



News release

January 6, 2017

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Gateway Technical College names 2017 Dr. King Humanitarians
Rep. Bowen to keynote event

Gateway Technical College will honor six area residents who have been selected as this year's Dr. Martin Luther King Humanitarians, individuals recognized for their contributions to society their school, business or profession, as well as their dedication to volunteerism or philanthropic life's work.

The six residents will be honored at the college's Jan. 16 event starting at noon, held in the Madrigrano Auditorium in the Conference Center of the college's Kenosha Campus, 3520-30th Ave. Doors open at 11:30 a.m. This year's theme is "The King in You."

Lawrence Terry

Rev. Lawrence Terry, Racine, has long served education, his faith and community. He is a retired as a principal from the Racine Unified School District, a position he served for 27 years after serving as a principal in Georgia for 14 years. He is an ordained African Methodist Episcopal Church minister and currently serves in the Wayman AME Church. He is the past president of the Racine Branch NAACP, served on area homeless shelter committees, volunteered at RUSD schools through the Homework First program, served on

the RUSD Desegregation and District Concerns Committee from 1975-98 and participated in civil rights marches and demonstrations in the 1960s.

An award nominator says: “He is a champion for others and, just like Dr. King, is selfless in his efforts to be a beacon of light to the world.”

Alex Hart-Upendo

Alex Hart-Upendo, Racine, a student at an area elementary school, is known nationally for his Build-A-Bow company and anti-bullying efforts. The company provides a way for customers to build their own unique and custom bow ties. In addition, the business also serves as a catalyst for a non-profit organization focused on promoting an anti-bullying message to youth and adults alike. Hart-Upendo was bullied himself and sought to find a way to prevent others from being bullied – and Build-a-Bow was formed because of his fondness for the clothing item.

Hart-Upendo hosts community workshops where bow ties are made and sent to key groups to help them in their own awareness campaigns, such as childhood cancer and for those suffering from incurable diseases. His for-profit business funds the workshops.

He delivers inspirational messages to other youth, as well as the elderly and those fighting disease. His work has garnered national accolades in the media.

An award nominator says: “The connection between Alex and the community is amazing. He gives people a platform to give back and impact the lives of others.”

Jeffrey and Nicole Urquhart

Jeffrey and Nicole Urquhart, Racine, own and operate the Racine business Baby Express, which they opened to assist expecting mothers in the area in an effort to reduce the city's high infant mortality rate.

Nicole, a Desert Storm veteran, provides programs to young families to increase their knowledge on healthy living with information such as safe sleep, breastfeeding and nutrition. She co-chairs the Greater Racine Healthy Birth Initiative and, as a nominator says, her "love and care for the families and well-being for the next generation captures the spirit – and embodies the philosophy of – Dr. Martin Luther King Jr." Jeff is chairman of deacons at St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church and coordinates the church's Tuesday community meal program which serves meals to 200 to 300.

An award nominator says Jeffrey and Nicole "have worked tirelessly to reduce infant mortality in the city of Racine."

Warren and Joannie Williams

Warren Williams is the senior pastor at Living Faith Lutheran Church in Racine, and Joannie Williams is a retired longtime hospice nurse and currently serves as a parish nurse. The two Mount Pleasant residents have helped with the church's Faith Works Food Pantry, which has become the largest food pantry in Racine. The two helped found the Mount Meru Tumania Health Clinic, which brings health care to a remote area of Tanzania. Joannie also contributed money to purchase land for the construction of a birthing center next to the clinic.

The Williams worked to create a homeless shelter for those who didn't qualify for other shelters in the area. Joanie, in particular, works with and advocates for the homeless in many different ways, including driving them to medical and other appointments. Warren moved to make the church he pastors more missional and became the catalyst for such efforts as a day care for dementia patients and a transitional service for developmentally disabled recent high school graduates. Joannie also serves on the Racine Interfaith Coalition; Warren is a former member of the group, as well.

A nominator says they “exemplify the spirit of Dr. Martin Luther King. Jr. not only in their own continuous leadership and service, but in the many ways they call others to follow in the line of compassionate service, creating programs that require paid staff and volunteers.”

Rep. Bowen keynotes event

The keynote speaker for this year's event is State Rep. David Bowen (D-Milwaukee).

Bowen was elected to the Wisconsin State Assembly in 2014 and represents District 10. He serves on the Assembly's committees on Corrections, Small Business Development, Transportation, Workforce Development and the Assembly Speaker's Task Force on Urban Education.

Before being elected to the Assembly, Bowen served on the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors for the 10th District, becoming the youngest member of the board. David served on several county board committees

including Finance and Personnel, Health and Human Needs, and Economic and Community Development as vice chairperson.

Bowen is a first generation American and son of Jamaican immigrants. He attended Milwaukee Public Schools and was an honors graduate of Bradley Tech High School before studying Education Policy and Community Studies at UW-Milwaukee.

David has served as program director for Urban Underground's youth leadership program and is a National Americorps Service alum. He also is a nationally recognized trainer for intergenerational community improvement strategies.

Annual education summit to also be held

The afternoon event will include the annual educational summit held at 2 p.m., also in the Madrigrano Auditorium. This year's summit will focus on English Language Learner and bilingual educational needs in the Gateway district, a topic that generated much interest at the inaugural summit, and it was decided upon to be explored this year.

For more information: www.gtc.edu/mlk

For further questions, please contact Zina Haywood at (262) 564-3104.

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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