



PRESS RELEASE

Feb. 24, 2023

UAPB Hosts Inaugural Sesquicentennial Celebration, Martin Luther King III at Black History Month Program and Meet-and-Greet Breakfast Reception

Pine Bluff, AR – On Monday, Feb. 27 at 7:30 p.m. in the H.O. Clemens Arena, the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff (UAPB) will launch its year-long sesquicentennial celebration and cap Black History Month with a program featuring Martin Luther King III. The program will include performances by the Vesper Choir, the Marching Musical Machine of the Midsouth, and the Spirit Team. Student leaders will make remarks, and the evening will conclude with Chancellor Laurence B. Alexander’s unveiling of the sesquicentennial theme story and art. **This event is free and open to the public to attend. It will livestream via UAPB’s [YouTube channel](#).** On Tuesday, Feb. 28 at 7:00 a.m. in the STEM Conference Center, Mr. King will attend an invitation-only breakfast reception for the campus community.

“There’s no question about the enduring legacy of the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, and it is that legacy that we celebrate as it strengthens our resolve to continue to educate the next generation of thought leaders and change makers,” said Chancellor Laurence B. Alexander. “If not for our alumnus, Dr. Samuel Kountz, how much longer would patients have needed to wait for kidney transplants? If not for our alumna Raye Jean Montague, how would U.S. naval ship development be revolutionized? Dr. Kountz and Mrs. Montague are but two of the countless alumni whose education from UAPB helped them to change the world. Thus, we are extremely excited to welcome Martin Luther King III to our campus to mark this momentous occasion. His life of service to humanity and dedication to ending injustice is an example from which we can all learn and by which our students and campus community can be inspired.”

Other events to mark the 150th anniversary include the Chancellor’s Scholarship Gala on April 22; Founders Week, April 23-29; and the Joseph Corbin Day Celebration on Sept. 27, which was the first day of school for the newly founded institution under the leadership of Corbin, the first principal.

Martin Luther King III’s visit comes 65 years after his father’s, the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., who delivered the commencement address to the class of 1958. As the oldest son of Dr. King and Mrs. Coretta Scott King, Mr. King has dedicated his life to creating and implementing strategic nonviolent action to address social, political, and economic injustice. A graduate of his father’s alma mater, Morehouse College, Mr. King was elected to political office in 1986 as an at-large representative of more



than 700,000 residents of Fulton County, Georgia. Mr. King initiated several programs throughout the years to support and nurture the personal and educational development of young people. He quietly negotiated a compromise between Georgia legislators and other leaders to change the state flag that was an offensive and divisive symbol for many Georgians. In 1985, he was arrested at the South African embassy in Washington, D.C. as part of a civil disobedience protest against apartheid and for the release of freedom fighter Nelson Mandela. His protests for justice continued throughout the 1990s and in 1998, King followed his father's footsteps again and began his tenure as president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, an organization created to coordinate the action of local protest groups throughout the South. Mr. King co-sponsored the 40th Anniversary of the historic March on Washington with human rights organizations from across the country and later founded the nonprofit, Realizing the Dream, Inc., which eventually merged with The King Center.

In conjunction with Ambassador Andrew Young and other partners, Mr. King co-founded Bounce TV, the first-ever independently owned and operated TV network featuring African Americans. Bounce TV targets audiences 25 years of age and older, and the network's content included a mix of movies, sports, documentaries, and original programming.

Most recently, Mr. King has taken over leadership of the Drum Major Institute, the only nonprofit organization started by his father more than 60 years ago.

About the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff

The University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff (UAPB) is an 1890 Land-Grant HBCU with a diverse student population, competitive degree offerings and stellar faculty. For 150 years, UAPB has worked to create an environment that emphasizes learning, growth and productivity while affording a basic need to its students: a chance to advance. UAPB offers certificate and associate degree programs, more than 40 undergraduate and master's degree programs and a doctoral program in Aquaculture/Fisheries. Students are active in more than 100 organizations, including an internationally renowned Vesper Choir, Marching Musical Machine of the Mid-South Band, Concert Bands, Wind Symphony and an accomplished athletics program.

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