



For Immediate Release
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Winners named at statewide MLK oratorical contest

Columbus — Ohio students inspired by the lessons and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. presented original speeches on his teachings during the 13th Annual Statewide MLK Oratorical Contest held today in Columbus. Thirty-one regional contest winners from grades kindergarten through 12 spoke before family, friends and judges at the King Arts Complex.

Speakers were judged on performance, originality and composition. The following speakers placed first, second and third in their respective divisions:

Senior Division (grades nine through 12) First place – Matthew Scott, Charles F. Brush High School, South Euclid; second place – John Merkel, Lima Senior High School of Multiple Intelligences, Lima; third place – Olivia Velasquez, Pandora-Gilboa High School, Ottawa.

Junior Division (grades six through eight) First place – Assata Gilmore, Woodward Park Middle School, Columbus; second place – Nia Coleman, Woodward Park Middle School, Columbus; third place – Kayinsola Oye, Woodward Park Middle School, Columbus.

Intermediate Division (grades three through five) First place – Bre'Anna Walker, Avalon Elementary School, Columbus; second place – Khaliq Garner, Perry Elementary School, Lima; third place – Hayat Mohammed, Avalon Elementary School, Columbus.

Primary Division (grades kindergarten through two) First place – Asher Reddington, Clinton Elementary School, Columbus; second place – Marlin Yarborough, Mansion Day School, Groveport; third place – Andrea Okocha, Glendale Primary School, Oakwood Village.

First-place finishers are invited to speak at the 2013 Ohio Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemorative Celebration on Jan. 17 in downtown Columbus. The celebration and oratorical contest are sponsored by the Ohio Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission. The commission is housed in the Equal Opportunity Division of the Ohio Department of Administrative Services.

“At a time when we think our young people aren’t listening, this contest proves that they are listening and they are taking what they have learned about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Civil Rights Movement and framing everything to put it into the context of today’s new generation,” said William T. Green, chair of the Ohio Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission.