The 2022 MLK Symposium Planning Committee
Presents
THIS IS AMERICA

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Symposium
2022 Keynote Memorial Lecture
January 17, 2022 | 10:00 a.m. EST
It is my great honor to welcome you to the annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Symposium, one of the University of Michigan’s longest and most important traditions. This Keynote Lecture and the series of events throughout the month provide our community with valuable opportunities to reflect on the legacy of Dr. King and countless others who have worked and continue to work toward justice, equity, and civil rights.

Our theme this year – This Is America – calls upon each of us to consider to what extent the popular images and common perceptions of our country are valid. Is America the “land of the free?” Is it “the leader of the free world?” Or is it living up to the goal of forming “a more perfect union?” Of course, these are not simple questions with simple answers. They require us to consider where we as a country, as a society, and even as individuals, have fallen short of our highest ideals.

Recent events have thrust these issues to the forefront. The trials of Kyle Rittenhouse and those found responsible for the death of Ahmaud Arbery reminded us that acts of violence and systemic racism continue to afflict our nation. The disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on many racial and ethnic minority groups has underscored inequities in public health. What do these issues and events tell us about our nation today? Dr. King’s life and work provide a helpful lens through which we may consider that question.

We at the University of Michigan also are committed to better understanding and reflecting on the legacy of our own institution to make it a better place today, tomorrow and forever. As such, we will soon launch an examination of the racism and lack of inclusion that has been part of the university’s own history more comprehensively than ever before, including actions and structures that have caused harm to groups in our community.

These factors continue to influence the University of Michigan generations later, and a fuller reckoning will help to make us a more equitable and inclusive campus.

Our 2022 keynote speakers, Maria Hinojosa and Dr. Rashad Richey, have built their careers around exploring some of the most challenging questions about inequity, justice, race, and politics. Hinojosa is an Emmy Award-winning journalist and the host of Latino USA, a show on National Public Radio dedicated to issues important to the Latinx community. Dr. Richey is a Presidential Lifetime Achievement Awardee who uses his platform as an Atlanta
radio host to engage more than 1.3 million listeners daily with news coverage and thoughtful political and social commentary. I thank both speakers in advance for sharing their perspectives with our community.

And I thank you for joining us, for taking the time to thoughtfully reflect on these important issues, and for pushing throughout the year to confront systemic racism and inequity in our world. Let us all do our part to “form a more perfect union” – one that we can point to and proudly declare: This Is America.

Sincerely,

Mark S. Schlissel
President
University of Michigan
Dear Colleagues and Friends,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to this year’s Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Symposium.

This marks the 36th year that the University of Michigan is honoring and celebrating the life and work of Reverend Dr. King. Faculty, students, and staff of the university have developed a thought-provoking event that calls on us to reflect on our own lives while honoring the great legacy of this man.

Dr. King’s vision for sustained progress towards a better future for all of us is a discourse that transcends time and place. I am confident that this year’s symposium will continue to build on this, in helping shape our own university community, and the greater world, where all have the opportunity to excel and thrive.

This booklet is your guide to many events that are sponsored by the university over the next month. I invite you to attend as many events as possible, whether in-person or virtually, while also encouraging others in your network to share this information with faculty, staff and students. Your collective experiences will contribute to the important and ongoing dialogue on how our community can work collaboratively to make our campus climate more equitable and inclusive, while embracing the diversity of our collective experiences.

I thank the members of the MLK Day Symposium planning committee, invited speakers, and the many other individuals involved in the program planning across campus.

I look forward to your presence at a number of the MLK Symposium events.

Best Regards,

Robert M. Sellers
Vice Provost for Equity and Inclusion and Chief Diversity Officer
University of Michigan
The 2022 MLK Symposium Planning Committee
Presents
Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Symposium
2022 Keynote Memorial Lecture

OPENING PERFORMANCE
Song Redtition: “Three Dream Portraits” Collection
Poems by Langston Hughes, Music by Margaret Bonds
Myah Paden, Chase Warren, and Jack Williams, III
Julian Goods, Accompanist

OPENING REMARKS
Dr. Janice R. Jones
2022 MLK Symposium Co-Chair

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS
Dr. Mark S. Schlissel
University of Michigan, President

SONG PERFORMANCE
“Breathing”
Joe Reilly and the Community Gardeners

SPEAKER INTRODUCTIONS
Sharonda Chiangong
MLK Student Intern

2022 KEYNOTE MEMORIAL LECTURE
Maria de Hinojosa Ojeda and Rashad Richey, PhD

MODERATOR INTRODUCTION
Julianna Collado
MLK Student Intern

MODERATED DISCUSSION
Maria de Hinojosa Ojeda and Rashad Richey, PhD
Moderated by: Patricia Coleman-Burns, PhD

CLOSING REMARKS
Gregory O. Thomas
2022 MLK Symposium Co-Chair

CLOSING PERFORMANCE
“My Country ‘Tis of Thee” (Historic Video)
Marian Anderson, Lincoln Memorial, 1939

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, MARTIN!!
Theme Statement

“This Is America”

Our country, ’tis of thee,
Sweet Land of Liberty
Of thee, We sing;
Land where Our fathers died,
Land of Our Nations’ pride.
From every mountainside
Let Freedom Ring.

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Planning Committee chose "This Is America" as the theme for the 2022 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Symposium.

The theme explores many images of America as defined and interpreted through history, popular culture, and a myriad of perceptions, and it challenges the validity of these images through the lens of the teachings and observations of Dr. King.

"This Is America" allows all disciplines to examine their commitment to social justice through practices, delivery, access, public policy, culture, research, and doctrines.

The diverse thematic content of “This Is America” encourages communities to explore images that either build or dismantle efforts to promote a just society through participation in dialogues, workshops, and the arts during the month of January and beyond.

How do we define America through the lens of social justice?

America Is a model for a democratic society in which all adult citizens exercise power and civic responsibility (directly and through their freely elected representatives) with commitment to the values of tolerance, cooperation, and compromise.

Or, is America best described as an oligarchy where the economic elites and organized groups that represent special interests have a substantial independent impact on U.S. government policy?

America Is (as penned by Emma Lazarus in 1883) the hope for immigrants as engraved on the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty:

Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

Or, do America’s immigration policies lean in favor of the rich and those only of European origin?
America Is (as coined by James Truslow Adams in 1931) "that dream of a land in which life should be better and richer and fuller for everyone, with opportunity for each according to ability or achievement."

Or, is America a land where the rich become richer and the poor become poorer as witnessed when disenfranchised communities lost lives, livelihoods, and health due to COVID-19 while the world’s super-rich continued to amass concentrations of wealth and power?

America Is “land of the free and the home of the brave."

Or, do acts such as the attack on the Nation’s Capital on January 6, 2021 put America under siege, casting fear throughout the land.

America Is "the leader of the free world."

Or, has the nation's recent distaste for long-established global alliances, harsh treatment of allies, and cozying up to dictators irrevocably reframed how the rest of the world sees it?

America Is "the beautiful."

Or, do selfish interests create barriers that dishonor the leadership of Tribal Nations and environmental scientists to preserve healthy land, clean water, and abundant wildlife for generations to come?

America Is "your land and my land."

Or, is America a land where it is increasingly evident that Black, Asian, and Brown Americans are unsafe in many of its public spaces.

America Is "A more perfect union."

Or, has America’s inability to explore common ground created a most divided nation?

America Is, as defined in Dr. King’s, ‘Dream’ a nation that will be realized as “a land of freedom and a nation of justice...a nation of equal, fair, and equitable treatment for all.”

Or, is America a nation that has failed to rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: “We hold these truths to be self-evident in that all men are created equal”?

“This Is America” summons all of us to individually and collectively explore how we contribute to a more just union that values and lives out equality, fairness, and opportunity. America Is each and every individual that contributes to its fabric of justice and freedom for all.

Let mortal tongues awake,
Let all that breathe partake;
Let rocks their silence break,
Let justice ring!
Keynote Speakers

Maria de Lourdes Hinojosa Ojeda

Ms. Hinojosa is a Mexican-American journalist. She is the anchor and executive producer of Latino USA on National Public Radio, a public radio show devoted to Latino issues. She is also the founder, president and CEO of Futuro Media Group, which produces the show. In 2018 she was a Fellow at Shorenstein Center at the Harvard Kennedy School and is a frequent speaker across the country. In 2019, Ms. Hinojosa was named the inaugural Distinguished Journalist in Residence at her alma mater, Barnard College. With a career spanning 30 years, she has informed millions. Ms. Hinojosa has won numerous honors and awards for her work. Other recognition includes the Robert F. Kennedy Journalism Award for Reporting on the Disadvantaged, the National Association of Hispanic Journalists’ Radio Award, the New York Society of Professional Journalists Deadline Award, the Edward R. Murrow Award from Overseas Press Club, and an Associated Press award. Ms. Hinojosa is the recipient of four Emmy Awards for her work for covering such topics as Taxing the Poor and The Plight of the Lower Class in Alabama. She was named among the top 25 Latinos in Contemporary American Culture. In addition to Ms. Hinojosa’s awards, she is the author of four books including her most recent book, “Once I Was You: A Memoir of Love and Hate in a Torn America.”

Dr. Rashad Richey

Dr. Richey is a university professor, lecturer, Emmy nominated broadcaster, and political/social analyst. Nationally, Dr. Richey is the television news anchor for ‘Indisputable with Dr. Rashad Richey’, which airs on multiple cable outlets with viewership averaging 1.3 million daily. Dr. Richey is routinely featured for his political analysis and commentary on MSNBC, BBC America, Black News Channel, Fox News, CNBC, CBS News, and other networks. Prior to becoming the President of Rolling Out Magazine in 2021, he served as Chief Editor-At-Large and Sr. Writer. Rolling Out is the largest free-print urban publication in America with 2.8 million readers monthly and a combined social media following of over 500,000.

Dr. Richey is also the host of the award-winning Rashad Richey Morning Show on News & Talk 1380-WAOK and Political Commentator for V-103 FM, the
Moderator

Dr. Patricia Coleman-Burns

Dr. Coleman-Burns is a University of Michigan Assistant Professor Emerita of Nursing and affiliated faculty in the Department of Afro-American and African Studies. Dr. Coleman-Burns began her career in the 1970s studying Black and Black Women’s social movements. Appointed by former Dean of the U-M School of Nursing, Rhetaugh Dumas, in 1991 as director of the Office of Minority Affairs; she immediately pioneered the trend across campus to rename all such offices to include “Multicultural Affairs”.

Her scholarship focuses on intersecting identities across safe policing, social justice, health equity, social determinants of health, and health promotion and disease prevention. Her research and science center on community impact and access of citizens to evidence-based knowledge and skills. She conducts workshops on anti-racism and anti-Blackness narratives; “hidden unconscious and/or implicit biases”; microaggressions across intra-personal, interpersonal, institutional and cultural domains; and “bystander (accomplices and co-conspirator) intervention”.

Dr. Coleman Burns is a long-standing member of the MLK Symposium Planning Committee.
The 1959 Three Dream Portraits is a song cycle of three Langston Hughes poems set to music by Margaret Bonds. “Minstrel Man,” once notably recorded as a poem read by legendary African American bass-baritone Paul Robeson, is a soliloquy juxtaposing the speaker’s outward mask of frivolity with his inner pain. The irony lies in the fact that this pain went largely unnoticed by the white audience that typically attended minstrel shows.

“Dream Variation,” the center movement, speaks of “a place in the sun.” It is filled with harmonies gathered from world cultures beyond American borders and has a joyous sense of movement through dance.

The concluding movement, “I, Too,” uses Hughes’ poignant yet ringing words, “I, too, sing America.” Even as the speaker, the “darker brother,” is banished and forced to eat in the kitchen, he feels that when others “see how beautiful I am,” they will invite him to the table, ashamed that they ever excluded him. Critics note that Bonds’ music becomes more self-assured with each of the three movements. It reaches a crescendo of confidence toward the end of “I, Too” that winds down into wistful uncertainty by its concluding notes.

This artistic choice by Bonds in the late 1950s mirrored the world around her. The Civil Rights struggle was beginning to gain momentum, with enormous struggle and loss ahead. When Bonds wrote her music for Hughes’ words, the outcome of this struggle was still unknown. Three Dream Portraits remains a deeply meaningful work more than half a century later.

(Taken from Don Gayhardt, “Five Things You Should Know About Langston Hughes and Margaret Bonds.” January 6, 2021.)
Julian J. Goods, born in Pittsburgh, PA and raised in Chicago, IL, currently serves as Co-Director of Choirs at Detroit School of Arts. He is a two-time graduate of the University of Michigan, receiving a Bachelor of Music degree in Music Education and a Master of Music degree in Choral Conducting. While at the University of Michigan, Mr. Goods studied under Dr. Eugene Rogers, Prof. Daniel Washington, and Dr. James Kibbie and focused on making classrooms and teaching more diverse both in population and the Music being taught. In 2018, he traveled to South Africa where he learned about the South African choral music tradition, found ways to incorporate South African Music in the classroom, and served as a guest clinician for many choirs in the cities of Pretoria and Soweto.

Along with his duties at Detroit School of Arts, Mr. Goods serves as organist at the historic Hartford Memorial Baptist Church in Detroit, MI. As an organist, Mr. Goods has appeared in recital at the University of Michigan Organ Conference, The National Association of Negro Musicians, Inc. Central Region Conference, and other major work concerts, including Handel’s Messiah, under the direction of Dr. Eugene Rogers. Mr. Goods has served as music director for several productions, including Basement Arts (Michigan) production of Crowns and Musket’s production of The Wiz. Beyond his skills at the piano and organ, Mr. Goods has performed as a vocalist in many venues and various productions, including the University Musical Society’s Porgy and Bess: Opera in Concert in 2018.

Chase Warren, soprano, is a senior at the University of Michigan (U-M) in the School of Music, Theatre & Dance (SMTD), majoring in Vocal Performance as a student of Professor Daniel Washington; her minor is in Performing Arts Management and Entrepreneurship. From Grosse Pointe Woods, Michigan, Ms. Warren has been a part of numerous SMTD productions, singing in the ensemble of “La Bohème”, working as a stage crew member for “Cendrillon”, and currently singing in the Winter 2022 production of “Rise for Freedom”, as well as “Highway 1, U.S.A.” Chase Warren is co-founder and co-chair of BLAC, the Black Leaders in Art Collective, a U-M student organization that works to create a safe, inclusive environment for black students both in SMTD as well as the Penny W. Stamps School of Art & Design. Since 2019, Ms. Warren has enjoyed a professional relationship with Northside Community Church of Ann Arbor, serving as soprano, handbell and vocal coaching intern, guest soprano soloist and finally as an enthusiastic greeter for Concert4aCause and other events.
Jack Williams III is a promising artist from Detroit specializing in many genres of music, ranging from jazz to classical. While a student at Renaissance High School, he received many awards and recognition for his vocal ability, including a Michigan Youth Arts Distinguished Scholar in 2015 and winning the Detroit Jazz Festival Youth Vocal Jazz Competition in 2016. Jack’s participation in the Mosaic Youth Theatre of Detroit as a Mosaic Singer brought him many performance opportunities nationally and internationally. Notable appearances include performing at the Apollo Theatre, Carnegie Hall, and Joe’s Pub in New York. Jack has sung on a live recording with Foreigner’s rock band on tour with Josh Groban. He competed in the 2012 World Choir Games in Cincinnati, Oh, and the 2014 World Choir Games in Latvia.

Jack is a recent graduate of the University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre and Dance, where he completed his degree in Choral Music Education. While attending the University of Michigan, Jack sang with the University of Michigan Men’s Glee Club and Chamber Choir, both under the direction of Eugene Rogers, and was the assistant director of BlueNote Vocal Jazz Ensemble. Jack currently resides in Detroit and has initiated the music program at Detroit International Academy for Young Women.
**Joe Reilly and the Community Gardeners**

**Joe Reilly** is a singer, songwriter, and educator who writes songs from his heart. Joe’s songs are playful, clever, engaging, joyful, and always have something meaningful to say. The core of his message is an invitation to heal our relationships with our selves, with each other, and with the earth. Joe uses his music to bring people together and build community across lines of race, class, gender, ethnicity, religion, age, and nationality.

Joe is Italian, Irish, and Native American (Cherokee) and was raised in Kalamazoo, Michigan in a creative household by musical parents who encouraged him to find his own voice. Joe loves to inspire others to do the same and to water seeds of compassion, joy, wisdom, and peace in our collective consciousness through the sharing of his music.

Joe has recorded eight albums of his music, including three children’s albums, *Children of the Earth* (2007), *Let’s Go Outside* (2011), and *The Circle* (Earthwork Music, 2016). In 2012 Joe recorded an album of traditional and contemporary Native American songs with youth from the Dream Seekers youth program at American Indian Health and Family Services in Detroit. Joe’s most recent album, *The Circle*, features songs that celebrate community, diversity, and core democratic values. The album has four interviews with elders, including lifetime Detroit activist Grace Lee Boggs, who speak about civil rights, education, love, and gratitude.

Joe earned his Bachelor of Science from University of Michigan’s School of Natural Resources and Environment in 2000 with an individualized concentration in Environmental Justice and Racism. He completed his Master of Social Work from University of Michigan in 2013 specializing in interpersonal practice with children and youth. In addition to performing professionally, Joe also works as a school social worker at Macomb Montessori Academy, a K-6 charter school in Warren, Michigan.

Joe is honored to perform as part of the University of Michigan Martin Luther King Day Symposium and to be joined in this performance by: Gayelynn McKinney - drum set; Lesley - Anne Stone - vocals; Mark Stone - percussion; Jacob Warren - bass; and Levi Taylor - keyboard.

Find photos, music, and more at [www.joereilly.org](http://www.joereilly.org)
Sharonda Chiangong is a junior at the University of Michigan’s School of Literature, Science and the Arts. She is majoring in International Studies and minoring in Music. With a passion for Infectious Disease Epidemiology, she is interested in learning how and why different socioeconomic statuses affect the spread of diseases within communities. She is currently the Philanthropy Chair for EnspiRED Runway and the Program and Events Coordinator for the African Students Association. Continuing her commitment to social justice, this year Sharonda is one of the MLK Symposium Interns.

Julianna Collado is a senior in the Ford School of Public Policy. She has held multiple leadership roles on campus with La Casa, the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Student Advisory Board, and the Advancing Public Safety Task Force. After she graduates in May, she will enroll in an education policy graduate program.

Marian Anderson was born on February 27, 1897, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

The oldest of three girls, Anderson was just six years old when she became a choir member at the Union Baptist Church, where she earned the nickname “Baby Contralto.” Her father, a coal and ice dealer, supported his daughter’s musical interests and bought her a piano when Anderson was eight. With the family unable to afford lessons, the prodigious Anderson taught herself.

At 12, Anderson’s father died. His death, however, did not slow down Anderson’s musical ambitions. She remained deeply committed to her church and its choir and rehearsed all the parts (soprano, alto, tenor, and bass) before her family until she had perfected them.

Anderson’s commitment to her music and her range as a singer so impressed the rest of her choir that the church banded together and raised enough money (about $500) to pay for Anderson to train under Giuseppe Boghetti, a respected voice teacher.
Over her two years of studying with Boghetti, Anderson won a chance to sing at the Lewisohn Stadium in New York after entering a New York Philharmonic Society contest. In 1928, she performed at Carnegie Hall for the first time and eventually embarked on a tour through Europe thanks to a Julius Rosenwald scholarship.

By the late 1930s, Anderson’s voice had made her famous on both sides of the Atlantic. In the United States, President Franklin D. Roosevelt and his wife Eleanor invited Anderson to perform at the White House, the first African American ever to receive this honor.

Despite Anderson’s success, not all of America was ready to receive her talent. In 1939, her manager tried to set up a performance at Washington, D.C.’s Constitution Hall. But the owners of the hall, the Daughters of the American Revolution (D.A.R.), informed Anderson and her manager that no dates were available. That was far from the truth. The real reason for turning Anderson away lay in a policy by the D.A.R. that committed the hall to be a place strictly for white performers.

When word leaked out to the public about what had happened, an uproar ensued, led in part by Eleanor Roosevelt. She invited Anderson to perform instead at the Lincoln Memorial on Easter Sunday. In front of more than 75,000, Anderson offered up a riveting performance that was broadcast live for millions of radio listeners.

When she sang “My Country ‘Tis Of Thee” at the Lincoln Memorial, she changed the words “of thee I sing” to “to thee we sing.” In later years, she explained: “We cannot live alone. And the thing that made this moment possible for you and for me has been brought about by many people whom we will never know.”

The Lincoln Memorial concert made Anderson an international celebrity. In 1961, she performed the national anthem at President John F. Kennedy’s inauguration. Two years later, Kennedy honored the singer with the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Finally, in early December 1942, the Daughters of the American Revolution officials partially relented, agreeing to allow Anderson to perform before an integrated audience.

(Excerpts taken from the Biography Newsletter, January 10, 2018 and NPR “Denied A Stage, She Sang For A Nation,” April 9, 2014.)
MLK Celebration Events

GalleryDAAS presents UJIMA: Collective Work and Responsibility exhibit at the University of Michigan discussion
January 12, 5:30 PM-7:00 PM

The Myth of Racial Equity in Sports.
Schwarze Adler (Black Eagles): A Film Screening
January 14, 2:00 PM-4:00 PM

Talking College: A Community Based Language and Racial Identity Development Model for Black College Student Justice
January 14, 4:00 PM-5:30 PM

U-M 2022 MLK Memorial Keynote Lecture: This Is America
January 17, 10:00 AM-11:30 AM

Don Graves, Deputy Secretary of Commerce
January 17, 12:00 PM-1:00 PM

This Is America: Confronting Health Inequities...Writing Prescriptions for Change
January 17, 12:00 PM-1:30 PM

You Can Keep the Mule: Let’s Explore Reparations Models
January 17, 12:30 PM-2:00 PM

Black Lives and Asian Medicine
January 17, 1:00 PM-2:00 PM

ISR MLK Day Event: Film Screening of “Urbanized” by Gary Hustwit
January 17, 1:00 PM-2:30 PM

Honoring the Legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr.: MLK and The Lighthouse Effect
January 17, 2:00 PM-3:10 PM

MLK, Militarism, and the Future
January 17, 2022, 2:00 PM-4:00 PM

MLK Day Circle of Unity
January 17, 3:00 PM-4:00 PM

Marjorie Lee Browne Colloquium – Indigenous Mathematics, Including an In-Depth Look at the Number Theory of the Maya
January 17, 4:00 PM-5:10 PM

THE TULSA RACE MASSACRE: Causes, Cover-Up, and the Ongoing Fight for Justice
January 17, 4:00 PM-6:00 PM

Anti-Racism Teach-In
January 17, 5:00 PM-6:30 PM

2022 North Campus Deans’ MLK Spirit Awards
January 17, 5:30 PM-7:00 PM

ISR MLK Day Event: Panel Presentation on Social Science Approaches to the Built Environment and Social Justice Issues in America
January 18, 1:00 PM-1:30 PM

Abolitionist Aesthetics: The Art to End Slavery and to End Prisons
January 19, 4:00 PM-5:30 PM

Department of Physics MLK Colloquium | Adventures In Life-Work Balance Across Four Simultaneous Careers
January 19, 4:00 PM-5:00 PM

Coalition Building in the City: Policy, Mutual Aid, and Design Justice
January 20, 6:00 PM-7:30 PM

Unsung Heroes of the Civil Rights Movement Trivia
January 20, 6:30 PM-8:00 PM

The Clements Bookworm: “Vanguard” Author Conversation with Martha S. Jones
January 21, 10:00 AM-11:00 AM

MLK Spirit Awards Ceremony
January 22, 2:00 PM-3:30 PM

All Are Welcome...But Are They?
January 23, 6:30 PM-8:00 PM

Rackham’s 5th Annual King Talks
January 26, 6:00 PM-7:30 PM

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. as a Black King of the Bible in Duke Ellington's Symphonic Triptych “Three Black Kings”
January 27, 3:00 PM-5:00 PM

Donia Human Rights Center: Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Lecture. The Promise — and Failure — of Human Rights
January 31, 2022, 4:10 PM-5:40 PM

The Effect of a Global Pandemic on Pre-Existing Health Inequalities
February 2, 2022, 6:00 PM-8:00 PM

Rural Students’ Unique Experiences on Campus
February 16, 1:00 PM-2:00 PM

Full event details can be found online at mlksymposium.umich.edu.
Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. left us with a challenge to create a nation that benefits all citizens of the United States. As U.S citizens, we are reminded that progress for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) and other disenfranchised communities requires activism. My work is inspired by Dr. King’s words from his speech titled, “The Other America”. In this speech, Dr. King teaches that American citizens are treated differently within varying communities and identities. The opportunities and privileges afforded to the white protestant man is not the same as those experienced by the indigenous woman. The imagery within the artwork work reminds us that the goal of advancing our nation is a burden and a responsibility that rests on all our shoulders.

John Rodriguez is the Marketing and Communications Lead with the Office of Academic and Multicultural Initiatives (OAMI). John has been a member of the University of Michigan community since 2014. He is of Afro-Caribbean descent, having been born in the U.S. Virgin Islands. John holds a bachelor’s degree in Political Science from the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA). His work as a visual artist explores the dynamics of culture and emotions through portraiture while aiming to tell stories that build community awareness and challenges stereotypical narratives.
Research into the human condition—how we live in the world and how we live with each other—is vital to the cultivation of a just and equitable society. At the Institute for the Humanities, we facilitate work that examines humanities traditions broadly across space and time, deepens synergies among the humanities, the arts, and disciplines across the university, and brings the voices of the humanities to public life.

We are honored to co-sponsor the 2022 Martin Luther King Memorial Lecture through the Jill S. Harris Memorial Lecture Fund. Dr. King was a profoundly humanistic thinker, calling on history, religion, music, philosophy, and literature in his speeches and writing. His legacy is important to us as humanists and as humans.
For an up-to-date list of 2022 MLK events, please visit: **MLKSYMPOSIUM.UMICH.EDU**

The co-chairs for the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Symposium, Gregory Thomas, Janice Jones, and John Rodriguez would like to thank all those who have contributed to the success of this event.

**Sponsors:**
University of Michigan Annual Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Symposium, Office of Academic and Multicultural Initiatives, a unit in the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion,

Stephen M. Ross School of Business with support from the William K. McInally Memorial Lecture Fund

The College of Literature, Science and Art (LSA), Institute for the Humanities, friends and family of the Jill S. Harris Memorial Endowment.