



Urban League of
Hampton Roads, Inc.

41ST ANNUAL

MLK

CELEBRATION:

THE **POWER** OF
Words



**41ST ANNUAL
MLK
CELEBRATION:**



*“I say to you today, my friends,
that in spite of the difficulties
and frustrations of the
moment, I Still Have A Dream.”*

— Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Urban League of
Hampton Roads, Inc.

THE **POWER** OF
Words



Urban League of Hampton Roads, Inc.



Honoring

E.L. Hamm Lifetime Achievement Award

TIM REID

Actor, Writer, Director, and Producer

Keynote Speaker

DR. SARAH LEWIS

Founder, Professor, and Author

MLK Community Leaders

DR. SCOTT MILLER

President, Virginia Wesleyan University

DONOVAN DUNCAN

EVP, Urban Strategies

VICTOR BRANCH

Senior Vice President, Bank of America

JEREMY BRIDGES

President, Hampton Roads Shipping Association

KENNY ALEXANDER

Mayor, Norfolk

DR. ALFRED ABUHAMAD

Dean, EVMS: EVP Brock Virginia Health Sciences, ODU

THE **POWER** OF
Words

41ST ANNUAL MLK CELEBRATION

THURSDAY, JANUARY 16, 2025 – 7:00 P.M.

Program Agenda

WELCOME	April Woodard, <i>Event Emcee</i> Salem High School
PRESENTATION OF COLORS	
GREETINGS	The Honorable Bobby Dyer <i>Mayor, City of Virginia Beach</i>
	The Honorable Bobby Scott <i>U.S. House of Representatives (Virginia's 3rd District)</i>
	The Honorable Tim Kaine <i>United States Senator from Virginia</i>
OPENING REMARKS	Gilbert T. Bland <i>President and CEO, Urban League of Hampton Roads</i>
VIDEO PRESENTATION	2024 Year in Review: Our Impact in Hampton Roads
PRESENTATION OF AWARDS	
Award for Workforce	Jeremy Bridges <i>President, Hampton Roads Shipping Association</i>
Award for Housing	The Honorable Kenny Alexander <i>Mayor, City of Norfolk</i>
	Donovan Duncan <i>President, Urban Strategies, Inc.</i>
INVOCATION	The Reverend R. Perez Gatling <i>Pastor, Ebenezer Baptist Church Virginia Beach</i> DINNER IS SERVED
PRESENTATION OF AWARDS	
Award for Finance	Victor Branch <i>President, Bank of America Richmond</i>
Award for Education SPONSOR	Dr. Scott Miller <i>President, Virginia Wesleyan University</i>
REMARKS	Mike Creedon <i>CEO, Dollar Tree</i>
KEYNOTE ADDRESS	Dr. Sarah Lewis <i>Founder, Vision & Justice</i>
PRESENTATION OF AWARDS	
Award for Health	Dr. Alfred Abuhamad <i>Executive Vice President, Dean of Eastern Virginia Medical School Macon & Joan Brock Virginia Health Sciences at Old Dominion University</i>
<i>The E.L. Hamm Lifetime Achievement Award</i>	Tim Reid <i>Pioneer, Entertainer, and Global Statesmen</i>
CLOSING REMARKS	Clyde Clark <i>Chair, Urban League Board of Directors</i>
BLACK NATIONAL ANTHEM	Lift Every Voice and Sing, <i>Sing-along</i>

Black Anthem LIFT EVERY VOICE AND SING

Lift every voice and sing,
Till earth and heaven ring,
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty;
Let our rejoicing rise
High as the list'ning skies,
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
Let us march on till victory is won.

Stony the road we trod,
Bitter the chast'ning rod,
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;
Yet with a steady beat,
Have not our weary feet
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?
We have come over a way that with tears has been watered.
We have come, treading our path through the blood of the
slaughtered,
Out from the gloomy past,
Till now we stand at last
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.

God of our weary years,
God of our silent tears,
Thou who hast brought us thus far on the way;
Thou who hast by Thy might,
Led us into the light,
Keep us forever in the path, we pray.
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee,
Lest our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee;
Shadowed beneath Thy hand,
May we forever stand,
True to our God,
True to our native land.



History OF THE BLACK ANTHEM

Often referred to as "The Black National Anthem," Lift Every Voice and Sing was a hymn written as a poem by NAACP leader James Weldon Johnson in 1900. His brother, John Rosamond Johnson (1873-1954), composed the music for the lyrics. A choir of 500 schoolchildren at the segregated Stanton School, where James Weldon Johnson was principal, first performed the song in public in Jacksonville, Florida to celebrate President Abraham Lincoln's birthday.

At the turn of the 20th century, Johnson's lyrics eloquently captured the solemn yet hopeful appeal for the liberty of Black Americans. Set against the religious invocation of God and the promise of freedom, the song was later adopted by NAACP and prominently used as a rallying cry during the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s.



Urban League of Hampton Roads, Inc.

ULHR implements its mission by providing services and programs in education, finance, employment, health, and housing to Hampton Roads communities through direct services, advocacy, research, policy analysis, community mobilization and collaboration throughout communities.

ULHR: GUILD

The Urban League Guild of Hampton Roads, a volunteer auxiliary of the Urban League, is comprised of volunteers who donate their time to deliver services that extend public understanding and support of the Urban League and its programs. The principal concerns of the Urban League Guild are in the areas of social service, leadership development and fund-raising.

ULHR: YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

The Urban League of Hampton Roads Young Professionals continues to set the bar high in spaces for young professionals, and our communities as YPs seek opportunities to learn and grow as leaders. The chapter provides this opportunity for their members in more sustainable, more impactful, have a ready pipeline of chairs and future presidents, and strong membership growth prospects. As an organization we must continue to empower our members through education and share our wealth of knowledge with the community.

ULCU: URBAN LEAGUE AT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

The intent of the ULCU Chapters is to educate, uplift, and unify the students at their Colleges & Universities, through various programs, service projects, and positive affairs. We aim to equip students with the necessary skills to survive and flourish as young professionals, as well as develop into effective and positive leaders for the future.

BOARD OF *Directors*

CLYDE CLARK

*ULHR Board Chair
SVP, Relationship Manager III, Blue Ridge Bank*

GILBERT BLAND

*President & Chief Executive
Urban League of Hampton Roads, Inc.*

TOM HASTY

*Senior Executive
Vice President, TowneBank*

DR. MARCIA CONSTON

President, Tidewater Community College

EDWARD HAMM

President, E.L. Hamm & Associates

TOIYA SOSA

*Board Member to Associate Vice President,
Chief Diversity Riverside Health
System-Corporate Office*

DONOVAN JONES

Regional Director, Virginia Natural Gas

JOYVAN MALBON-GRIFFIN

Lawyer, Minnesota Lawyers Mutual

MAXINE MCNAIR

Claims Supervisor, GEICO

GAYLENE KANOYTON

President, Gaylene Events, LLC

BRYAN K. STEPHENS

President/CEO, Hampton Roads Chamber

LOUISA STRAYHORN

President/CEO, LSA Consulting, LLC

BONITA BILLINGSLEY HARRIS

*Director, Media Relations,
Dominion Energy*

THOMASINA WRIGHT

*VP of Program Management
Newport News Shipbuilding*

OUR *Journey*

Throughout the sixties, a number of initiatives to bring a Hampton Roads affiliate of the Urban League failed. Then, as it remains, the need for an Urban League affiliate was evidenced by poverty rates and the wealth gap: low educational attainment and high unemployment. For example, during this period while Black families made up 29% of the total population, they made up 47% of the poorest segment and 50% of black families lived below the poverty line. Unemployment for Black youth exceeded 40%, and 38% of all unemployed were Black males. Median years of education for blacks was 9.3 years compared to a white rate of 11.8 years.

While the need for a service agency focused on this population cohort was clear, there was high reluctance and lack of support to start the affiliate. Despite the unwillingness to form a league, as early as the 1970's, a racially diverse group would gather on Saturday mornings at the Giant Open air market at Wards Corner in Norfolk to discuss issues pertinent to improving the plight of minorities in the area. The group

included prominent whites and blacks as well as media persons. However, it was understood that they were not to publicize the meetings.

Efforts continued and Dr. and Mrs. J. O. Willie engaged with Mrs. Vivian Mason and Dr. Lyman Brooks, President Emeritus of Norfolk State University. With the help of Father Joseph Green, the first organizational meeting was held at Grace Episcopal Church in Norfolk in July 1977. Sensing momentum, representatives from area businesses, civic leagues, and the educational system gathered to explore the possibility of forming an affiliate. Dr. Harrison Wilson, President of Norfolk State University, presided over the meeting.

It was determined that the Urban League of Tidewater would be an interracial, non-profit organization that would work towards the same various goals of equality that the current Urban League of Hampton Roads aspires to...equality in housing, health, education and workforce outcomes.

A Message from our Presenting Sponsor



On behalf of the Dollar Tree and Family Dollar leadership team, it is our great privilege to support the impactful work of the Urban League of Hampton Roads and to serve as the presenting sponsor for today's 41st Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Awards dinner. As one of the most diverse retail workforces in North America, we are deeply committed to community engagement and empowerment, and we are honored to support the inspiring initiatives championed by the Urban League.



It is also our honor to congratulate this year's award recipients for their commitment to upholding the Urban League's mission in service to the Hampton Roads community. The work of these organizations and leaders truly makes our community a better place. We celebrate those who exemplify service and demonstrate the values modeled by Dr. King.

At Dollar Tree and Family Dollar, one of our core company Values is to Inspire Belonging among our associates, customers, and the communities we serve. We believe everyone in our diverse community of more than 200,000 associates has a place with us, whether at our Store Support Center here in Chesapeake, or across the country in our stores or distribution centers. The magic of a diverse team is the opportunity to learn from one another as we collectively work to strengthen the communities where we live and work.

Thank you for the opportunity to continue supporting the Urban League of Hampton Roads, and congratulations again to all who – inspired by Dr. King's legacy – have made such significant contributions to our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jessica J. Thomas".

Jessica J. Thomas

Senior Vice President, Chief Diversity Officer, Dollar Tree





**National
Urban League**

*Empowering Communities.
Changing Lives.
For an Equitable Future.*

Marc H. Morial
President and CEO



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New York, NY 10005
Phone 212 558 5336

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presidentoffice@nul.org

January 16, 2025

Dear Friends of the Urban League,

It is my honor to extend my heartfelt greetings as the Urban League of Hampton Roads gathers to celebrate its 41st Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Awards Dinner.

Congratulations to your President and CEO, Gilbert Bland, the Urban League staff, and the outstanding Board of Directors, for their continued commitment to the mission and spirit of the Urban League Movement.

The National Urban League is a historic civil rights organization dedicated to economic empowerment and committed to fighting for underserved communities. Our 92 affiliates, located in 36 states and the District of Columbia, provide direct services that impact and improve the lives of more than 3.8 million people nationwide. Despite our hard-fought progress and well-earned achievements, there is still work to do. So, I have announced a new phase of advocacy and activism – Empowerment 2.0 – which builds on the five pillars of Empowerment: Education, Employment, Housing, Health, and Justice, and introduces the Three Ds: Defend Democracy, Demand Diversity, and Defeat Poverty. We cannot afford to relent, and we must continue to hold high the standard of freedom, equity, and economic self-reliance for all of America.

It is also my honor to congratulate the awardees for their significant investment in a diverse community, and their dedication to making Hampton Roads a better place to live for all families.

Thank you for your support of the Urban League of Hampton Roads and the National Urban League. Your partnership makes it possible to fulfill our mission to our communities every day. Together, we will continue to build on our legacy to power our future.

Congratulations again and best wishes to all.

Yours in the Movement,

Marc H. Morial
President and Chief Executive Officer
National Urban League



**Urban League of
Hampton Roads, Inc.**

Friends, Supporters, and Honorees,

Today, we gather to honor the life, work, and enduring legacy of a man whose dream changed the course of history—Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. His vision of equality, justice, and love for humanity continues to inspire millions worldwide. On this special occasion of his birthday, we celebrate not only his incredible contributions but also the individuals among us who exemplify his principles through their tireless efforts and unwavering commitment to positive change.



Dr. King's dream was not merely an aspiration but a call to action—a reminder that the fight for justice requires courage, compassion, and collective effort. His words, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere," resonate deeply today as we navigate the challenges of our times. In honoring his legacy, we are reminded that the work is far from over.

Tonight, we have the privilege of recognizing extraordinary individuals who embody Dr. King's ideals. These awardees have taken his dream and brought it to life in their communities, through their service, advocacy, and relentless pursuit of equity. They remind us that change begins with each of us—that by lifting our voices, extending our hands, and working together, we can create a world that reflects the dignity and worth of every person.

To our esteemed honorees: You are a testament to the power of purpose and the impact of action. Your work, whether in education, civil rights, community service, or another avenue, echoes Dr. King's belief in the transformative power of love and nonviolence. Thank you for your dedication and leadership.

As we reflect on Dr. King's legacy and the contributions of our awardees, let us recommit ourselves to his vision. Let this day not only be a celebration but a reminder of our shared responsibility to continue his work—to confront injustice, to build bridges of understanding, and to strive for a future where equality is not just an ideal, but a reality.

Thank you for joining us in honoring Dr. King and those who carry his torch forward. May his dream continue to guide and inspire us all.

With gratitude and hope,

Gilbert Bland

President and CEO Urban League of Hampton Roads



Urban League of Hampton Roads, Inc.

**MEMBERSHIPS ARE
FREE ALL DAY TODAY.**
Join the movement.

USE THE FOLLOWING DISCOUNT CODES:

College Students - MLKCU

Young Professionals - MLKYP

Guild - MLKGuild

Seniors - MLKSenior

ulhr.org/membership



GUILD



SENIOR



STUDENT



**YOUNG
PROFESSIONAL**

LAST 10 YEARS
 PAST *Award* WINNERS

Robert D. Ayers
 Eric Fox
 Barbara Hamm Lee
 Bruce Hacker
 Barbara Hamm Lee
 Deborah K. Stearns

Marquise Hunt
 Cassandra Newby-Alexander, PHD
 Howard Kern
 Bob Aston
 Kaylene C. Kanoyton

Marlene Randall
 Sharon Durette-Hunt
 James Church
 Mary Blunt
 Dr. Ashley Kilgore
 Bruce Thompson
 Addie Wright Thomason
 Dr. Avi Santo

Dwane Seals
 Lois Boyle
 Vivian Henderson

Dr. Anderson O. Foreman
 Dr. Karen Hill Prudent
 Dr. Sharon Sheffield
 Montae Taylor
 Rev. James Curran
 Winston M. Whitehurst, Sr.

Barbara L. Willis
 Rev. Cardell C. Patillo, Jr.
 Donovan Stokes

Amy K. Milligan
 Dr. Narketta Sparkman-Key
 Saea M. Carroll

Peter Blake
 Alexis Swann
 Charlie Hill
 Norfolk Redevelopment Housing
 Authority
 Harry T. Lester
 Lisa Wise-Chapman
 Nykita Doggette

Gilbert Bland
 Bruce Hacker
 Deborah K. Stearns

John Broderick
 Cecelia Tucker
 Mary Blunt
 Tom Hasty, III
 John Brock

Bennet Zier
 Jeffery Smith
 Jennifer Boykin
 Charles Henderson, Jr.
 Dr. Cynthia Romeo
 Susan Dewey
 Robert Blue
 Jane P. Batten

Isaiah Marriner
 James W Dyke, Jr.
 Jonathan Zur
 Dr. Angela Reddix

Dr. Jordan Asher
 Mark Johnson
 Judget Jerauld Jones & Family
 Richard Barry

The Honorable Robert Scott
 Shawn Avery
 The Honorable Louise Lucus
 William Downey
 Steve Lawson
 George Birdsong
 Marckel Bonds
 Dr. Anthony Sandifer
 Reverend Dr. Joseph Green, Jr.

Keynote SPEAKER

DR. SARAH LEWIS

FOUNDER, PROFESSOR, AUTHOR



Sarah is the founder of Vision & Justice; a catalytic civic initiative that reveals the foundational role visual culture plays in generating equity and justice in America. At Harvard, she pioneered the course Vision and Justice: The Art of Race and American Citizenship, which she continues to teach, and which is now part of the university's core curriculum.

Her latest book, *The Unseen Truth* (an Amazon bestseller), reveals one of the greatest lies we've been told about race in this country, and how we can move past it. She tells the story of the Caucasian war—the fight for independence in the Caucasus that coincided with the end of the U.S. Civil War—and how it showed that the place from which we derive “Caucasian” for whiteness actually wasn't white at all. She shows how visual tactics concealed the truth in order to secure our regime of racial injustice, and how we can begin to see what we have ignored and start to dismantle this regime. Harvard professor Imani Perry says that she “illuminates what it means to both ‘see’ and create race, deepening our ability to pursue justice.”

She is also the bestselling author of *The Rise: Creativity, the Gift of Failure*, and *The Search for Mastery*, a story-driven investigation into a biography of an idea—a big idea—that no current term yet captures. It reveals the secrets behind creative human endeavor, and how innovation, mastery, and new concepts are found in unlikely places. The New York Times writes that “Lewis's voice is so lyrical and engaging that her book, *The Rise*, can be read in one sitting,” while Junot Diaz praises it as “exhilarating, inspiring, profound and so beautifully written it left me breathless.” It has been translated into six languages to date.

Sarah's talks urgently address the world we are living in right now, gathering various threads—art history, technical innovation, race, photography, the story of America, and her own deeply personal narrative—to elucidate the power of art to ignite transformative social change. This combination

of urgency, hope, and clear, compelling analysis keeps her lecture halls packed; it's the reason her award-winning “Vision and Justice” issue of *Aperture Magazine* (now in its fourth printing) and bestselling book *The Unseen Truth* have garnered unprecedented press coverage and changed the national conversation on race. Clint Smith, #1 New York Times bestselling author of *How the Word Is Passed*, says that “it is almost as if Sarah Lewis has given us a new pair of glasses that allow us to see history in ways that were previously unclear. Lewis has provided us with an indispensable resource to better see ourselves.”

Sarah has spoken to top-tier organizations from Prada to ABC to United Way. Her mainstage TED talk received over 2.8 million views and she was a closing speaker at SXSW. She was prominently featured in HBO's *Black Art: In the Absence of Light*, a “rich and absorbing” documentary exploring two centuries of art by African-Americans, and the path they forged for contemporary Black artists. Sarah's scholarship has also been profiled by The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, and The Boston Globe, to name a few. She was on Oprah's “Power List,” served on President Obama's Arts Policy Committee, and was the inaugural recipient of the Freedom Scholar Award, presented by The Association for the Study of African American Life and History. The award honors Lewis for her body of work and its “direct positive impact on the life of African-Americans.”

An associate professor at Harvard University in the Department of History of Art and Architecture and the Department of African and African American Studies, Sarah focuses on the intersection of African American and Black Atlantic visual representation, racial justice, and representational democracy in the United States. Her forthcoming publications include *Vision & Justice (One World/Random House, Fall 2025)*, and *Groundwork: Race and Aesthetics in the Era of Stand Your Ground Law*.



**Urban League of
Hampton Roads, Inc.**

The Urban League of Hampton Roads annually honors our Living Legend, **Ed Hamm**, for his exceptional career, commitment to excellence, incomparable leadership, philanthropy, social responsibility, advocacy, and huge impact on civil rights. The E.L. Hamm Lifetime Achievement Award given to one who embodies these ideals and engages in advancing The Dream for equality.

E.L. HAMM
Lifetime Achievement Award
presented to:

TIM REID

E.L. HAMM *Lifetime Achievement* AWARD

TIM REID

ACTOR, WRITER, DIRECTOR, AND PRODUCER

TIM REID, Emmy-nominated actor, director and producer, has appeared on television for over three decades, from Venus Flytrap, on WKRP in Cincinnati through Simon & Simon, Frank's Place, Sister, Sister, That 70's Show, HBO's Treme, and recently OWN's Love Is, and Greenleaf.

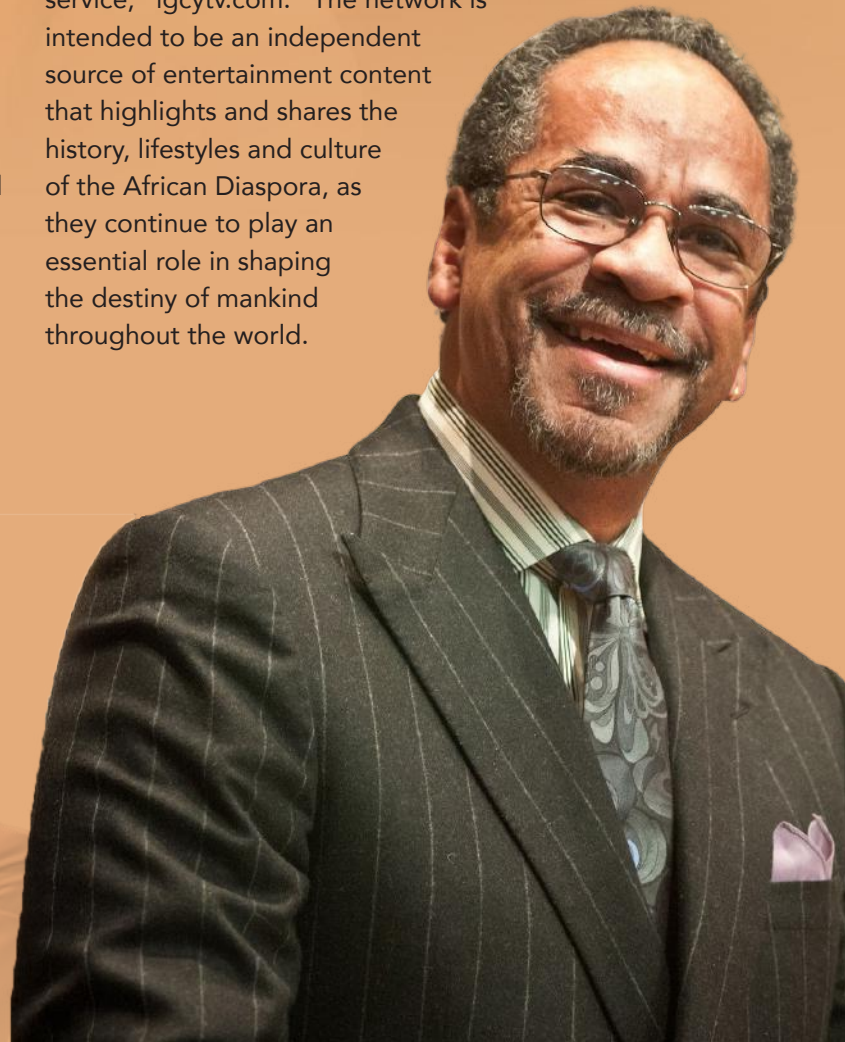
He made his directorial debut with his critically acclaimed feature film, "Once Upon a Time... When We Were Colored." Tim's other film projects include "Asunder," starring Blair Underwood, Debbi Morgan and Michael Beach, and "For Real", which Reid directed, and produced. He co-produced, with Atlantis Films Limited, "Race to Freedom: The Underground Railroad." The film starring Courtney Vance was nominated for Cable Ace Awards' Best Picture. Tim executive produced the critically acclaimed CBS movie "About Sarah," starring Mary Steenburgen, Kellie Martin, and Diane Baker for which he received a Christopher Award. He also created and produced the acclaimed Showtime TV series "Linc's", and has received the "Oscar Micheaux Award" from the Producer's Guild of America for outstanding lifetime achievement.

In 2012, Reid co-produced and directed "Keepers of the Flame", a film of Virginia's central role in American history, which runs in the visitors center of the Virginia State Capitol. He recently launched

the TV series, Legacy of a People, described as a "Talkumentary," Through his non-profit Legacy Media Institute, he instructs an international group of students and emerging filmmakers, promoting excellence and accountability in creating media that reflects a diverse global society.

Reid has received numerous Honorary Degrees and has been inducted into the National Black College Hall of Fame. He was appointed by two Governors to serve two terms on the Board of Visitors of Norfolk State University, and he served on the prestigious Richmond Forum Board.

Tim recently launched an international streaming service, "lgcytv.com." The network is intended to be an independent source of entertainment content that highlights and shares the history, lifestyles and culture of the African Diaspora, as they continue to play an essential role in shaping the destiny of mankind throughout the world.



2025 MLK COMMUNITY LEADER

Award RECIPIENTS

We are proud to honor the leaders that guide our community toward social and economic equality.

Join us as we celebrate their dedication and commitment to Hampton Roads.



Education

DR. SCOTT MILLER

President, Virginia Wesleyan University

Dr. Scott D. Miller is President of Virginia Wesleyan University in Virginia Beach, Virginia. In his 10th year at VWU and his 34th year as a college president, Dr. Miller is one of the most experienced and prominent liberal arts college leaders in America. Recognized by numerous books and publications nationally for his transformative leadership style, he was identified in the book *The Entrepreneurial College President* as one of 17 most entrepreneurial presidents in American higher education. Virginia Wesleyan has enjoyed significant growth, development and accolades during Dr. Miller's tenure. Accomplishments include transitioning to university status; establishment of the highly selective endowed Batten Honors College, a graduate program, and VWU Online; 22 new construction projects on campus and capital

improvements of over \$135 million; the addition of a campus in Tokyo, Japan in partnership with Lakeland University Japan (VWU Global); and increasing the endowment from \$53 million in 2015 to \$130 million in 2024, concluding Virginia Wesleyan's largest fundraising campaign in history. Under his leadership, the University has received over \$13 million in grants to support student scholarships and success for underserved populations, including a federal Title III grant and a National Science Foundation grant. Also during that time, the University became an inaugural member of the Liberal Arts Colleges Racial Equity Leadership Alliance (LACRELA) in 2020. In 2019, Dr. Miller appointed the University's first Chief Diversity Officer and has promoted an expanding menu of campus programming discussing and celebrating inclusion and diversity through the VWU Robert Nusbaum Center. He earned his B.A. in communications from West Virginia Wesleyan College, worked as a journalist early in his career, and completed an M.A. from the University of Dayton. He earned an Ed.S. from Vanderbilt University and a Ph.D. from The Union Institute and University. Dr. Miller has been married for 41 years to Annie Cook Miller. They have two adult daughters and four grandchildren



Finance

VICTOR BRANCH

Senior Vice President, Bank of America

As Market President, Victor Branch is Bank of America's leader for the Richmond, VA Market. He connects businesses, families and individuals to the banking and investment teams that will help improve their financial lives. He also leads the work to deploy Bank of America's resources across the market and the region to address social and economic concerns and build strong communities. In addition to the Market President role, Victor also serves as the Market Executive for Richmond. As Market Executive for Richmond since 2003, Victor has worked with local Bank of America leaders to shape our strategy for delivering one company in the Richmond market. Victor joined Bank of America in 1984 through a predecessor institution's management associate trainee program. He worked in the Consumer Bank for several years and subsequently in Marketing before assuming the

Market Executive role for Richmond. Victor has been active in civic and community affairs throughout his career at Bank of America. In addition to being appointed by Governor Youngkin to serve on the board of visitors at Virginia State University, he most recently served on the board of visitors for William & Mary being appointed by Governor Northam in 2018. He is a trustee of several Foundations, including Virginia Foundation for Independent Colleges, VA Museum of History & Culture, ChamberRVA and Venture Richmond, a founding trustee of the Virginia Funders Network, and a trustee on The Community Foundation of Richmond. Victor is a native of Dinwiddie County where he attended public school. He graduated from Richard Bland College and William and Mary. Victor is married to his high school sweetheart, Michele Branch, and they have two adult daughters, Victoria, and Stephanie.



Housing

DONOVAN DUNCAN

EVP, Urban Strategies

Donovan Duncan is a Executive Vice President for Urban Strategies, Inc. who has more than ten years of experience in the development and housing industry, including managing and implementing a property maintenance strategy, recertification, federal, state and local regulations related to implementing an outstanding housing solution, Housing New Admission and effective management of a 20,000-person waiting list. He has extensive experience in community revitalization and development initiatives, resident services, minority and female participation, Section 3, Youthbuild initiatives and energy conservation along with single family and multifamily housing analysis, Rental Assistance Demonstration Program (RAD),

Neighborhood Stabilization programs and planning/project management. His work as both the Executive Director of Western Reserve Revitalization and Management Company and the Director of Asset Management and Operations for the Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority had him managing a development budget of \$150 million and \$500 million in real estate, tax credit and project-based housing units. In addition, Donovan has a varied financial background in the insurance and car rental and sales industries. Donovan was a fellow in the 2013-2014 class of the Annie E. Casey Fellowship, an intensive leadership development program. He is also the Vice President of Forever Family National Board of Directors in Atlanta, Georgia and the National Community Development and Revitalization Chairperson of the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials. Donovan was also named a Field Catalysts in the inaugural cohort of the Center for Community Investment. Donovan holds a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration/Finance from the University of Akron and a Master's Degree in Organizational Development and Diversity Management from Cleveland State University



Economic Development

JEREMY BRIDGES

President, Hampton Roads Shipping Association

Jeremy Bridges, a seasoned labor relations professional, currently serves as the President & Chief Negotiator of the Hampton Roads Shipping Association (HRSA). In this role, he leads the Employer's Negotiating Committee, negotiating local contracts with the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) and coastwise master contracts. His leadership is dedicated to maintaining favorable labor relations that support the long-term success of the Port of Hampton Roads. Before joining the HRSA team, Jeremy held significant roles in labor relations with CMA-CGM America, LLC and the Pacific Maritime Association. Jeremy's commitment to collaboration and effective governance is evident in his role at HRSA. In addition to his negotiation responsibilities, he co-chairs several joint HRSA/ILA committees,

including the Board of the ILA Trusted Benefit Funds, the Contract Board Grievance Process, and the Joint Safety and Training Committees. He also serves as HRSA's Board representative on various United States Maritime Alliance (USMX) committees, demonstrating his dedication to effective governance and reassuring the audience of his leadership. Jeremy's leadership at HRSA and CMA CGM was marked by his ability to guide and manage teams effectively. As Vice President of Labor Relations at CMA CGM (America) LLC, he oversaw the design and implementation of comprehensive labor relations programs, representing the organization in labor-management relations, including contract negotiations and grievance resolution. His leadership at HRSA, where he currently serves as President & Chief Negotiator, is dedicated to maintaining favorable labor relations that support the long-term success of the Port of Hampton Roads. Mr. Bridges also held senior leadership positions at the Pacific Maritime Association, where he managed labor relations operations across Southern California, served as a key negotiator for multi-employer contracts, and provided counsel on arbitration matters while enhancing staff capabilities through targeted training initiatives. With a Bachelor of Business Administration in Finance from James Madison University, where he was a full athletic scholarship recipient and varsity football player, Jeremy combines a strong educational foundation with practical skills in financial analysis, technology implementation, and personnel management. He is certified in Labor Negotiation Skills and Arbitration for Advocates through the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service and is a Certified Port Executive through the International Association of Maritime and Port Executives. Jeremy's ability to address complex labor issues effectively is a testament to his problem-solving skills and strategic thinking. As a recognized domain expert in labor relations, he is known for building consensus across various personnel levels, including executive management and bargaining unit employees.

2025 MLK COMMUNITY LEADER

Award RECIPIENTS

Housing

KENNY ALEXANDER

Mayor, Norfolk



Dr. Kenneth Cooper Alexander is actively engaged in practical work and scholarly pursuits in leadership, politics, and public service. His scholarship focuses on leadership in diverse settings, with an emphasis on nontraditional forms of leadership and the dynamics of power, influence, and information within leader-follower relationships. As a guest columnist and the author of "Persistence: Evelyn Butts and the African American Quest for Full Citizenship and Self-Determination," Dr. Alexander sheds light on the African American struggle for equal rights and self-governance. His work practically applies leadership principles, mobilizing individuals and organizations to address political, social, and civic challenges through adaptive strategies, change-oriented approaches, and collaboration.

Dr. Alexander began his career as an International Relations teacher at Tidewater Community College and has since become the Chancellor of several career community colleges: Aviation Institute of Maintenance, Centura College, and Tidewater Tech. Additionally, he serves as the president of the family-owned Metropolitan Funeral Service. With a distinguished political career, Dr. Alexander has been serving as Norfolk's Mayor since May 2016 and was re-elected in May 2020 and November 2024. Prior to his mayoral role, he served in the Virginia Senate from 2012 to 2016 and in the House of Delegates from 2002 to 2012. Dr. Alexander holds a bachelor's degree in political science from Old Dominion University, a master's degree in diplomacy from Norwich University, and a Ph.D. in Leadership and Change from Antioch University.

Health

DR. ALFRED ABUHAMAD

Dean, EVMS, EVP Brock Virginia Health Sciences, ODU



Dr. Alfred Abuhamad currently serves as Mason C. Andrews Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology and Radiology, Dean, Eastern Virginia Medical School, and Executive Vice President, Macon & Joan Brock Virginia Health Sciences at Old Dominion University. Dr. Abuhamad is a past President, Provost & Dean of Eastern Virginia Medical School. Dr. Abuhamad had served as past President of the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine (SMFM), Society of Ultrasound in Medical Education (SUSME), Perinatal Quality Forum (PQF) and the American Institute of Ultrasound in Medicine (AIUM). He is also founder and past-Chair of the Council for Patient Safety in Women's Health Care, in Washington DC. He has published more than 200 peer-reviewed manuscripts, authored eight textbooks in fetal echocardiography, ultrasound in Obstetrics and Gynecology, first trimester ultrasound and office procedures, and received numerous national and international awards including

the 2019 Commonwealth of Virginia Outstanding Faculty Award and the 2022 Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine Life-Time Achievement Award. He is the recipient of the National Institute of Health RO1 grant to study "Novel Tools for the Noninvasive Evaluation of the Human Placenta". Dr. Abuhamad established the International Society of Ultrasound in Obstetrics and Gynecology's (ISUOG) outreach program and has led several ultrasound training missions to the developing world to include Haiti, Ghana and Somaliland. He is well known internationally for his work in ultrasound, prenatal diagnosis, fetal echocardiography, global outreach and patient safety. Dr. Abuhamad has been a faculty member at EVMS, at ODU and



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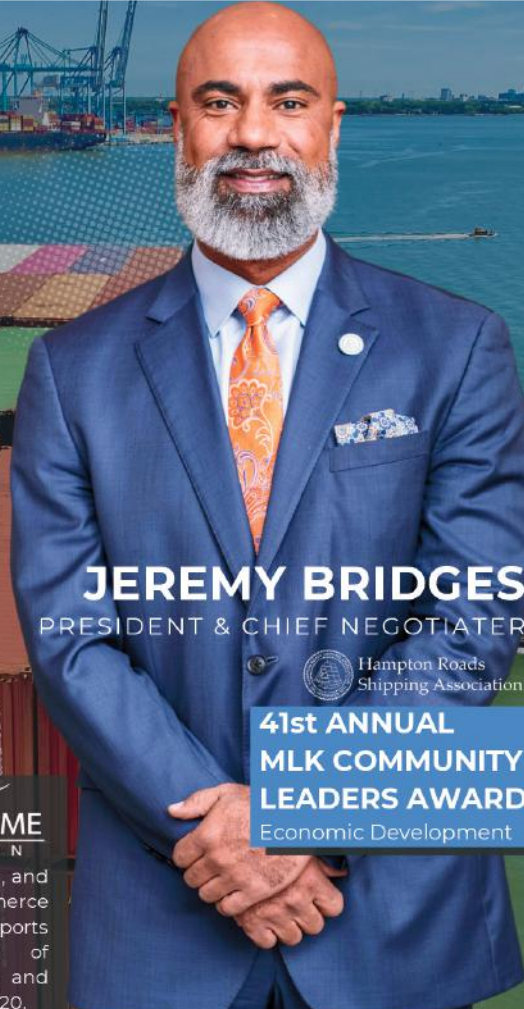
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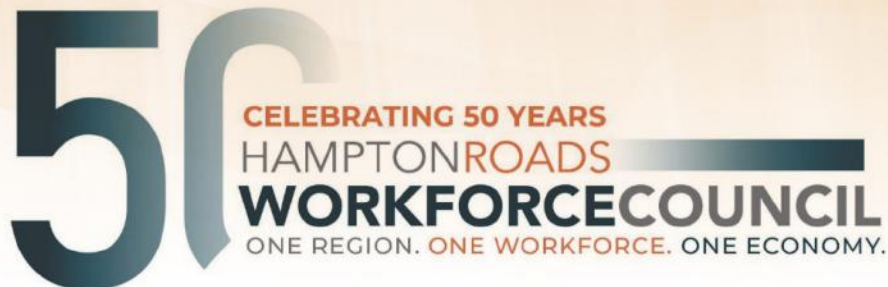
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THE HAMPTON ROADS WORKFORCE COUNCIL builds catalytic collaborations to advance our regional employment ecosystem for economic empowerment for all. We applaud the Urban League's longstanding commitment to sustaining the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and are pleased to partner with the Urban League of Hampton Roads to support the shared vision of workforce equity by promoting diversified talent outreach, inclusive career training/development, and advancement pathways for family-sustaining careers in Hampton Roads.

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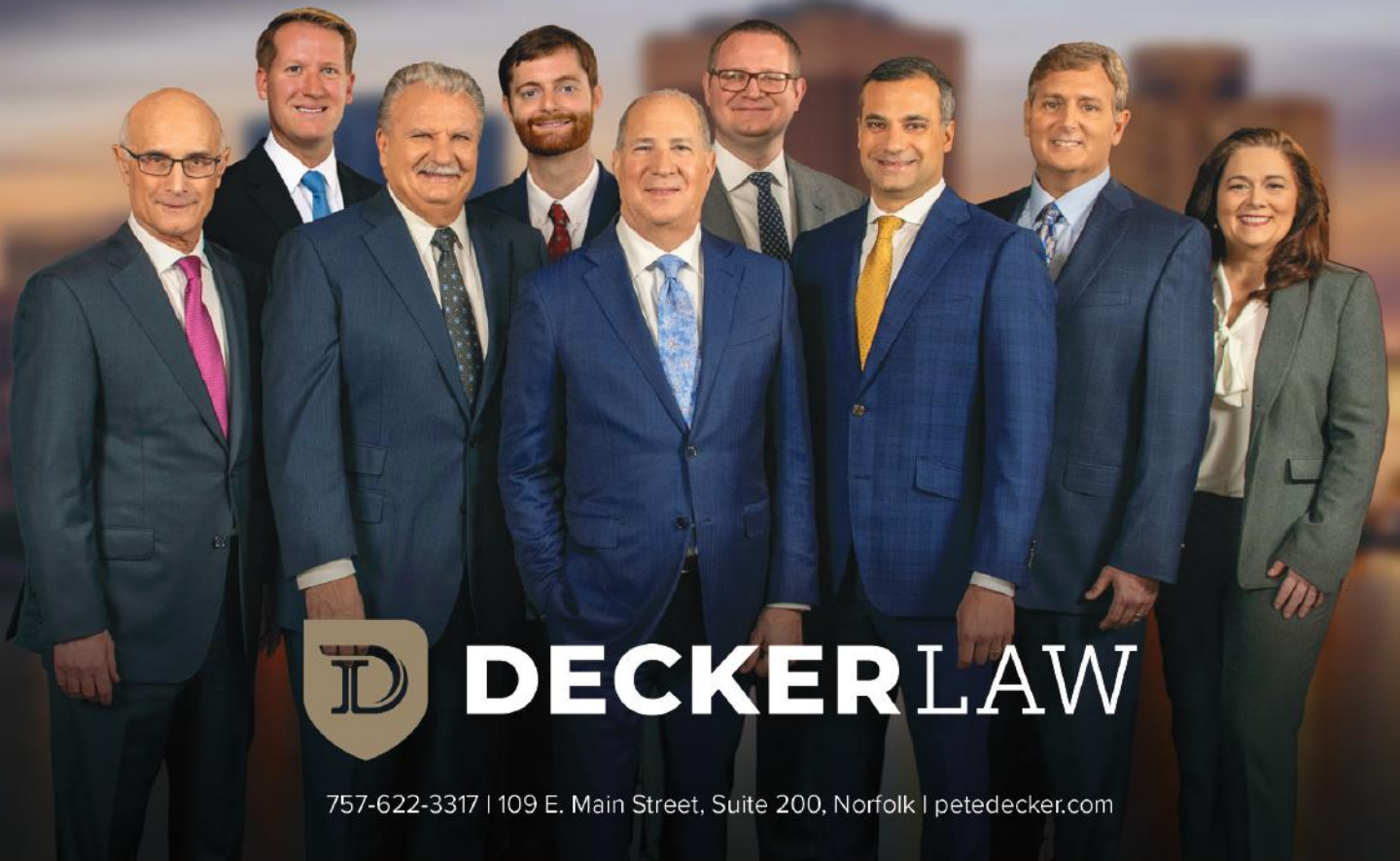
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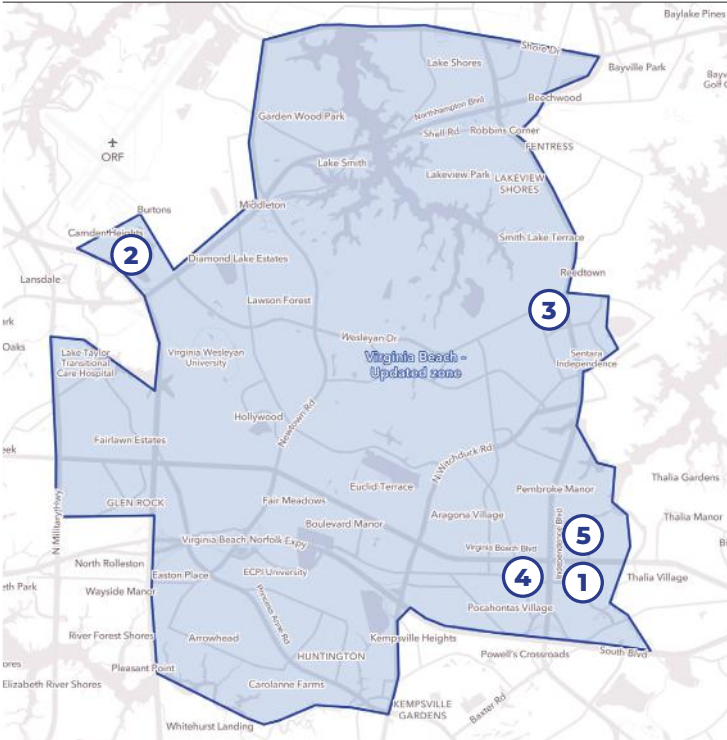
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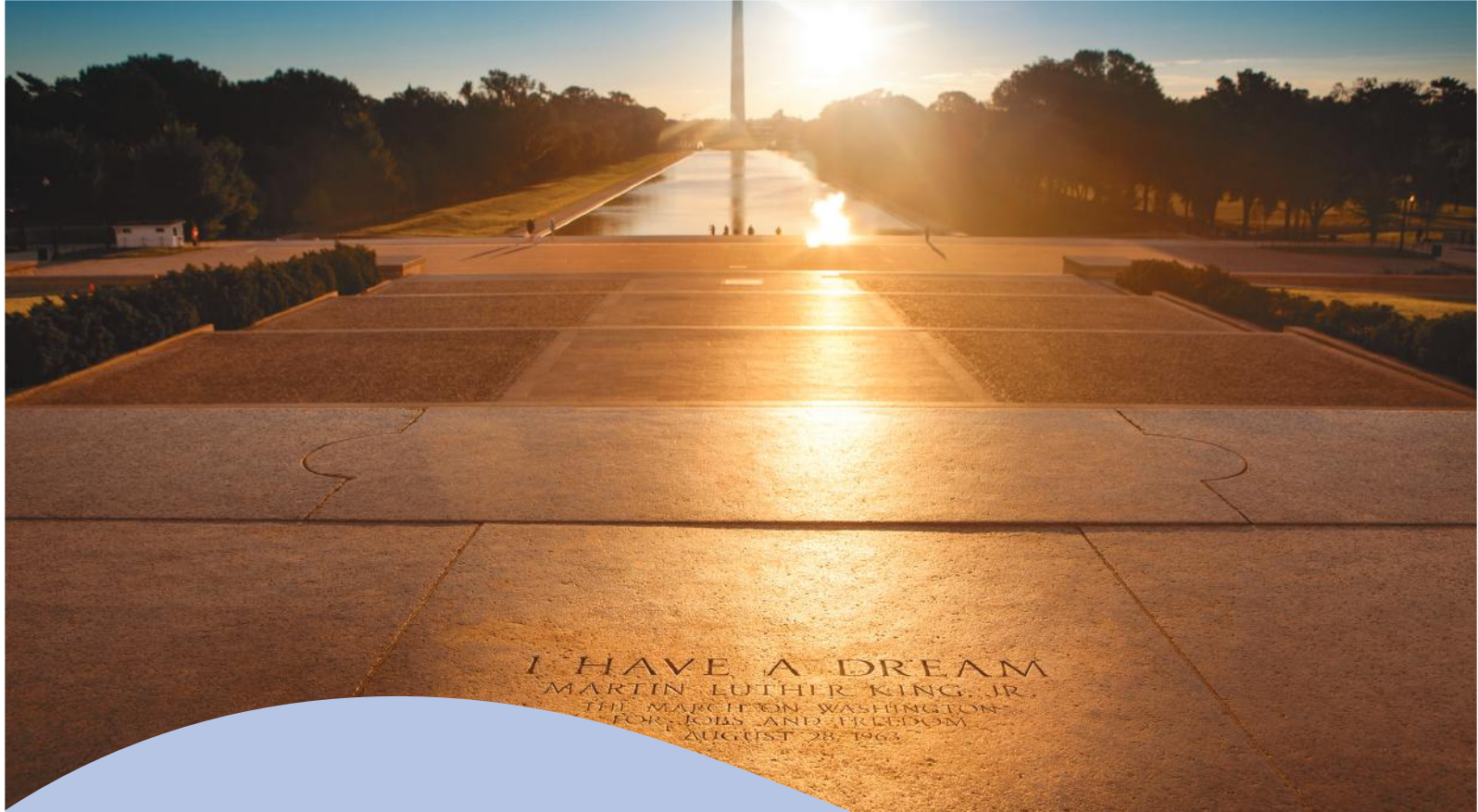
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Sentara believes our community thrives when we all come together to improve the health and well-being of our residents. Thank you, Urban League of Hampton Roads, for your commitment to enhancing the lives of people in the community. The opportunities you provide make a real difference and celebrate community leaders who are shaping positive change in honor of Martin Luther King Jr.



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Congratulations to all recipients of the
41st Annual MLK Community Leaders Awards



Thomas M. Little, *International Vice President*
Larry Bachtell, *Atlantic Coast District Vice President*
Jonathan Coley, *Hampton Roads District Council President*
Monta Bivins, *Hampton Roads District Council Vice President*
Travelle Jenkins, *Secretary/Treasurer*
Toye Murphy, *Recording Secretary*

Affiliated Locals

Jonathan Coley, *President Local 970* **Christopher Faulk**, *President Local 1248*
Kevin Halstead, *President Local 1624* **Vernon Brimage**, *President, Local 1963*
Monta Bivins, *President, Local 1970*

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“Sobriety, Truth, Justice, and Morality”



It is my privilege to honor **Dr. Alfred Abuhamad**, a distinguished leader whose groundbreaking contributions to healthcare and education have transformed our community. As the Executive Vice President, Macon & Joan Brock Virginia Health Sciences at Old Dominion University and Dean of Eastern Virginia Medical School at ODU, Dr. Abuhamad has championed innovation in medical education, expanded access to quality healthcare, and advanced health equity. Beyond his roles, he is a passionate advocate, a pioneer in maternal-fetal medicine, and a mentor to the next generation of medical leaders. His enduring dedication to service and inclusion reflects the legacy of Dr. King, making him a fitting recipient of the 41st Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Community Leaders Health Award. Congratulations, Dr. Abuhamad, on this well-deserved recognition of your extraordinary impact.

Shirley Baldwin

CPA, CFP, MBA
BALDWIN ADVISORY, LLC.

Congratulations

We are proud to honor **Dr. Scott D. Miller** for his unwavering dedication to education as a driving force for equity and positive change. As President of Virginia Wesleyan University, Dr. Miller has redefined what it means to lead in education, creating a learning environment that prioritizes inclusion, innovation, and sustainability. Through his vision, students are not only prepared to succeed academically but are also inspired to become compassionate leaders who give back to their communities. Dr. Miller's commitment to breaking down barriers and fostering opportunities reflects the enduring legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., making him a true champion for the transformative power of education.

from David and Susan Goode



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Janeen and I would like to congratulate all the MLK Community Award recipients. In today's world there is a famine for leadership. You and the Urban League are supplying the leadership our communities need.

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Congratulations to the 41st MLK Community Leaders Awardees:

Dr. Alfred Abuhamad

Dean, EVMS; EVP, Brock Virginia Health Sciences, ODU

Kenny Alexander

Mayor, Norfolk

Victor Branch

Senior Vice President, Bank of America

Jeremy Bridges

President, Hampton Roads Shipping Association

Donovan Duncan

EVP, Urban Strategies

Dr. Scott Miller

President, Virginia Wesleyan University

Tim Reid

Actor, Writer, Director and Producer

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Dollar Tree and Family Dollar are proud to celebrate the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the many contributions he made to advancing equal rights for all.

We are honored to serve as the presenting sponsor for the Urban League of Hampton Roads 41st Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Awards Dinner.

We congratulate the Urban League for its years of dedicated service to the Hampton Roads community, and we celebrate all of the community leaders recognized here today. Thank you for making our community stronger.

