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1-18-2015

### Martin Luther King Celebration Event

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#### Recommended Citation

Syverud, Kent, "Martin Luther King Celebration Event" (2015). *Chancellor's Office (2004 - 2013)*. 103.  
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# Syracuse University

Remarks by Chancellor Kent Syverud

Delivered on Thursday, January 18, 2015

Location: Carrier Dome

Remarks: Martin Luther King Celebration Event

Good evening, and welcome to Syracuse University's Carrier Dome as we celebrate the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and 30 years of this event on the Syracuse University campus.

I want to thank Sylvia Langford, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs, who so capably led the committee that planned tonight's event, and in particular the program we are about to experience. Thank you to the committee members, too, for their hard work and dedication.

I also want to thank Dick Phillips, Dean Emeritus of Hendricks Chapel and Tom Wolfe, former Dean of Hendricks and Senior Vice President of Student Affairs, who have traveled from Denver, Colorado, to be with us tonight.

As you saw in the video, this event was established under Dick's guidance during his tenure at the Chapel, and Tom shepherded it for many years during his time as dean of the chapel and in student affairs.

We all owe Dick and Tom, as well as former chairs and committee members, a big round of applause for their dedication.

As Syracuse University moves forward in our mission to be the best place we can be, it is important that we continue to draw lessons from our past, to remember the work of those who fought for change and who worked toward a more just society.

It is important that we celebrate the achievements that have been made through the years, and to celebrate the cultures and experiences of the people that form our local and global communities.

And it is important that we use the lessons we have learned, as citizens of this diverse global community, to do our part to make the world a better place than we found it. We are more than two generations removed from the time in which Dr. King marched for justice and spoke of his hope that his children would be judged on their character, not on the color of their skin.

We need to always be asking ourselves, “What are we doing today to continue those hopes and dreams, and to bring them alive for the younger generations?” What are we doing to ensure justice that all people, regardless of their race, gender, sexual orientation, faith or culture, deserve.

One of the ways we can keep Dr. King’s dream alive and work toward justice for all is through dialogue—the kind of candid dialogue fostered through The Race Card Project.

We are honored to have Michele Norris, National Public Radio host and creator of The Race Card Project, with us as our keynote speaker tonight.

Her call back in 2010 for six-word essays that capture people’s experiences, questions, hopes and dreams on the subject of race and identity has helped to break down barriers and to make the first step to get engaged in this important continuing conversation.

You will also hear and see the hopes and dreams of many of our students and from community members, who will share their experiences, hopes and dreams through performance.

We will also honor four members of our University/ESF and greater Syracuse communities, who are dedicated to making a difference.

Thank you for celebrating this milestone anniversary with us, and enjoy the program.

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