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### Events planned to commemorate Martin Luther King Jr.

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## **NEWS RELEASE**

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Jan. 28, 2004

**Contact:** Ray Carlisle, director, UM Educational Opportunity Program, (406) 243-4202.

### **EVENTS PLANNED TO COMMEMORATE MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.**

#### **MISSOULA-**

For the 14th year, the Martin Luther King Jr. Day Committee at The University of Montana is planning a series of events Feb. 3-5 in honor of the slain civil rights leader.

Although Martin Luther King Jr. Day was celebrated on Jan. 19, the committee schedules events for the beginning of spring semester so that more people -- especially students -- can participate.

"A really important sector of our audience for these events is students," said Ray Carlisle, a committee member. "They're important not only because this is a university, but because it's been a long time since Martin Luther King Jr. was alive and there's a risk of his legacy losing vitality if we don't commemorate his life by offering programs like this."

This year's events include a panel discussion, a film and a lecture by J. Morgan Kousser, a history and social science professor at California Institute of Technology.

"King is recognized because his ideas are important," Carlisle said. "It's not just the man, it's what he represents."

Events are:

- **Feb. 3** -- 3:30 p.m., University Center Theater, Panel Discussion: "University of Montana Faculty Reflect on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr."

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- **Feb. 4** -- 7 p.m., UC Theater, Film: "The Angry Heart."
- **Feb. 5** -- 7:30 p.m., North Underground Lecture Hall, Lecture: "Long Before Brown: The Supreme Court's First Decision on Racial Discrimination in Schools (1899)."

The panel discussion includes UM faculty members Tunde Adeleke, Harry Fritz, Michael Mayer and Kathryn Shanley, all of whom will share the legacy of King and its relevance to the UM campus, Missoula and Montana in terms of diversity. Fritz served on the 1991 Montana Legislature that sponsored the bill mandating that the federal Martin Luther King Jr. Day holiday be observed in Montana.

"The Angry Heart" is a film that highlights the modern epidemic of heart disease in the African-American community and analyzes the idea that the factors causing the disease are inseparable from racism, discrimination, poverty, segregation, substandard education and day-to-day racial tension. Dr. Bruce Hardy, a pediatric cardiologist at the International Heart Institute of Montana, will introduce the film.

Kousser's lecture will examine an opinion by Supreme Court Justice John Marshall Harlan, the sole dissenter in the "separate but equal" case of Plessy v. Ferguson, which ruled the closing of Georgia's only black public high school constitutional. The author of "Colorblind Injustice: Minority Voting Rights and the Undoing of the Second Reconstruction," Kousser has focused his scholarly career on minority voting rights, the history of education and the legal and political aspects of race relations in the 19th and 20th centuries.

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