

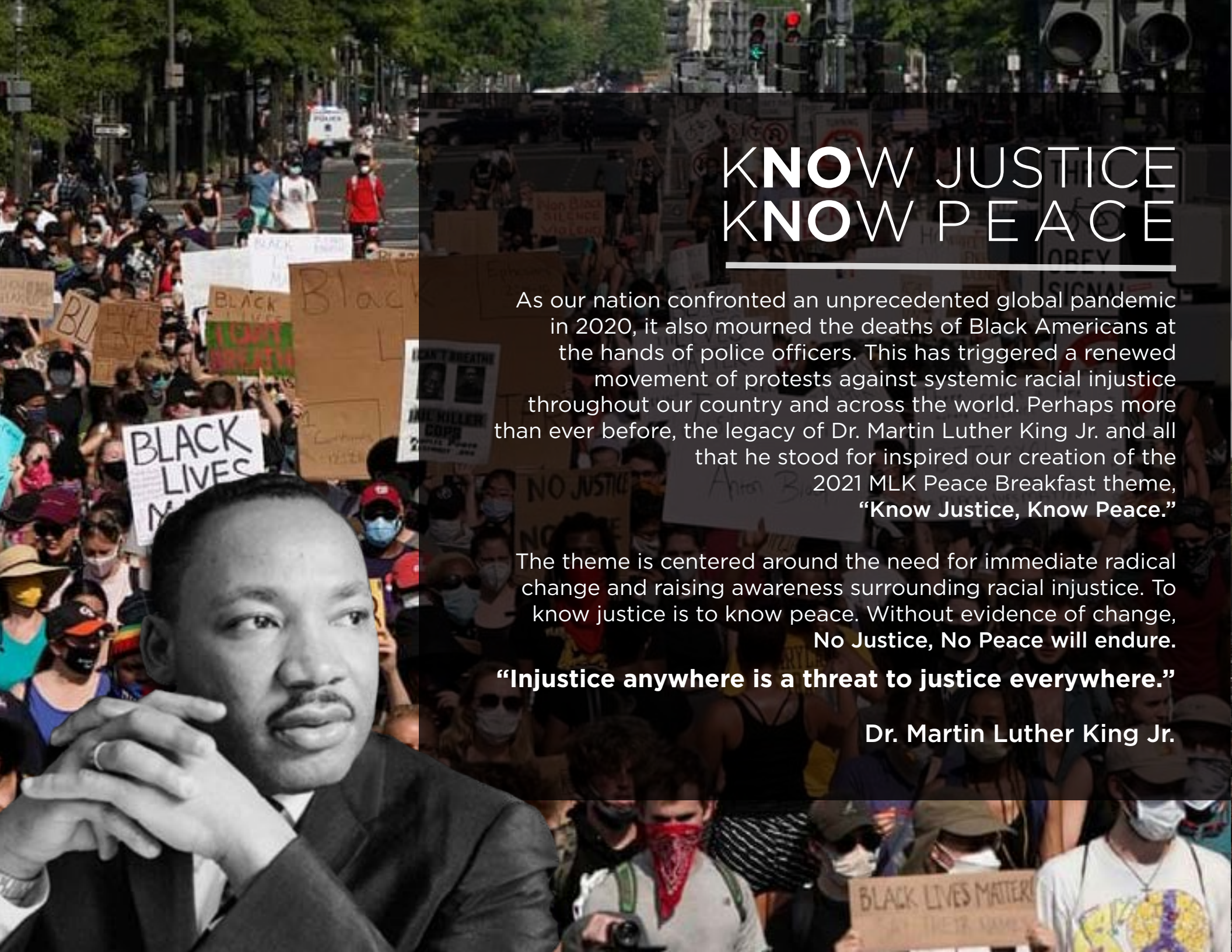


KNOW JUSTICE KNOW PEACE

Jan. 15, 2021 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Peace Awards Ceremony



METROPOLITAN STATE UNIVERSITYSM
OF DENVER



KNOW JUSTICE KNOW PEACE

As our nation confronted an unprecedented global pandemic in 2020, it also mourned the deaths of Black Americans at the hands of police officers. This has triggered a renewed movement of protests against systemic racial injustice throughout our country and across the world. Perhaps more than ever before, the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and all that he stood for inspired our creation of the 2021 MLK Peace Breakfast theme, **“Know Justice, Know Peace.”**

The theme is centered around the need for immediate radical change and raising awareness surrounding racial injustice. To know justice is to know peace. Without evidence of change, **No Justice, No Peace will endure.**

“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.”

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

A History of our Celebration

Karen J. Thorpe, Ph.D., then-Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs, initiated the annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Peace Breakfast on Jan. 15, 1992. At the first MLK Peace Breakfast about 50 people from the campus and Denver community gathered in the old Student Union (now Plaza Building) to celebrate Dr. King's life and legacy. The Office of Diversity and Inclusion now serves as the official sponsor.

Committee

Michael Benitez, Ph.D.

Kathleen Jewby

Donelyn Jones

Lisa Kirscht, J.D.

Kiran Majid

Douglas Mpondi, Ph.D.

Cory Phare

Julie Sharer-Price

Tisha Townsend

Jeremy VanHooser

Kimberly Williams

Lorri Wray

Spirit of MLK Drive

Thank you for attending the 2021 MLK Peace Breakfast! Although our event is remote this year, we seek to honor Dr. King's legacy by maintaining the spirit of our service drive that has been an important part of the event each year. To this end, we are asking everyone to support MSU Denver's Student Emergency Fund in lieu of purchasing tickets to attend the breakfast and event this year.

Perhaps more than ever before, our students are in need of support that is offered through this fund to help them overcome challenges that might otherwise cause them to stop or pause their educational goals. Your donations will also support one of MSU Denver's core values - access, which is a value that was reflected through Dr. King's mission of equality for all.

Please [donate here](https://engage.msudenver.edu/giving/stl05)
(engage.msudenver.edu/giving/stl05)
and enter **"2021 MLK Peace Breakfast"**
in the comments box.

Event Program

Welcome and Land Acknowledgement

Amber Mozet
MSU Denver Alumni Association Board Member

Invocation

Pastor Anitha Jones
Co-Pastor, For His Glory Christian Fellowship

Welcome Remarks

Janine Davidson, Ph.D.
President, MSU Denver

Keynote

Melinna Abdullah, Ph.D.
Professor, Pan-African Studies California State
University, Los Angeles

Awardees

Vincent Cervantes
Founder and Organizing Director,
Denver Alliance Street Health Response

Chalane Lechuga, Ph.D.
Associate Professor Chicana/o Studies
and Diversity Faculty Fellow

Alejandra Merjil
Alumnus, MSU Denver

We Shall Overcome

MSU Denver, Department of Music





Know Justice, Know Peace Panel Discussion

Dr. Melina Abdullah

Professor of Pan-African Studies, California State University, Los Angeles

Dr. Michael Benitez

Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion, MSU Denver

Dr. Andrea Borrego

Associate Professor of Criminal Justice and Criminology, MSU Denver

Stephen Brackett


Community Activist and Lead Singer, Flobots

Sondra Young

President, Denver Chapter of the NAACP

Friday, Jan. 15, 2021

2:30–4 p.m.



Keynote Speaker Mellina Abdullah, Ph.D.

Melina Abdullah is a recognized expert on race, gender, class, and social movements. She was among the original group of organizers that convened to form Black Lives Matter and continues to serve as a Los Angeles chapter leader.

She is also Professor and Chair of Pan-African Studies at California State University, Los Angeles. Professor Abdullah is a womanist scholar-activist, understanding the role that she plays in the academy as intrinsically linked to broader struggles for the liberation of oppressed people. Professor Abdullah is a leader in the fight for Ethnic Studies in the K-12 and university systems and was a part of the historic victory that made Ethnic Studies a requirement in the Los Angeles Unified School District, also serving on the Taskforce for the Advancement of Ethnic Studies for the California State University system.

Abdullah has been the recipient several awards and recognitions. She was the 2019 Rachel B. Noel Distinguished Visiting Professor at MSU Denver, 2018 Community Service Award from National Council for Black Studies, 2017 Unsung Heroes Award from the Oscar Grant Foundation, 2017 Extraordinary Service Award from the African Heritage Studies Association, 2017 Justice Work Award from Beyond the Bars, 2017 Freedom Fighter Award from the NAACP, 2017 Activist Award presented by the National Association for Ethnic Studies, among numerous others.

Awardees



Chalane Lechuga, Ph.D.

As a Chicana/o Studies sociologist, Associate Professor Chalane Lechuga, Ph.D., uses inclusive and critical pedagogy to reveal and teach the multiplicity of intersectional Latina/o identities, examining the effect of public policy, and educational practices, situated in a historical flashpoint of civil rights and social justice actions. She advocates for the recruitment and retention of underrepresented faculty in higher education as Diversity Faculty Fellow with the Office of Diversity and Inclusion

Born and raised in Denver, Colorado and an alumna of Denver North High School, she continues to engage in teaching, scholarly activity and service that emanates from her lived experiences.



Alejandra Merjil

Alejandra Merjil is heavily involved in higher education access for all students regardless of immigration status, as well as an advocate for healthcare for all. She is a DACA student and have been leader of various student organizations that serves DACA/ Undocumented students both high school and in higher education. Alejandra served as the president of the Student Nurses' Association at MSU Denver, president of RISE, secretary for the United Leaders in Higher Education, and president for the DREAMers United at CCD. She have received the Cesar Chavez Peace and Leadership Justice Award and organized state-wide conferences for educators and students in higher education regardless of immigration status.



Vincent Cervantes

Vinnie Cervantes is a lifelong Colorado resident and MSU Denver graduate. As Director for Denver Alliance for Street Health Response (DASHR), he has worked to create alternatives to policing and jail. He serves on the boards for The Conflict Center, which provides tools for conflict resolution and Colorado Jobs With Justice, which works to expand workers' rights. Vinnie was previously chair of the Colorado Poor People's Campaign, the revived movement that MLK started in 1968. Through involvement in politics, organizing, and activism, Vinnie has worked to create justice in the areas of homelessness, hunger, workers' rights, education, and criminal justice.

Past Awardees

2020

Rosemarie Allen, Ed.D.
Khadijatu Fofanah
Eneri "Netty" Rodriguez
Women of Color Founders -
Cynthia Baron, Ed.D
Andrea Borrego, Ph.D.
Bridgette Coble, Ph.D.
Hsiu-Ping Liu, Ph.D.

2019

Wilton Flemon Ph.D.
Rebecca Hunter Dobbin
Rev. Tammy Garrett-Williams
Verginia Castro

2018

Kathryn Young, Ph.D.
Pastor Anitha Jones

2017

Aaron Brown, Ph.D.
Madison Holloway, Ph.D.
Stephen M. Jordan, Ph.D.
Maria Rangel Leon
Renee Fajardo

2016

Sandra Haynes, Ph.D.
Althea Redd
Aaron Futrell

2015

Arthur Jones, Ph.D.
Katherine Miller
Zachary Berger

2014

Jennine Jeffries
Alton Clark
Rudy Gonzales

2013

Ramon Del Castillo, Ph.D.
Mary Hanewall
Mahdyeh Hosseini Nowkhandan

2012

Candace Johnson
Lisa Ingarfield
Bennie Williams

2011

Opalanga Pugh
Aaron Smith
Mary Ann Watson, Ph.D.
Gerie Grimes

2010

Marziya Kaka
Gloria J. Burns
John Parvensky
Leon Kelly
Annjanette Alejano-Steele, Ph.D.

2009

Lavanda Conner
Savannah Powell
Lucas Shamala, Ph.D.
Cleo Parker Robinson

2008

Phyllis Bigpond
Vern Howard
Larry Johnson, Ph.D.
Wayne Marshall

2007

Lupe Martinez, Ph.D.
Win Naing
The Rev. James Peters

2006

Nick Delmonico
Erin Durban
Anthony J. Garcia
Ruth Yamauchi

2005

Jacquelyn Benton
Nita Gonzales
James "Justice" Jackson

2004

Art Campa, Ph.D.
Mildred Freeney-Hilton
Ronald M. Knights, Ph.D.
Angelo Van Fleet

2003

Erika Church
Brother Jeff Fard
Luis Torres, Ph.D.

2002

Skip Crownhart
Bill Hosokawa
Hektor Munoz

2001

Pauline Reece

2000

Addison "Spike" Adams
Brenda Mosby

1999

Fannie Fiddmont, Ph.D.
Grizel Gonzales
Gayle Johnson
Percy A. Morehouse Jr, Ph.D.

1998

Walter R. Echo-hawk
Teresa Harper
Robert Hazan, Ph.D.

1997

Abelardo "Lalo" Delgado
Yolanda Ortega-Ericksen
Mark Ramsey
Gwendolyn Thomas, Ph.D.

1996

Essie Garrett
The Rev. Marshall Gourley
Alfonso Suazo
Tara Tull

1995

Margie Ball Cook Ph.D.
The Rev. Clyde J. Miller
Thomas Rauch
Megan Reyes

1994

Glenn Morris, Ph.D.
Joe Navarro
Arthur & Bea Sutton Branscombe
Akbarali Thobhani, Ph.D.

1993

Jody Andrade
Vincent & Rosemary Harding
C.J. White, Ph.D.

1992

Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales
Wilma J. Webb

Special Thanks

Office of Diversity and Inclusion, Met
Media Creative Team, MSU Denver
Music Department, David Sharman,
and Amanda Schwengel