA

## SOUVENIR JOURNAL

*For Universal Peace with Justice, Human Rights, Social and Economic Progress for ALL People*

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

1929-1968

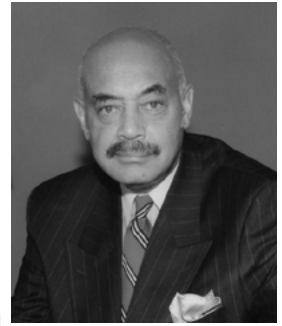
*Martin Luther King Jr.*



# *Dr. William Tucker*

## **President and CEO**

*Philadelphia Martin Luther King, Jr.  
Association for Nonviolence, Inc*



To our distinguished guests, friends and supporters, greetings and welcome to our 40<sup>th</sup> Annual Awards and Benefit Luncheon to celebrate the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

During the past three years, America and the world have experienced a tumultuous shock and challenge to our customary everyday mode and style of living, which has caused many unforeseen cultural and political upheavals in our society. Since our 2020 presidential election, mass shootings, QNON theories and elections deniers have dominated every news cycle of our daily life, which confused and baffled the American Psychic. The seditious attack on our Nation's Capital January 6, 2021, further added to the uncertainty and insecurity about the "state" of our democracy.

Since the unbridled attack on the Nation's Capital, the question I am sure has risen in all of our minds at some point, "Will our democracy survive?" The Capital attack clearly revealed that there are organized forces in certain areas of the Nation that believe that the concept of democracy that they have always subscribed to is no longer the highway to the American dream. Thirty-six states have passed or are in the processing of passing voter suppression laws that will restrict the rights of millions of voters. Present events have clearly demonstrated to the nation that voting rights is the underlying issue that has emboldened certain societal forces to try to dismantle and or destroy our democratic institutions. By now, I am sure it must be clear to all that democracy as we have conceived it, cannot be taken for granted.

The smugness and long held belief that our democratic institutions were unassailable were suddenly shattered before our very own eyes. Suddenly we are confronted with a very disturbing and unthinkable question – which has eluded our mentality since the Civil War – "Is our democracy strong enough to resist and subdue the forces of authoritarianism?" How America ultimately responds to this question, will determine what kind of America will exist when we celebrate our Tricentennial in 2076.

If democracy is to survive as a governing concept, the Nation must garner the resolve to act swiftly and decisively in prosecuting and convicting the actors involved. Many have proclaimed that the seditious mob that attacked the Capital January 6<sup>th</sup>, were merely expressing their rights to protest. Freedom to protest is a bedrock principle of our Democracy which I and most Americans fully subscribe to as long as it is lawful and peaceful. I am certain that we all accept the fact that freedom without limits and constraints gives rise to confusion and chaos. Any free civilized society must have laws, regulations and rules that protect and respect everyone.

The recent mid-term election has beamed a strong glimmer of hope for our democratic institutions. The strongest and most enduring guard rail of our democracy "the Right to Vote " prevailed despite efforts to suppress and stifle voter's participation. We must begin now to ensure that we never again enter an election cycle with so many threats and uncertainty looming over our voting process. The solution to this problem requires that we all get involved in demanding that "The John Lewis Voting Rights Act" be passed. This will automatically subvert the suppressive and subversive actions of state legislators around the country.

There is one cardinal thought I wish to leave with you, a quote by Edmond Burke, a Seventeenth Century English writer who stated: "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing." I would add to that "good women." I am aware that the above quote has a long repetitive history but given the present political climate we find ourselves immersed in, the quote has seldom been more appropriate than now.

Again, we wish to thank all who have joined us to commemorate the Holiday and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Further, we are most grateful for the support from community organizations, professional groups, labor, business and the corporate sector. Words are not adequate to express our profound appreciation and thanks to the dedicated souls who volunteered monthly for our distribution and outreach making it a great success in 2021 and 2022.

Last Christmas our incredible volunteers distributed food items, toys, clothing and other items to more than one thousand families. Again, this was made possible by the support and assistance of District Council 33. They have been diligent partners in keeping the legacy of our slain leader alive.

May blessings, peace, love and commitment to the Dream be a sustaining force in our lives this New Year.





# Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

January 15, 1929 - April 4, 1968

*"When we let freedom ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, "Free at last! free at last! thank God Almighty, we are free at last!"*

**Martin Luther King, Jr.**, was born Michael Luther King, Jr., but later changed his name to Martin. He came from a family history of pastors. Martin Luther attended segregated public schools in Georgia, graduating from high school at the age of fifteen; he received the B. A. degree in 1948 from Morehouse College, a distinguished Negro institution of Atlanta from which both his father and grandfather had graduated. After three years of theological study at Crozer Theological Seminary in Pennsylvania where he was elected president of a predominantly white senior class, he was awarded the B.D. in 1951. With a fellowship won at Crozer, he enrolled in graduate studies at Boston University, completing his residence for the doctorate in 1953 and receiving the degree in 1955. In Boston he met and married Coretta Scott, a young woman of uncommon intellectual and artistic attainments. Two sons and two daughters were born into the family.

In 1954, Martin Luther King accepted the pastorate of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama. Always a strong worker for civil rights for members of his race, King was, by this time, a member of the executive committee of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the leading organization of its kind in the nation. He was ready, then, early in December, 1955, to accept the leadership of the first great Negro nonviolent demonstration of contemporary times in the United States, the bus boycott described by Gunnar Jahn in his presentation speech in honor of the laureate. The boycott lasted 382 days. On December 21, 1956, after the Supreme Court of the United States had declared unconstitutional the laws requiring segregation on buses, Negroes and whites rode the buses as equals. During these days of boycott, King was arrested, his home was bombed, he was subjected to personal abuse, but at the same time he emerged as a Negro leader of the first rank.

In 1957 he was elected president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, an organization formed to provide new leadership for the now burgeoning civil rights movement. The ideals for this organization he took from Christianity; its operational techniques from Gandhi. In the eleven-year period between 1957 and 1968, King traveled over six million miles and spoke over twenty-five hundred times, appearing wherever there was injustice, protest, and action; and meanwhile he wrote five books as well as numerous articles. In these years, he led a massive protest in Birmingham, Alabama, that caught the attention of the entire world, providing what he called a coalition of conscience. and inspiring his "Letter from a Birmingham Jail", a manifesto of the Negro revolution; he planned the drives in Alabama for the registration of Negroes as voters; he directed the peaceful march on Washington, D.C., of 250,000 people to whom he delivered his address, "I Have a Dream", he conferred with President John F. Kennedy and campaigned for President Lyndon B. Johnson; he was arrested upwards of twenty times and assaulted at least four times; he was awarded five honorary degrees; was named Man of the Year by *Time* magazine in 1963; and became not only the symbolic leader of American blacks but also a world figure.

At the age of thirty-five, Martin Luther King, Jr., was the youngest man to have received the Nobel Peace Prize. When notified of his selection, he announced that he would turn over the prize money of \$54,123 to the furtherance of the civil rights movement.

On the evening of April 4, 1968, while standing on the balcony of his motel room in Memphis, Tennessee, where he was to lead a protest march in sympathy with striking garbage workers of that city, he was assassinated.



## **Philadelphia Martin Luther King, Jr. Association for Nonviolence, Inc.**

# **HISTORY OF THE NATIONAL BELL RINGING CEREMONY**

President Reagan signs on August 27, 1984 legislation providing for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Federal Holiday Commission, to last for five years, with an option to renew for another five years.

First meeting of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Federal Holiday Commission, November 1984. Mrs. King was unanimously elected chairperson and Former governor of New Jersey, Thomas Kean was named vice-chair.

January 20, 1986, the first national King Holiday was observed. The King Holiday Commissioners were sworn in by federal district Judge Horace Ward.

The Commission was given two specific congressional mandates: first, to encourage appropriate ceremonies and activities throughout the U.S. relating to the observation of the federal holiday honoring Martin Luther King, Jr.; and second to provide advice and assistance to federal, state and local governments and to private organizations with respect to the observance of such a holiday. One such activity was a bell ringing ceremony requested by Mrs. King.

Mrs. King requested that a bell ringing ceremony be held in Philadelphia at Independence Hall to launch the celebration of the holiday. Ronald Reagan's HUD Secretary, Samuel Pierce was the first bell ringer. For the first three years of celebrating the holiday the Commission served as sponsors of the bell ringing ceremony. Thereafter, the Philadelphia Martin Luther King, Jr. Association for Nonviolence became the sponsor of the ceremony, and has carried on the tradition ever since. The holiday is now observed by the ringing of the Liberty Bell as a Symbol of freedom and justice. The Association currently assumes all organizing and financial responsibility for the bell ringing ceremony, but will seek and support legislative initiatives for federal funding of this national observance.



## FORMER NATIONAL HONORARY BELL RINGERS

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### **Gregory E. Deavens**

President of Independence  
(parent company of Independence Blue Cross)

### **Dr. Ala Stanford**

The Black Doctors Covid-19 Consortium

### **Hon. Robert Casey/Hon. Pat Toomey**

U.S. Senators, PA

### **Laura Wooten**

Election Activist

### **Lee Saunders**

National President, AFSCME

### **April Ryan**

White House Correspondent for Urban Radio Networks

### **Crystal Grice**

Eldest Niece of C. DeLores Tucker

### **Ernest Evans “Chubby Checker”**

1960’s Music Legend

### **George Monyemangene**

Consul General, Embassy of South Africa, U.S.

### **Most Reverend Charles J. Chaput**

Archbishop of Philadelphia

### **Ilyasah Shabazz/Malaak Shabazz**

Daughters of Malcolm X and Betty Shabazz

### **Michael Rashid**

President & CEO  
AmeriHealth Mercy Family of Companies

### **Hon. Russyl Ali**

Asst. Secretary for Civil Rights  
U.S. Department of Education

### **James Bain**

Exonerated after 35 years of Wrongful Incarceration

### **Hon. Lynn Toler**

Judge, Syndicated Fox Television Show “Divorce Court”

### **Xernona Clayton**

President & Founder, Trumpet Awards Foundation

### **Hon. Edward G Rendell**

Governor, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

### **Cicely Tyson**

Renowned Actress

### **Ossie Davis**

Former Renowned Actor

### **Hon. Carol Moseley Braun**

Former U.S. Ambassador  
Former U.S. Senator, Illinois

### **Hon. Martin Luther King, III**

President, Southern Christian Leadership

### **Hon. Walter Fauntroy**

Former U.S. Congressman  
Pres. Nat’l Black Leadership Roundtable

### **Tipper Gore**

Advocate for Families, Women and Children  
Wife of Former Vice President Al Gore

### **Hon. Bruce Babbitt**

Former U.S. Secretary of Interior

### **Chief Justice Robert N.C. Nix, Jr.**

Former Supreme Court Judge Pennsylvania

### **Hon. Colin L. Powell**

Former Secretary of State

### **Hon. Al Gore**

Former Vice President, U.S.A.

### **Dr. Joycelyn Elders**

Former U.S. Surgeon General

### **Myrlie Evers-Williams**

Civil Rights Activist and Widow of slain Civil Rights  
Leader, Medgar Evers

### **Dr. Dorothy I. Height**

President, National Council of Negro Women, Inc.

### **Judge A. Leon Higginbotham, Jr.**

Former U.S. Third Circuit Court of Appeals

### **Rev. Joseph Lowery**

Former President, Southern Christian  
Leadership Conference

### **Hon. James Farmer**

Former President, Congress of Racial Equality

### **Rev. Benjamin A. Hooks**

Former Executive Director of the NAACP

### **Rosa Parks**

Mother of the Civil Rights Movement

### **Hon. Samuel Pierce**

Former U.S. Secretary of Housing & Urban Development

## FORMER CORPORATE CHAIRS *(partial listing)*

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### **Jeff Brown**

Brown’s Family Shoprite

### **Dave Fitts**

Pepsi Bottling Company

### **Daniel J. Hilferty**

Keystone Mercy Health Plan

### **Stephen Steinour**

Citizen’s Bank  
*(three consecutive years)*

### **R. Michael O’Brien**

GMAC Mortgage Corporation

### **Patrick Wallace**

NBC-10

### **Fred G. DiBona**

Independence Blue Cross

### **Joseph F. Paquette, Jr.**

PECO Energy

### **Nelson Harris**

Tasty Baking Company

### **John A. Miller**

Provident Life Insurance

### **J. Lawrence Wilson**

Rohm & Haas Corporation

### **Waverly Easley**

Philadelphia Tribune Newspaper



# 36<sup>th</sup> Annual National Bell Ringing Ceremony HIGHLIGHTS



## 2023 Liberty Bell MISTRESS OF CEREMONY

*Janelle Burrell*

**News Anchor**

*CBS3 Eyewitness News This Morning and at Noon*



Janelle  
BURRELL



Janelle Burrell anchors Eyewitness News This Morning and Eyewitness News at Noon along with Jim Donovan on Philadelphia's KYW-TV (CBS 3). Prior to CBS 3, Janelle worked as general assignment reporter and anchor for WCBS in New York City, joining the station in 2013.

She was also a part of the anchor team that helped launch the station's digital channel, CBSN New York. At WCBS, Janelle contributed to the news team's coverage of major events including the Pope's visit to New York, the 2014 Super Bowl, and the terrorist truck attack on Manhattan's West Side. She also broke an exclusive investigation into an alleged cover up within New York City's public housing system.

Janelle also has worked as a reporter at News 12 Westchester and Time Warner Cable News – Binghamton. Additionally, she worked behind the scenes at WNYW Fox 5 in New York, and MSNBC. Janelle, a New York native, is an alumna of Penn State University, where she majored in English and minored in Biology.

It's actually where she got her first taste of broadcasting, as an intern at WPSU-TV, the PBS station serving Central Pennsylvania. In her free time, Janelle loves working with the next generation of journalists, spending time as an adjunct assistant professor at her alma mater, Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism.

Janelle is very excited to call Philly home and loves exploring its great food scene!

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## 2023 NATIONAL BELL RINGERS

*Harold, Esq. and Susan Rosenthal*

**Civil Rights Activists**

Board Members, Philadelphia Martin Luther King, Jr. Association for Nonviolence, Inc.



## Philadelphia Martin Luther King, Jr. Association for Nonviolence, Inc.

# OVERVIEW OF THE ANNUAL AWARDS AND BENEFIT LUNCHEON

In 1984, the year after the Martin Luther King, Jr., Holiday was officially enacted, **President Ronald Reagan** appointed the late **Mrs. Coretta Scott King** and then-Governor of New Jersey **Thomas Kean**, to chair the King Federal Holiday Commission, which was charged with determining how the holiday was to be observed. Mrs. King's vision was to have the holiday commence each year at noon with the ringing of the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia--a worldwide symbol of freedom, justice, and equality--echoed by bells throughout the world, including those in Big Ben in London and in the Vatican. At the request of Mrs. Coretta Scott King, the Philadelphia Martin Luther King, Jr. Association for Nonviolence, Inc. lead by the **Honorable Dr. C. DeLores Tucker**, was given the responsibility for this observance since the national holiday honoring Dr. King began.

Previous National Bell Ringers and Drum Major honorees have included, Coretta Scott King, Rosa Parks, Hon. Judge Lynn Toler, Boyz II Men, Hon. Colin Powell, Hon. Edward G. Rendell, Ossie Davis, Cicely Tyson, Melba Moore, Sisters Sledge, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Reverend Leon H. Sullivan and Judge A. Leon Higginbotham, Jr. to name a few.

It honors individuals and organizations whose deeds are exemplary of the ideals fostered by Dr. King. The luncheon is a highly visible affair, which has been attended by over 2,000 people, and has been the largest luncheon in honor of Dr. King in the country. It receives national press coverage because of the ringing of the Liberty Bell at 12:00 noon which officially inaugurates the King Holiday.

Our luncheon has also showcased a who's who of sponsors, who support the Dream of Dr. King's Beloved Community. Previous Corporate Host Sponsors have included, **Brown's Family Shoprite** and **Pepsi Bottling Company**, **GMAC Mortgage Corporation**, a host sponsor for three consecutive years, **Citizens Bank**, a host and a co-host sponsor for five year and **Verizon**. Other major sponsors have included **Amerihealth Mercy**, **Independence Blue Cross**, **Lockheed Martin**, **Comcast**, **Fedex**, **UPS**, **State Farm**, **Wakefern** and the **William Penn Foundation**, just to name a few.

The **Annual Awards and Benefit Luncheon and National Bell Ringing Ceremony** are held each year on **the King Holiday** and always promises to be one filled with excitement, camaraderie and hope for the creation of a truly beloved community. It is a major source of funding for the King Association and its youth development programs.



# 2021 Virtual Annual Awards and Benefit Luncheon

## HONOREES AND HIGHLIGHTS



## FORMER HONOREES AND HIGHLIGHTS *(partial)*



## REMEMBERING: "The Beginning"



## Former Drum Major Honorees

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### 2021 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES

Cedar Grove Christian Academy  
Share Food Program  
Koren L. Parker  
Captain Lisa Forrest  
Dr. Ala Stanford

### 2020 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES

MCC of Philadelphia  
Michael Churchill, Esq.  
Chris Woods

### 2019 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES

Laura Wooten  
Samuel Staten, Jr.  
Hon. Jewell Williams

### 2018 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES

Louise Moss  
Lee Sanders

### 2017 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES

Dr. Arthur C. Evans  
The Philadelphia Foundation

### 2016 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES

Herman "Pete" Matthews  
Hon. Marian Tasco

### 2015 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES

Ernest Evans "Chubby Checker"  
Hon. Edward G. Rendell

### 2014 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES

Dr. Joshua Feldstein  
Charisse Lillie  
Jill Michal  
Hon. Nelson Mandela (posthumously)  
Dean Weitzman, Esq.

### 2013 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES

Queen Mother Fattah  
Kathleen Walsh  
Lezlie Hiner/Work to Ride Program

### 2012 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES

Sheryl Lee Ralph  
Daniel J. Hilferty  
Hon. Renee Cardwell-Hughes  
Dr. Warren Smith (posthumously) and  
Rosa Lee Smith

### 2011 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES

Michael A. Rashid  
Hon. Ethel Barnett  
Jerry L. Johnson  
Peter Neufeld, Esq.

### 2010 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES

Hon. Colleen Alexander  
James Bain  
Hon. Ethel Barnett  
Peter Neufeld, Esq.

### 2009 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES

Thelma Arnold Smith  
Hon. Lynn Toler  
Audrey Thornton-Johnson

### 2008 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES

Jeff Brown  
Xernona Clayton  
Richard "Sonny" Driver  
J. Whyatt Mondesire  
Intermezzo Choir

### 2007 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES

Blanche Burton Lyles  
Dr. William J. Shaw  
Bishop Richard Franklin Norris

### 2006 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES

Hon. Arlen Specter  
Rev. Thomas J. Ritter  
James Farmer  
Rev. Robert Shine  
Lisa Thomas-Laury

### 2005 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES

Mrs. Bertha Brown (cont'd)  
2005 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES  
Carl Greene  
Trudy Haynes  
Bilal Qayyum  
Hon. LeAnna Washington

### 2004 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES

His Eminence Anthony Cardinal  
Bevilacqua  
Lois Fernandez  
William H. Gray, III  
Dr. Edward W. Robinson  
Cicely Tyson

### 2003 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES

Mr. George Gallup, Jr.  
Hon. Chaka Fattah  
W. Clinton Pettus  
Judith Rodin, Ph.D  
Ossie Davis  
Sister Sledge

### 2002 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES

Ambassador Andrew Young  
G. Carol Johnson  
Rev. Father Thomas W.S. Logan  
Hon. Gwendolyn Faison  
Dr. Donald Paul Wilson  
Pastor Wintley Phipps

### 2001 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES

Hon. John F. Street  
Donald "Ducky Birts"  
Dr. Sonia Sanchez  
Community College of Philadelphia  
Samuel London Evans

### 2000 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES

Dick Gregory  
Rev. Dr. Sarah Potter Smith  
Mother Bethel AME Church  
The Philadelphia Tribune

### 1999 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES

Raymond W. Smith  
Eugene and Dr. Karin Bivens  
Jean C. W. Smith  
Dr. Walter P. Lomax, Jr.  
Father Paul M. Washington

### 1998 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES

Donn G. Scott  
Veronica Joyner  
Phile Chionesu and Asia Cooney  
Valerie Ambroise

### 1997 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES

George Woods  
William & Liller Green  
Celeste Harrington Tate

### 1996 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES

Hon. Colin L. Powell  
Hon. David P. Richardson  
(Posthumously)  
Leona Smith  
Judge Doris A. Smith  
Gerald McEntee

### 1995 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES

Judge Harvey Schmidt  
Dr. Niara Sudarkasa  
Ann Marquess Garrott  
Strawbridge and Clothier

### 1994 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES

Ann Marquess Garrott  
Strawbridge & Clothier  
Rev. Robert Johnson-Smith  
Dr. Joyce Elders

### 1993 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES

Bernice Pree  
John C. Haas  
Rev. Henry Wells  
Myrlie Evers

### 1992 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES

Melba Moore  
Corestates Financial Corporation  
Martin Luther King, III

### 1991 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES

Hon. Onah C. Weldon  
Joseph Fisher  
Norman Braman

### 1990 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES

Waverly Easley  
Judge Juanita Kidd Stout  
Dr. Geraldine R. Segal  
James Farmer

### 1989 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES

Dr. Bernard C. Watson  
Dr. Ruth Hayre  
Dr. Benjamin A. Hooks

### 1988 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES

Hon. Roxanne Jones  
Daisy L. Bates

### 1987 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES

Rev. Leon Sullivan  
Honorable C. DeLores Tucker

### 1986 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES

Bishop Desmond Tutu

### 1985 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES

Rev. Thomas J. Ritter  
Mr. Harold J. Soregenti  
Ms. Rosa Parks

### 1984 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES

Mr. Henry Nicholas  
Bernard G. Segal, Esq.  
Rev. Repsie Warren

### 1983 DRUM MAJOR HONOREES

Dr. Edward L. Clark  
SmithKline-Beecham



**DRUM MAJOR HONOREE**  
*for*  
**MEDIA AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS**

*Natasha Brown*

**News Co-Ancor**  
*CBS3 News at 4*  
*Emmy Award Winner*



Natasha Brown is the co-anchor of CBS 3 Eyewitness News at 4pm. She came to the station from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where she had been a reporter and anchor for WPXI-TV. Previously, she was a reporter and weekend anchor for WWBT-TV in Richmond, Virginia.

The Emmy Award-winning anchor began her career as a reporter and anchor at WPDE-TV in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Since that time, she has established herself as an outstanding on-scene reporter covering such major stories as the Columbine High School shootings, the crash of Flight 93 in Somerset County, Pennsylvania on September 11th and the Quecreek Mine Disaster.

Natasha has also covered several political campaigns and candidates. She also covered the historic move of the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia in 2004 to its new home across Independence Park. Her work has earned her four local Emmy Awards.

Natasha is a member of the National Association of Black Journalists. While in Pittsburgh, she received an African American Heritage Award as "Best Reporter" from WAMO Radio, the award's sponsor. The Philadelphia chapter of the NAACP has named her to its "Most Influential Black Women" list twice. In 2016, she was inducted into the Broadcast Pioneers of Philadelphia's Hall of Fame.

Natasha has also been active in supporting the stations' efforts on behalf of Susan G. Komen Philadelphia. She also served on Susan G. Komen's Board of Directors.

A native of Virginia, Natasha is a graduate of James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Virginia where she earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Mass Communications.



**DRUM MAJOR HONOREE**  
*for*  
**LABOR EQUALITY AND JUSTICE**

*Ernest Garrett*

**President**  
*AFSCME - District Council 33*



Ernest Garrett has been an active force in the labor movement for over a decade with very humble beginnings as a laborer for the Philadelphia Water Department, an elected shop steward, then as the Business Agent for AFSCME District Council 33 Local 394. His primary responsibilities as a business agent were to ensure that members received fair and equitable treatment from management as well as to be a voice for Local 394. In 2020, Ernest decided it was time to take on a larger role by running for president of District Council 33 against a strong repeat incumbent. Ernest successfully defeated his opponent in what was deemed one of the biggest upsets in Philadelphia's labor history.

Since assuming the role of President of District Council 33, Ernest has made a number of huge accomplishments. Most notably, negotiating one of the best labor contracts DC33 members had seen in decades. Ernest spends every waking moment trying to improve the lives of every single member of DC33 by fighting for wages, benefits, and fair treatment for each and every member. His standing mantra is "What we do for one, we do for all." His open-door policy has been in effect since his very first day as Business Agent and remains in effect as President.

Ernest is a proud military veteran and father. During his time off, he enjoys spending time with his family and friends.

**DRUM MAJOR HONOREE**  
*for*  
**SOCIAL JUSTICE**

*Chad Dion Lassiter*

**Executive Director**  
*Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission*



Chad Dion Lassiter is a National Expert in the field of American Race Relations. Mr. Lassiter has worked on race, peace, and poverty-related issues in The United States of America, Africa, Canada, Haiti, Israel, and Norway, and is called upon frequently by media outlets to provide commentary on race relations and potential solutions.

He is the current Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission, where over his four years in this position, he has continued to push the Commonwealth forward in the spaces of DEI Training, Unconscious Bias Training, Anti-Racism Training and has developed and launched a ‘No Hate in Our State Townhall’ to address the surge of White Nationalism in Pennsylvania, a ‘Social Justice Lecture Series’ providing an outlet for the communities in the State to discuss imperative issues and serves as a Racial Reduction Response team for those communities impacted by hatred. He oversees a staff of 87 with three Regional Offices that comprise the 67 Counties in Pennsylvania and manages an annual budget of \$11 million dollars.

He has also developed programs under his appointment, such as a ‘Global Social Justice Initiative’, ‘Black and Jewish Beloved Community Dialogue’, and the ‘College Race Dialogue Initiative.’ Mr. Lassiter received his Master’s degree from the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Social Work, where he was the A. Phillip Randolph Award winner in 2001 and was the recipient of the prestigious University of Pennsylvania’s Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Involvement Award in 2008.

Mr. Lassiter is a co-founder and current president of the University of Pennsylvania’s School of Social Policy & Practice’s Black Men at Penn, the first Ivy League Black male group of social workers. Since 2003 this transcendent group has sought to recruit Black males into the profession, as well as, provide Anti-Racism and violence prevention training to urban and suburban schools around the country and diversity and inclusion training for corporate entities and penal systems.

Mr. Lassiter has been recognized by the Philadelphia Tribune as “The Most Influential African American Leader from 2010-2022”, as “Who’s Who among African-Americans” 17th edition in 2004 with such notables as Colin Powell and Michael Jordan. On November 18th, 2019, Mr. Lassiter was inducted into the University of Pennsylvania’s School of Social Policy and Practice Alumni Hall of Fame. On October 26, 2021, Mr. Lassiter was chosen as National Association of Social Workers, Pennsylvania Chapter Social Worker of the Year for 2021. Mr. Lassiter has also been recognized by City & State’s 2022 Pennsylvania Fifty Over 50; City & State’s 2022 Pennsylvania Impact 50 and City and State’s Pennsylvania Power of Diversity: Black 100



## **C. DeLores Tucker VOLUNTEER AWARD**

*Aaron L. Merrill*

**Asst. Clinical Supervisor**  
*Behavioral Wellness Center at Girard*



For over 10 years, Aaron Merrill, a 30 year Camden New Jersey native and Masters Level Alumni of Lincoln University has been a noteworthy volunteer for the Philadelphia Martin Luther King, Jr. Association for Nonviolence, Inc.. You may know him for his work with directing the youth from The College for Teens Program and Global Leadership Academy during the Association's Annual Children's Christmas Party in which the youth volunteer to help bring about the vision of the late Dr. C DeLores Tucker and Dr. William Tucker which is to provide families and children in need with holiday dinners, presents for their children, and Nativity skit that teaches children the real meaning of Christmas.

Aaron has been instrumental in assisting the Association with Audio/visual and social media needs for the Annual National Bell Ringing Ceremony, again, following in his father's footsteps. He also serves on the Association's Executive Planning Committee.

In his professional life, Aaron can also be contributions towards "keeping the dream alive" in the Human Services field where he has over 20 years of work experience including volunteering for the Camden City Mayor's Youth Council, direct care services, operating as a house parent at a group home, servicing residents as a behavioral specialist for The Behavioral Wellness Center at Girard, helping to run a therapeutic community program at Howard R Young Correctional institute in Delaware as a drug and alcohol counselor, and providing leadership in his current position at The Miracles in Progress program, a residential treatment program for dually diagnosed Chronically Homeless Men at The Behavioral Wellness Center at Girard where he was requested back to take on a leadership role by administration during his employment in Delaware at the Correctional Institute.

Aaron accepted the leadership role as Assistant Clinical Supervisor at The Behavioral Wellness Center At Girard and as a member of society he continues to have a heart and passion for three major areas: the wellbeing and education of the youth, ADL resources for populations reentering society who struggle with self care & lack the proper healthy social supports needed for successful ADL maintenance, and providing state of the art, resources, supervision, and development for helpers in the human services field.

As a hobby Aaron enjoys writing songs and poetry, skating and performing with a skate group called Greaton Skates, and also DJing occasionally at special events for various organizations fostering culturally diverse\positive music that people can enjoy and also dance. Through the arts and also DJing, Aaron speaks a language that youth, artists, and the current culture is drawn to and with this artistic language he chooses to promote an empowering type of creativity, words, movement, imagery, and sound that focuses on values that heal and strengthen and give resilient restorative solutions to families and communities. Aaron hopes to complete and publish two books by April of 2023.

His desire is to use his creativity, skills, and resources to support the growth of the King Association's College for Teens Program in any way that can.

Aaron is the father of two amazing boys and resides in Cherry Hill, New Jersey.



## **JASMINE PAYOUTE**

Jasmine Payoute joined CBS3 Eyewitness News as a reporter in June 2021.

Jasmine is no stranger to Philly, she interned at Eyewitness News while a student at Temple University. She later became a CBS3 News Apprentice in 2015 before joining the digital team as an Assistant Digital Content Producer.

Realizing her passion for reporting and storytelling, Jasmine headed to Shreveport, Louisiana as a general assignment reporter and anchor. She then headed to the well-known KSDK in St. Louis in 2018, where she was a reporter, covering major stories such as the 2020 protests for social justice, the controversy after a couple pointed guns at protestors in their neighborhood, and a violent prison rebellion that included live hits for MSNBC.

###

Contact: Wil Manzano, 215-977-5823 [manzano@cbs3.com](mailto:manzano@cbs3.com)

# Jubilee Music Enrichment

A NJ Nonprofit Corporation  
501 ( c ) 3 Tax Exempt Organization



## Jubilee Ringers



Cultivating Young Leaders Through The Discipline Of Music Training

### OUR INSPIRATION

The project draws its inspiration from the Fisk Jubilee Singers, a group of young African Americans, most of them former slaves, who through education and much discipline triumphed over oppression and severe obstacles. The Jubilee Singers cultivated their talents and introduced the world to the songs their parents sang in slavery. The power of songs like "Steal Away," "Swing Low Sweet Chariot," "Were You There When They Crucified My Lord," left unforgettable impressions upon their audiences. The message of these songs and the spirit in which they were presented melted the hearts of segregationists and opened doors of opportunity for their people. They were ambassadors who traveled the world and stood before, presidents, kings and queens with impeccable character and dignity. Jubilee Music Enrichment challenges youth to emulate the dignity and discipline of the Jubilee Singers and to stand as leaders who provoke positive change in their community.

### *Rachel Merrill, Founder and Director*

Rachel, a native of Camden, New Jersey commenced her music training when a young child, at the age of eight years old. She is a talented pianist, vocalist, songwriter, and conference speaker. Her powerful soprano voice has touched audiences throughout the country and internationally including Israel, Russia and Vienna. Her versatility enables her to sing classical, spirituals and gospel music. She has directed numerous choirs and ensembles. Her CD, "Great Is Thy Faithfulness" has inspired many. She is recognized in "Dedicate to Music" a book commissioned by the Historical Society of New Jersey to recognize the accomplishments of South Jersey Musicians. She has been honored as one of South Jersey's most influential women in the arts. She has held the positions of President of the Marian Anderson Music Guild, Inc., board member and 2nd Vice President of the historic National Association of Negro Musicians, Inc. She is the recipient of The President's Volunteer Service Award in recognition of her lifetime of volunteer service in her community.



Rachel has degrees in Social Work and Bible from Philadelphia Biblical University. She is a retiree of the State of New Jersey, after an extensive career as a Family Service Specialist with the Division of Youth and Family Services. She has also held the positions of Labor Representative, Executive Vice President and President of a major state workers labor local. Her vast experience provides insight, skill and the passion to minister to youth and to foster the mission of this project.



# The History of the Philadelphia Martin Luther King Jr. Association

**The Philadelphia Martin Luther King, Jr. Association for Nonviolence, Inc.** was founded by the late Dr. C. DeLores Tucker and a group of local leaders in 1983, 17 years after the assassination of Dr. King. Waverly Easley, then President of the Philadelphia Tribune and a stalwart supporter, was the first to respond. He provided the office space and organizational support during the beginning years. Many of the early leaders had personally known Dr. King and had been inspired by his works and messages.

Dr. King's widow, Coretta Scott King, knew that Philadelphia held a special place in her late husband's heart and thought it fitting to have a permanent organization dedicated to his ideals of peace and freedom in the City of Brotherly Love.

The Association is the only affiliate commissioned by Mrs. King and the Martin Luther King Center for Nonviolent Social Change, Inc. in Atlanta, Georgia. Philadelphia has and continues to enjoy a unique and historic role in the life of Dr. King and his memory. The last office he opened before his assassination was opened here in an office given to him by William Tucker, the husband of C. DeLores Tucker. The last fund-raising gala "Stars for Freedom" was held at the Spectrum in 1967 and was chaired by C. DeLores Tucker. Every King holiday commences with the ringing of the Liberty Bell at 12:00 noon at Independence Hall.

The King Association, located at 1809 Spring Garden Street, at that time, was founded to develop programs in the Northeast region of the United States and to serve as a pioneering model for future programs in other parts of the nation. Shortly after its establishment, Pennsylvania's then Governor, Richard Thornburgh designated the Association as the Commonwealth's official resource center on civil rights and nonviolence.

Since then, the Association has grown to produce an active, year-round schedule of programs and activities that amplify the teachings and principles espoused by Dr. King. Through the myriad of activities, people of all ages learn about the significance of Dr. King's works and how to incorporate Kingian principles into their own lives to make a positive difference.

The Association works with area educators, corporations, business, social organizations, and religious and community groups, as well as the general public. The Association seeks to develop and present related curricular, extracurricular and informational programs and events within the general community and to develop leadership in working toward the prevention of "nonviolent social change" in all walks of life.

## The Mission of the King Association

The Philadelphia Martin Luther King, Jr. Association for Nonviolence, Inc.'s mission is to preserve and advance the work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. through educating, interpreting, advocating, and promoting non-violent theory and philosophy.

### Association's Goals:

- To work with the educational system in developing curricular and extracurricular programs on the life, work and philosophy of Dr. King and the Civil Rights Movement.
- To provide special programs, conferences and seminars for corporate management and personnel on the significance of the Kingian approach to orderly economic and social progress.
- To provide an arena for community members to discuss and develop solutions for social issues and conflict resolutions.
- To encourage community, civic, ethnic, and religious groups to study the principles and application of Kingian nonviolent strategies in resolving social tensions and conflicts.
- To serve as a preventive and interventive resource for social conflict.

# 40<sup>th</sup> Annual Awards and Benefit Luncheon Program

~SYMBOLIC RINGING OF LIBERTY BELL ~

PRELUDE.....JUBILEE BELL RINGERS

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTION OF MISTRESS OF CEREMONIES .....DR. EVELYN PARTRIDGE  
*Treasurer, Philadelphia MLK, Jr. Association for Nonviolence, Inc.*

INVOCATION .....PASTOR TONY HART  
*Pastor, Montco Bible Fellowship  
President/Grand Old Gospel Fellowship*

“LIFT EVERY VOICE AND SING” .....RACHEL MERRILL  
*Director/Founder, Jubilee Music Enrichment*

BRIEF TRIBUTE REMARKS.....OFFICIALS

MUSICAL SELECTION .....RACHEL MERRILL/JUBILEE BELL RINGERS

## ~Lunch~

YEAR IN REVIEW.....JOYE NOTTAGE  
*Executive Director, Philadelphia MLK, Jr. Association for Nonviolence, Inc.*  
LILLIE OLIVER  
*Liberty Bell Coordinator/Special Events Program Director*

### C. DELORES TUCKER VOLUNTEER AWARD

AARON MERRILL

REMARKS AND PRESENTATION OF “DRUM MAJOR” AWARDS .....DR. WILLIAM TUCKER  
*President, Philadelphia MLK, Jr. Association for Nonviolence, Inc.*

### DRUM MAJOR AWARDS

NATASHA BROWN - Drum Major for Media and Community Affairs

ERNEST GARRETT - Drum Major for Labor Equality and Justice

CHAD DION LASSITER - Drum Major for Social Justice

“WE SHALL OVERCOME” (VIA ZOOM).....RACHEL MERRILL

BENEDICTION.....PASTOR MARK MERRILL

DOWNLOAD a complete copy of our 2023 Souvenir Journal at [www.philadelphiamlk.org/40thannualluncheon](http://www.philadelphiamlk.org/40thannualluncheon)

Program subject to change



- “In Remembrance” -

## Hon. Dr. DeLores Tucker

October 4, 1927 – October 12, 2005

**C. DeLores Tucker** (née **Cynthia Delores Nottage**) was an African American politician and civil rights activist best known for her participation in the Civil Rights Movement and stance against gangsta rap music.

Born in Philadelphia to a minister from the Bahamas and a "Christian feminist mother" on October 4, 1927, she was the tenth of thirteen children. Tucker attended Temple University and the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School of Business. She was later the recipient of two honorary doctoral degrees from Morris College in Sumter, South Carolina and Villa Maria College in Pennsylvania, and for this reason, she is sometimes referred to as "Dr. Tucker".

In 1951, she married William "Bill" Tucker, a successful Philadelphia real estate agent and she herself worked in real estate and insurance sales early in her career.

Tucker had a long history in the Civil Rights Movement. Early on, her civil activities included participating in the 1965 march in Selma, Alabama alongside the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and raising funds for the NAACP.

In 1990, Tucker, along with 15 other African American women and men, formed the African-American Women for Reproductive Freedom.<sup>[1]</sup> She was the convening founder and national chair of the National Congress of Black Women, Inc. (NCBW), having succeeded the Hon. Shirley Chisholm in 1992.

Tucker also was responsible for the Governor's appointment of more women judges and more women and African Americans to boards and commissions than ever before. She also led the effort to make Pennsylvania one of the first states to pass the Equal Rights Amendment. As Chief of Elections of Pennsylvania, she was a leader in instituting a voter registration by mail and reducing the voting age from 21 to 18 years of age

In 1971, Tucker became the first black female Secretary of State when Pennsylvania Governor Milton Shapp appointed her Secretary of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. During her tenure, she instituted the first Commission on the Status of Women. Shapp fired Tucker in September 1977 for allegedly using state employees to write speeches for which she received honorariums.<sup>[4]</sup> Two years later, one of Tucker's successors as Secretary of the Commonwealth, Dr. Ethel D. Allen, would also be fired for using public employees to write speeches.

She was founder and president of the Bethune-DuBois Institute, Inc., which she established in 1991 to promote the cultural development of African American youth through scholarships and educational programs. Tucker also launched, and served as publisher of the publication, *Vital Issues: The Journal of African American Speeches*.

Tucker dedicated much of the last few years of her life to condemning sexually explicit lyrics in rap and hip-hop tracks, citing a concern that the lyrics were misogynistic and threatened the moral foundation of the African American community.

Called "narrow-minded" by some rappers who often mentioned her in their lyrics, Tucker picketed stores that sold rap music and bought stock in Sony, Time Warner, and other companies in order to protest hip-hop at their shareholders' meetings.<sup>[6]</sup> She also fought against the NAACP's decision to nominate late rapper Tupac Shakur for one of its Image Awards<sup>[6]</sup> and filed a \$10 million lawsuit against his estate for comments that the rapper made in his song "How Do U Want It?" on the album *All Eyez on Me*, in which Shakur rapped " *C. Delores Tucker you's a motherfucker / Instead of trying to help a nigga you destroy a brother*". In her lawsuit, Tucker claimed that comments in this song, and on the track "Wonda Why They Call U B--ch" from the same album, inflicted emotional distress, were slanderous and invaded her privacy. This case was eventually dismissed.

A number of famous rappers have taken their stance against her. In his song "Church for Thugs", The Game raps "*I've got more hatred in my soul than Pac had for De'ores Tucker.*" Jay-Z chimes in as well, with the lines "*I don't care if you're C. Dolores Tucker or you're Bill O'Reilly, you only riling me up,*" from *The Black Album's* "Threat." Much of KRS-ONE and Channel Live's "Free Mumia" is a direct criticism of what the MCs see as Tucker's misplaced energy. Lil Kim also referenced her in a leftover track entitled "Rockin' It" from her second studio album, where she raps "*C. Delores T., Screw her, I never knew her*", after Tucker dubbed her music "gangsta porno rap". Lil Wayne also referenced her in his leftover song "Million Dollar Baby" rapping "Can't be banned I'm sorry Miss Delores." Rapper Eminem also mentioned Tucker in the D-12 song "Rap Game", in which he rapped the line "Tell that C. Delores Tucker slut to suck a dick." Tucker later went on to serve on the Advisory Board of the Parents Television Council until her death in 2005.

Selected as one of *25 of the World's Most Intriguing People* by *People* magazine, Tucker was also selected as a *People Magazine* 1996 Yearbook Honoree, and was featured in the inaugural issue of John F. Kennedy, Jr.'s *George* magazine for her crusade against gangsta rap. In addition, she has been acknowledged for her deep concern for children by First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton in the book *It Takes A Village*. The National Women's Political Caucus and *Redbook* also named her as the woman best qualified to be Ambassador to the United Nations. For five consecutive years, from 1972 through 1977, she was listed as among *Ebony* magazine's *100 Most Influential Black Americans*. During that period, she was listed as *Ladies Home Journal* Nominee for Woman of the Year in both 1975 and 1976. She was recognized by *Ebony* as one of the '100 Most Influential Black Organization Leaders' in the country in 2001 and 2002. Tucker was also a prominent member of Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority.

On April 25, 2006, a state historical marker honoring Tucker was unveiled during a ceremony at the State Museum of Pennsylvania, in Harrisburg. The unveiling of the marker was done by Governor Ed Rendell and Bill Tucker. In addition, it was announced that the North Building which is adjacent to the State Capitol Building, was to be renamed the Secretary C. Delores Tucker Building. The state marker, which was commissioned by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, was installed outside the entrance to the building.

The marker reads:

C. Delores Tucker  
1927—2005

Civil rights leader and activist for women, she was the first African American Secretary of State in the nation. Championed the PA Equal Rights Amendment and policies on affirmative action, voter registration by mail, and lowering the voting age to 18. Spearheaded the creation of the Commission on the Status of Women & led a successful crusade critical of the music industry and lyrics demeaning to women, African Americans, and children.

C. DeLores Tucker died on Wednesday, October 12, 2005 at Suburban Woods Health Center in Norristown, Pennsylvania at the age of 78.



Philadelphia Martin Luther King Jr. Association for Nonviolence, Inc.

# COLLEGE FOR TEENS PROGRAM

*“Educational Ambassadors of Nonviolence”*

## HISTORY AND PROGRAM OVERVIEW

### HISTORY:

The Philadelphia Martin Luther King, Jr. Association for Nonviolence, Inc. established the College for Teens Program in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in May 2001. The King Association’s founder and president, Dr. C. DeLores Tucker, saw a need for comprehensive educational support for Philadelphia’s school children. She envisioned a holistic program that would encompass providing year-round academic reinforcement, counseling, tutorial assistance and mentoring to Philadelphia’s struggling secondary students. The College for Teens Program (CFT), provides a unique model for equipping African American and minority high school students with the tools needed to succeed in high school and beyond while preparing and encouraging them to seek higher education.

This youth development program emphasizes four major components: an After-school tutorial and enrichment program **ASTEP**; a 6 to 8 week Summer College Campus College Residency (**SUCCES**) and Day Program; a year-round Mentoring/Career Development and Life Skills Program (**MCLS**); and **“Educational Ambassadors of Nonviolence” Club**.

The overall goal of our pre-college program is to increase the number of low-income and minority students who successfully complete high school and are prepared to enter and succeed in college. The College for Teens program is uniquely configured to provide an intensive career education mentoring program, delivered on a college campus; that exposes students to diverse career opportunities beginning at age twelve. A key element of the program is to target students who are in greatest need and prepare them to embrace high educational aspirations that lead to professional careers. All students will remain in the program from grade seven through college.

Alarming numbers of Philadelphia African-American and other minority youth are already being programmed for future dead-end jobs or unemployment by the choices made by them or for them during high school years. A critical factor resulting in children expanding their concept of what career paths are realistic options for them is to acquaint them with adults of diverse ethnic and economic backgrounds who have succeeded in non-traditional careers. Besides conveying - by who and what they are- that this position is achievable, these adults are also able to convey a realistic portrait of what was required for their achievement and why various school choices are important in selecting that path. To stop the cycle of early, low expectations leading to poor performance in high school years, failure to reach college, and future stagnation in low-paying jobs or unemployment, early intervention is essential! The College for Teens program allow our participants to take A step at a time toward Success, adding the Muscle of mentoring and support to produce educated, contributing, positive young adults. Thus, making them **“Educational Ambassadors of Nonviolence”**.

Finally, students may enter the College for Teens Program at twelve and remain until College. The King Association makes it possible through fundraising to ensure that the program operates fully and that students will be able to attend at no cost.

*Please visit our website at [www.philadelphiamlk.org](http://www.philadelphiamlk.org) to see highlights of the program*

# College for Teens Program Highlights



**College for Teens Program**  
**Temple University**  
*"Educational Ambassadors of Nonviolence"*

# **HISTORY**

## *of the*

# **Children's Christmas Dinner Party**

The Philadelphia Martin Luther King, Jr. Association for Nonviolence, Inc. sponsored its 1st Annual Children's Christmas Dinner Party for underserved children from Philadelphia and surrounding areas at the Wyndham Franklin Plaza Hotel (now the Sheraton Downtown Philadelphia Hotel), 17th and Race Street on Sunday, December 19, 2004. The Association had targeted to accommodate 1,800 to 2,000 children, however, over 4,000 children attended and the hotel overwhelmingly did not reject any of these precious jewels.

The idea and concept of a Christmas party for homeless and disadvantaged children was conceived and established over twenty years ago in Washington, DC by Dr. William Tucker, Vice Chair of the Bethune Dubois Institute (a King Association affiliate) and President, Philadelphia Martin Luther King, Jr. Association for Nonviolence, Inc.

In 2004, Ms. Diane Cauley, former Human Resources Director at Wyndham Franklin Plaza Hotel, challenged Mr. Tucker to bring the Christmas Party to Philadelphia with the task of targeting disadvantaged children in the area. Diane approached the General Manager of the Hotel to be the 2004 Corporate Host Sponsor and the hotel graciously accepted. For 10 years, Mr. Herman "Pete" Matthews, through AFSCME District Council 33, was the Host Sponsor of the event. Since 2020, when Covid- 19 hit the world, we have not been able to host the event indoors but continue to support families in various ways throughout the holidays. These current efforts were continued to be supported by AFSCME DC-33 throughout the pandemic because the new president, Ernest Garrett, thought it was important to continue their support.

For many children this event has been their first total Christmas experience. They are treated to a full course Christmas dinner, a special Christmas program that embodies the meaning and spirit of Christmas and gifts/toys with surprise visits from special Christmas characters, Disney Characters and Sesame Street Characters. The ballroom is usually beaming with Christmas decorations made into a magnificent winter-wonderland.

### **COAT DONATIONS THROUGH ONE WARM COAT TOY DONATION - DREXEL UNIVERSITY**





# 2022 Christmas Extravaganza



## COSTUME CHARACTERS: Global Leadership Academy Students

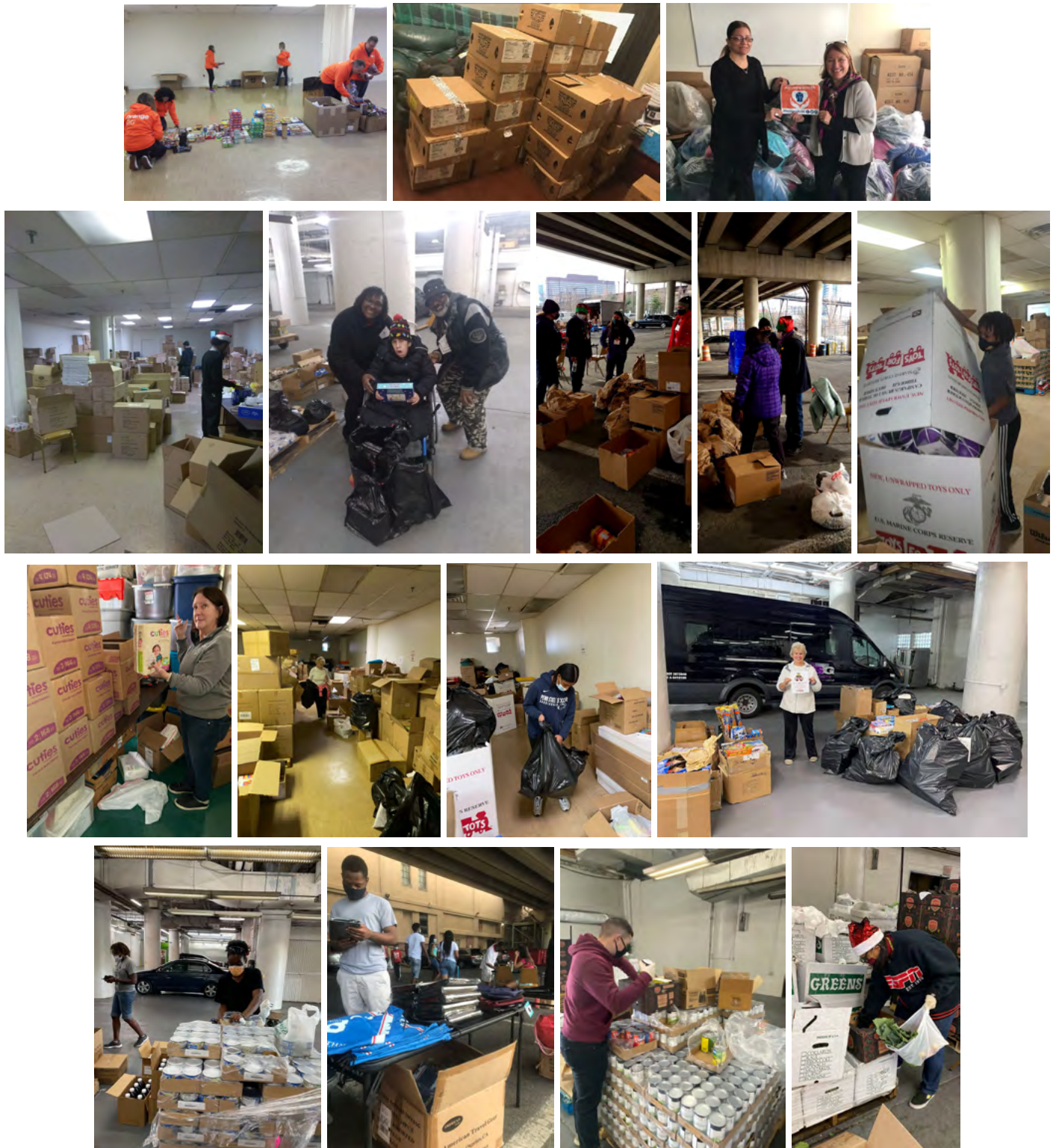
- Kimathi Walker
- Jahzarau Walker
- Marquan Murphy
- Paris Canada
- Semaj Stone
- Kenneth Caines
- Lyra Jones
- Nyla-Faye Holmes
- Nigel Choice
- Elijah Choice
- Leah Wright

## Annual Children's Christmas Party Past Highlights





# VOLUNTEERS: Helping Those in Need



## Our PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS:







# ***Kids Serving Kids***

*“Driving Out Hunger”*



**Founder – Samara J. Wilson**

“Kids Serving Kids” was formed 10 years ago by Samara Wilson (now 21 years old) whose inspiration came from her talks with the late Dr. C. DeLores Tucker (her great-aunt) and further encouraged by seeing her great-uncle, Dr. William Tucker, who has been hosting a Children’s Christmas Dinner Party for disadvantaged children for over 22 years, serving over 3,800 children at one time.

Samara had wondered for several years how she and her best friend could help children less fortunate than themselves until this past summer she heard that over 15 million children went hungry every year in America. Samara said, “I am so tired of hearing everyone talking about homeless children and I don’t just want to talk, I need to help do something. I feel blessed to have my family that helps my mom take care of me and want other kids to know that there is hope even when things look bad”. She then invited some of her friends to join her in asking businesses and people they knew to donate items. Each participating member of the group was asked to collect at least one box of food per shelter/family visit.

The first project was held in honor of National Homelessness and Hunger Awareness Week in 2011. The group of young leaders delivered food to the Lutheran Settlement Home for homeless mothers and children, played games with the children and gave out prizes, toiletries, new clothes and other donated items. They also shared a positive message of hope with the children.

This year, “Kids Serving Kids” continues to serve families in the Philadelphia area. Although Samara is not directly involved in the distribution as often due to college studies outside of the city, she continues to serve the community by distributing feminine needs to homeless women on the streets.





In honor of *Martin Luther King, Jr.*,  
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**40<sup>th</sup> Annual Awards  
and Benefit Luncheon**



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Supporting the 40th Annual Awards  
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## The Philadelphia Martin Luther King, Jr. Association for Nonviolence, Inc.

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## SALUTES

# **The 2023 Drum Major honorees**

Independence Blue Cross is proud to support the Philadelphia Martin Luther King, Jr. Association for Nonviolence's 40th Annual Awards and Benefit Luncheon. We recognize the honorees for their leadership, service, and commitment to social justice.

Now more than ever, Independence remains steadfast in its support of individuals and community organizations dedicated to improving the lives and health of the people in our region.







**District Council 33 is proud to  
celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the  
Philadelphia Martin Luther King Jr.  
Foundation for Nonviolence.**

