

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Celebration SNOHOMISH COUNTY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Civil Rights leader Morris Dees to keynote Martin Luther King Jr. celebration event

Civil Rights leader Morris Dees, of The Southern Poverty Law Center, will be the keynote speaker at the 2005 Snohomish County Martin Luther King Jr. Day Community Celebration.

Dees will speak at a 1 p.m. program at the Everett Conference Center, 2000 Hewitt Ave., on Thursday Jan. 13, 2005 as part of a day full of events.

Snohomish County, the City of Everett and the Snohomish County YMCA have organized the events in an effort to keep alive MLK Jr.'s dream of creating a unified community with the promise of inclusion and diversity among all residents of Snohomish County.

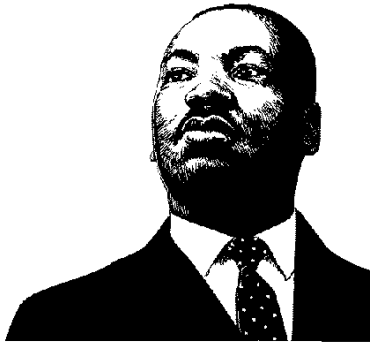
"Morris Dees is a hero to those of us who believe in the principle of opportunity for all and have a desire to build a community that respects all people," Snohomish County Executive Aaron Reardon said. "His message to Snohomish County will be particularly powerful in the wake of a series of troubling racial incidents over the past year. Our County is about inclusiveness and unity, and Dees' presence here will reinforce that."

Mayor Ray Stephanson said, "We are working every day to build bridges in our community among all people. Morris Dees, a man who made a conscious decision in his life to fight stereotypes and injustices, is proof that one person can really make a difference. He is a modern-day pioneer in many respects who has successfully found a way to fight hate groups."

Jerry Beavers, CEO of the Snohomish County YMCA, said, "We are proud to be a part of the MLK Celebration. Our hope is that our community celebration of diversity will build stronger bridges in Snohomish County."

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Dees, founder and chief trial counsel for the non-profit Southern Poverty Law Center, is a legendary figure in the civil rights movement. Dees' efforts have resulted in many achievements including the Civil Rights Memorial, lawsuits that bankrupted the KKK and imprisoned perpetrators of hate crimes and increased awareness of radical militias.

Dees co-founded the Southern Poverty Law Center in 1971, which specializes in lawsuits involving civil rights violations, domestic terrorists and racially motivated crimes.

His most famous cases have involved landmark damage awards that have driven several prominent neo-Nazi groups into bankruptcy. In 1981, Dees successfully sued the Ku Klux Klan and won a \$7 million settlement. Then in 1991, he won a judgment of \$12 million against the White Aryan Resistance and was instrumental in the rewarding of a \$6.5 million judgment against the Aryan Nation in 2001.

The day of community events begin 7 a.m. with a Diversity Partnering Breakfast sponsored by United Way at Everett Station, 3201 Smith Ave. The MLK "Prodigies for Peace" School Essay Award winners will be announced at the breakfast. Space is limited to the first 125 people who sign up with Kate Reardon, public information director for the City of Everett, at 425-257-8687 or kreardon@ci.everett.wa.us.

Dees will address an all-school assembly at Arlington High School, 18821 Crown Ridge Blvd., at 10 a.m. More than 1,500 students are expected to attend. Dees will be introduced by several Arlington students who organized a unity rally for hundreds of their peers and community members in the wake of a cross-burning last March.

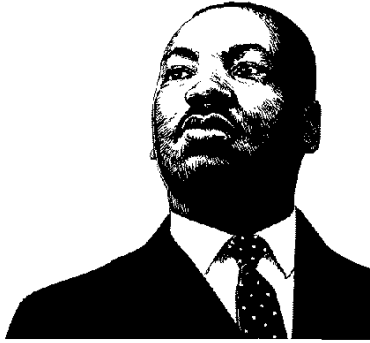
At noon, there will be a community march through downtown Everett. Everyone is welcome to join the group in a new route that begins at Hewitt and Lombard avenues. The march will head west on Hewitt, north on Colby Avenue, east on Everett Avenue and South on Broadway back to the Everett Conference Center. The march has been a tradition for the past 14 years.

At 1 p.m., the Community Celebration and Program with keynote speaker Morris Dees will be at the Everett Conference Center, 2000 Hewitt Ave. The program also features the Everett High School Jazz Band and the Everett Dance Theatre dancers.

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The Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Celebration serves to recognize and honor the life and work of Dr. King, create a unified community, and promote inclusion and diversity among the

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citizens of Snohomish County. The Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Celebration is held each January to honor his memory and leadership and to celebrate Snohomish County's diverse ethnic and cultural community.

The City of Everett, Snohomish County Government and the YMCA of Snohomish County are co-sponsors of the event. Additional support includes: The Herald, Snohomish County Labor Council, Paine Field Airport, ABS Technologies, Alfy's Pizza, Cascade Bank, Center for Career Alternatives, Chicago Title Escrow, Community Transit, Everett Transit, Everett TV 21, Everett Gospel Mission Inc., Evergreen Manor, Fred Meyer—Everett, Hyundai of Everett, Interfaith Association of Snohomish County, Susan J. Kern, Bruce Meyers, Outcomes by Levy, Podrasky & Shipman Law Firm, Providence Everett Medical Center, Providence General Foundation, Puget Sound Kidney Centers, Shockey-Brent Inc., Bryan & Erin Smith, Snohomish County Center for Battered Women, Tiz's Door Sales Inc., Tulalip Tribes, Karyn and Robert Zigler, United Way of Snohomish County, Marysville Craft Mart, Naval Station Everett, Martha and William Robins, Temple Beth Or, Aaron and Kate Reardon.

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