UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA  
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., DAY  
CELEBRATION HISTORY

The commemoration of the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., has a rich history at the University of South Carolina. Even before the inception of the national holiday, commemorative activities were held at USC. In January 1983, the USC Black Alumni Caucus sponsored the first University program in honor of Dr. King's birthday and continued to sponsor the event, held in Rutledge Chapel, until 1986.

In that same year, the Office of Minority Student Affairs, in conjunction with the Black Alumni Caucus and the Association of African-American Students, expanded the program and moved it to the Russell House Ballroom. Dr. King's daughter, Ms. Yolanda King, was the 1986 keynote speaker. Since then, through the Office of the President, Division of Student Affairs and the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs, this commemorative program has evolved into a three-day celebration. Nationally recognized speakers and native South Carolinians who have achieved success in religion, government and politics have been past keynote speakers for the Annual Commemorative Breakfast which traditionally kicks off the MLK activities for the weekend leading up to the Monday birthday celebration.

The USC Chapter of the Black Law Students Association implemented their Commemorative Law School Program in 1989. The primary focus of this event has been on the legal aspects of Dr. King's life and the Civil Rights Movement, and this event is open to the public. The Martin Luther King, Jr., Holiday Committee is pleased that these activities have evolved into a University-wide event. The committee, with the full support of President Harris Pastides, salutes those individuals and groups that have led the way in commemorating Dr. King's birthday at this institution.

In 1999 then President John M. Palms cancelled classes and declared the day a University-wide Day of Service. This tradition continues today under the leadership of President Harris Pastides. USC's Day of Service includes projects in which faculty, staff and students devote a day to community service in the greater Columbia community and it continues to grow in scope. USC's Day of Service celebrates Dr. King's spirit and our commitment as a University to never forget his contributions to this nation and to the world.

Black Law Students Association  
A Celebration Commemorating the Life and Legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.  

A LEGACY OF EMPOWERMENT

January 12, 2012  
6:00 p.m., USC School of Law Auditorium

PRESIDING:  
Sutania Radlein, Third-Year Law Student  
2012 President, Black Law Students Association

INVOCATION:  
Aisha Success, Third-Year Law Student

MUSIC SELECTION:  
Simone Martin, Second-Year Law Student

WELCOME  
Robert Wilcox, Dean, USC School of Law

OCCASION  
Cheslyne Brighthop, Third-Year Law Student

REFLECTIONS  
Charles White, First-Year Law Student

INTRODUCTION OF MODERATOR  
Ashley Cole, Third-Year Law Student

PANELISTS  
Dr. Cleveland Sellers  
Attorney I.S. Leevy Johnson  
Chris Leevy Johnson  
Attorney Candace Jackson

INTRODUCTION OF PANELISTS  
Judi Gatson, WIS-TV, moderator

REMARKS  
Bobby Gist, Chair, USC 2012 Martin Luther King, Jr., Holiday Committee, and Executive Assistant to the President for Equal Opportunity Programs

BENEDICTION  
Lamar Fyall, First-Year Law Student

A reception sponsored by the USC School of Law will follow the program. Special thanks to Dean Robert Wilcox.
CLEVELAND L. SELLERS JR.

Cleveland L. Sellers Jr. was born in Denmark, S.C. He left Howard University in 1962 to join the civil rights movement. In 1968 he was the only person arrested as a result of the Orangeburg Massacre, a violent melee at South Carolina State University in which three protesters were killed and another 27 injured.

During his seven months in prison (his conviction was pardoned 25 years later), Sellers decided to complete his education and fight for civil rights as an educator. He earned a master's degree in education from Harvard University and a doctorate in education from the University of North Carolina, Greensboro. Sellers is a former member of the S.C. State Board of Education, Second Judicial District. He taught history and African-American studies at the University of South Carolina, later becoming director of USC's African-American Studies Program. He is currently president of Voorhees College. Sellers is also a member of such groups as the Kosmos Club and the Southern Historical Association. His awards include the 2003 I. DeQuincey Newman Trailblazer Award and the 2009 Legacy Award from the United Negro College Fund.

Sellers and his wife, Gwendolyn, have three children: Nosizwe A. Sellers, M.D.; The Reverend Cleveland L. Sellers III (Lumumba); and S.C. Rep. Bakari Sellers.

I.S. LEEVY JOHNSON

I.S. Leevy Johnson was born in Richland County, S.C. He received the Associate in Mortuary Science Degree from the University of Minnesota in 1962, a Bachelor of Science from Benedict College in 1965 and the Juris Doctor from the University of South Carolina School of Law in 1968. He is a member of Brookland Baptist Church and has served on numerous charitable boards and commissions.

Featured in multiple editions of “The Best Lawyers in America” and “Super Lawyers,” Johnson has also received the highest rating for ethics and legal ability awarded by the Martindale-Hubbell National rating service. In 1970, he was one of the first three African-Americans to be elected to the South Carolina House of Representatives since the turn of the century. On Oct. 18, 1999, he received the state's highest award, the Order of the Palmetto. Johnson is chairman of the American Bar Association Center for Racial and Ethnic Diversity, and he established the I.S. Leevy Johnson Scholarship at the University of South Carolina School of Law.

Johnson is married to the former Doris Wright, assistant vice president for institutional advancement at Benedict College. They have two sons, George C. and Christopher Leevy Johnson, and three grandchildren: Rachel Hurley Johnson, Ryann Leevy Johnson and Leah Denise Johnson.

CHRIS LEEVY JOHNSON

The Reverend Chris Leevy Johnson is the husband of Cynthia Richardson Johnson and the son of Attorney I.S. Leevy and Doris Wright Johnson. Born in Columbia, S.C., he is a 1996 honors graduate of the University of North Carolina. While attending UNC, he served as a manager for the men’s basketball team under legendary coach Dean Smith. He was also initiated into Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Inc.

After graduating from UNC, Johnson attended Gupton-Jones College of Mortuary Science, graduating with an associate degree in mortuary science. He also has a master’s degree and a doctorate in American history with a concentration in African-American religion from the University of South Carolina. He served as an adjunct professor of African-American history and is currently the chaplain for the men’s and women’s basketball teams at USC. A fourth-generation funeral director, he is the managing director of Leevy’s Funeral Home.

Johnson was ordained by Brookland Baptist Church and currently serves as the campus pastor of Brookland Baptist Church, Northeast, a thriving ministry in northeast Columbia. He has also served on various boards and commissions, including the board of directors for the Brookland Foundation, the Columbia Community Development Foundation, the Township Auditorium and the Central Carolina Community Foundation.

CANDACE CELESTE JACKSON

Candace Jackson is a native of Columbia, S.C. She completed her Bachelor of Arts in English and philosophy at Spelman College. A Phi Beta Kappa Society member, she graduated magna cum laude in 2003. Jackson then earned a Juris Doctor from the Duke University School of Law in 2006.

Jackson began her career as a law clerk for The Honorable Kaye G. Hearn and The Honorable Jasper M. Cureton. She then joined Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough in Columbia, S.C., where she currently practices business litigation and employment law. She is on several boards of directors, including those for the South Carolina Bar Foundation and the Oliver Gospel Mission, and is a member of the Alumnae Association of Spelman College and the Duke Law Alumni Association. In 2008 she co-founded and became chair of the Candace Girls Educational Foundation in Monrovia, Liberia. In May 2010 she served on the Regionalism and Intergovernmental Relations Committee of Mayor-Elect Steve Benjamin’s Transition Team. Jackson was also a delegate at the American Council on Germany’s Young Leaders Conference in Germany in August 2011.

The daughter of The Reverend and Mrs. Charles B. Jackson Sr., Jackson is an active member of the Brookland Baptist Church of West Columbia, S.C., where her father has served as pastor for more than 40 years.