



News release

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**Gregory Bennett Jr. and Seeds of Hope
named as Gateway Dr. King Humanitarians**
Dr. King event to be held Jan 18

Gateway Technical College has named Gregory Bennett Jr. and Seeds of Hope as this year's Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Humanitarians to recognize them for their contributions to society, their school, business or profession, as well as their dedication to volunteerism and philanthropic work.

The Humanitarians will be honored at Gateway's 27th annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration, noon, Jan. 18. This year's version of this annual event will be held online in a virtual format. Community members can join the event virtually by visiting gtc.edu/mlk on the day of the event and clicking the link to view the livestream, which will be located at the top of the page. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there will be no in-person attendance for this year's event.

This year's theme is "Response, Resiliency, Restoration." The program will run from noon to 1 p.m. The keynote speaker will be Tammi Summers, Gateway Technical College vice president, for the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Summers will talk about Gateway's response and resiliency to all that's happened in 2020 and focus on how the Gateway community is moving forward

with raising awareness, sharing DEI information and creating an inclusive work and learning environment.

Gregory Bennett Jr.

Gregory Bennett Jr. is the founder and director of Peace in the Streets, an organization committed to helping Kenosha's youth in a number of ways, including empowering them and giving them a voice for today's social justice issues.

Bennett has helped city youth by steering them toward positive activities such as cooking, learning chess, playing ping-pong and doing computer work to help them focus on positive activities and build their skills for work and education. He has a heart for encouraging youth to speak up, and also believes it's important he listens to their concerns. While Bennett will mentor and encourage youth of all races, many of his students are African-American.

Bennett's nominator said he "is a young black activist who is highly regarded amongst his peers. Younger members of the Kenosha community follow Greg's lead when he plans peaceful community marches, holds community outings and Get Out the Vote events. Greg is an up-and-coming leader in Kenosha and his message of change appeals to the younger generation."

Seeds of Hope

Founded by Jamie Stilling-Stepp, Seeds of Hope is a nonprofit organization based out of Elkhorn, providing a positive and structured program to

meet the needs of developmentally disabled youth and adults. The group uses horticulture and recreation to plant seeds of possibilities in everyone.

The group's nominator said that "Seeds of Hope is committed to ensuring the highest level of care to individuals with developmental and other disabilities. This organization provides participants with an encouraging, creative and supportive environment which facilitates not only an improved sense of confidence, but also a greater sense of independence. It is my firm belief that Seeds of Hope is an organization which fully embodies the values and causes for which Dr. King worked so tirelessly, including equality, justice, freedom and peace."

More on Tammi Summers

Summers was selected last year to lead the college's newly formed Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. She earned her bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater in Special Education. Summers, Ph.D., earned her doctorate degree from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee in Urban Education focusing on Adult and Continuing Education.

Gateway Technical College collaborates with communities in Kenosha, Racine and Walworth counties to ensure economic growth and viability by providing education, training, leadership and technological resources to meet the changing needs of students, employers and communities.

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