

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 17th Annual Statewide MLK Oratorical Contest held today in Columbus.

Thirty-one regional contest winners from grades kindergarten through 12 spoke before judges and others at the King Arts Complex.

Speakers were judged on performance, originality and composition.

“Like Dr. King, these young people modeled bravery, determination and tenacity in the manner they took command of the stage,” said the Rev. Joel L. King, Jr., interim chair of the Ohio Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission and a first cousin to Dr. King.

The following speakers placed in the top of their respective divisions:

Senior Division (grades nine through 12) First place – Ivy Holley, 15, ninth-grade, Lima Senior High School, Lima. Runners-up – Logan Woodyard, 17, 12th-grade, Jackson High School, Jackson; and Kenyon Spotts, 16, 10th-grade, Charles F. Brush High School, Richmond Heights.

Junior Division (grades six through eight) First place – Playon Patrick, 13, eighth-grade, Columbus Gifted Academy, Columbus. Runners-up – Alyssa Warthem, 12, sixth-grade, Heir Force Community School, Lima; and Cameron Dewberry, 12, seventh-grade, Patriot Preparatory Academy, Columbus.

Intermediate Division (grades three through five) First place – Mackenzie Lewis, 9, fourth-grade, Berwick Alternative K-8 School, Columbus. Runners-up – Sundra Branch, 11, fifth-grade, North Middle School, Lima; and Maddie Hainen, 11, fifth-grade, Indian Springs Elementary School, Columbus.

Primary Division (grades kindergarten through two) First place – Elena Earley, 7, second-grade, Clinton Elementary School, Columbus. Runners-up – Addison Captain, 6, first-grade, Glendale Primary School, Bedford; Layla Schneider, 8, second-grade, Benjamin Harrison Elementary School, Marion; and Adonia Balqis, 7, second-grade, Clinton Elementary School, Columbus.

First-place finishers are invited to speak at the 2017 Ohio Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemorative Celebration on Jan. 12 in downtown Columbus.

Ohio Department of Administrative Services
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News Release



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.

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