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New Orleans

Data

News Weekly

"The People's Paper"

Sade

The Soul of an Artist

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Tim Smooth



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Anthony Bean Community Theater and the Art of Giving Back



The Cast of Anthony Bean Community Theater's Production of CATS

By Edwin Buggage

The Anthony Bean Community Theater has been a safe haven for young people and also a place that for over a decade exposed kids and adults in New Orleans to the world of theatre. "This is the 11th year that I have had a summer program and I am always excited to see so many young people involved in such a positive activity as theatre," says Bean.

Over the years Bean has written and directed the plays performed by the youth, but in recent years he has staged large scale productions of classic plays. Last year the students performed "The Wiz" and this year the kids did a production of the Broadway musical "Cats" to a capacity crowd. "I did "Cats" because

I wanted to do something different and to expose young people to opera and show that African-American kids could do this play and I must say they did an excellent job," remarks Bean. "Also with this production I was able to do a show that featured 75 Black kids and in turn take them outside of their comfort zone and they stepped up to the plate and knocked it out the park."

Anthony Bean says he is more than just an acting teacher. He says the skills the kids obtain will help them live more productive lives, "The things I am trying to impart on these young people is to give them things that will help them to be a success such as discipline, determination and dedication, I am just simply using theatre as a way to teach these qualities," says Bean of his commitment to the youth of the city.

As the artistic landscape of the City is changing with many theatre companies struggling to survive ABCT is thriving on the heels of the runaway success

Cover Story, Continued on next page.

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Cover Story, Continued from previous page.



Anthony Bean (shown with Singer Irma Thomas and WWLTV Anchor Sally-Ann Roberts) said "I wanted to do something different and to expose young people to opera and show that African-American kids could do this play."

of the hit play "Reflections" a play that chronicles the rise, fall and redemption of former New Orleans City Councilmember Oliver Thomas. "I think why we have been able to be more successful than some other theatre companies is that what we have been able to do is service a community that the mainstream theatre community has ignored and also we have given our audience stories that are relevant to their experience," says Bean of the niche that ABCT has been able to tap into.

While Bean's company has done the works of Pulitzer Prize Winning Playwrights August Wilson and Charles Fuller, he has also used his theatre as a space to showcase his own writings and that of many talented individuals in the New Orleans area, "My company's goal is to give people a chance to express themselves through art, and while some that come through the doors may aspire to become professional actors many are just ordinary citizens looking for a creative outlet and I think this theatre serves as a valuable space for that," says Bean.

Being part of the New Orleans Theatre community for nearly four decades Bean is concerned in preserving a tradition of African-American theatre. Responding that it is one of the main reasons he is so vigilant about helping train the next generation for a life on the big stage. "I think what

I am aiming to do is telling our stories and giving to the world and each other a slice of our history," says Bean.

Continuing he says, "And through these performances it is also about our young people learning where they come from and having a respect for their heritage and traditions and hopefully my camp can be something that plants the seeds for future generations to use the stage as a space to let the world know who we are as a community."

ABCT has partnered with the New Orleans Recreation Department (NORD) who has given Bean the financing to staff his program with young people from the community to serve as teachers for his students. "I am grateful to all the help my NORD partners have given me over the years to help with providing me the resources to reach out and give talented young adults from the community a chance to teach and mentor every summer," says Bean.

In addition to conquering the world of stage Anthony Bean has a project that he says is "Hip-Hop meets Information" the show is called "Teen Trax" that airs at 11:30 on Saturday mornings on My 54. It features ABCT kids and is hosted by rapper/actor Tony Felix, and is shot, written and produced by young people. "I felt it was important to put the power in their hands, also it is a great way for

them to learn how to produce a television show," says Bean. Continuing he says, "The show is a positive outlet for them to explore the issues that concern them and it is informative as well as entertaining and I am proud of what the kids have been able to create thus far."

Helping the youth is Mr. Bean's passion; he feels that giving back to his community is what gives his life meaning and purpose, "I believe in Divine Design and it has been a higher calling that has led me to living a life that has been dedicated to service," says Bean. As an advocate for youngsters especially Black males he says what he does with his summer youth program serves as a deterrent for young people who may otherwise be involved in behavior that may lead to their demise."

As a young activist during the Civil Rights and Black Arts Movement, Anthony Bean saw art as a way to make a difference in the world and today he is still sounding the trumpet leading the charge. He is a dedicated individual who truly loves his city and through his art giving youth the tools to live a successful life. "Acting and activism is what I live for," says Bean. "I feel that I was put here on this earth to make a difference and every day I see those kids and the things they accomplish and know I have given them the hope and the drive to succeed that gives me peace of mind."

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Asante Awards Celebrate Accomplishments of New Orleanians



By Eric Connerly

Asante is a Swahili word that means thank you. On August 3, 2011 throngs of people came out to witness and recognize many esteemed New Orleanians that have given so much to this great historical city. The Asante Foundation Awards and Festival is an annual event that celebrates the contributions of people from the

creative arts in addition to citizens from the civic, business, law enforcement and many other areas of endeavor. The purpose of the show was to highlight and award the unsung heroes and sheroes of the great City of New Orleans.

"I created this show and festival as a way to bring together our community and to recognize excellence in individuals that show

the best of what our city is about and that is the spirit of giving and I just want to say thank you to all the award recipients for what they do for our city as we rebuild," says Lawrence Martin, founder of the Asante Awards.

The Asante Awards is always a great event drawing a who's who in the city and this year was no different. The ceremony featured many outstanding citizens who

his older brother James Andrews and cousin Glen David Andrews. The marching clubs were also represented as a number of them were honored including the Black Men of Labor. Also the scholar, musician and preservationist/archivist Dr. Michael White and the legendary late Indian Chief Allison "Tootie" Montana was among those honored. "As the city is going through a change it is impor-

and businessman Sherman Cope- lin, business owner Don Hubbard, and former NOPD officer Roland Doucette who created many community outreach programs for young people while a member of the NOPD were on hand to receive their awards. Lawrence Martin says of the show's success, "We have again put on a first-class production that spotlight the best of New Orleans and



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Creator and CEO of Asante Awards – Lawrence Martin and Terry Jones

were on the list of honorees. They included from the world of music the legendary Uncle Lionel Batiste of the Treme Brass Band. Another group of honorees that hail from Treme, the Andrews Connection was also honored, Troy "Trombone Shorty"

tant that we celebrate our contribution the city moving forward", says Martin of the significance of the Asante Awards.

Outside of the creative arts many civic, business, political and community leaders received awards as well, elected official

I look forward to continuing the Asante Awards because there are so many people responsible for this city during wonderful things and I want to say to them (Asante) thank you."

Asante/ More photos on page 7.

Sade...The Soul of a True Artist

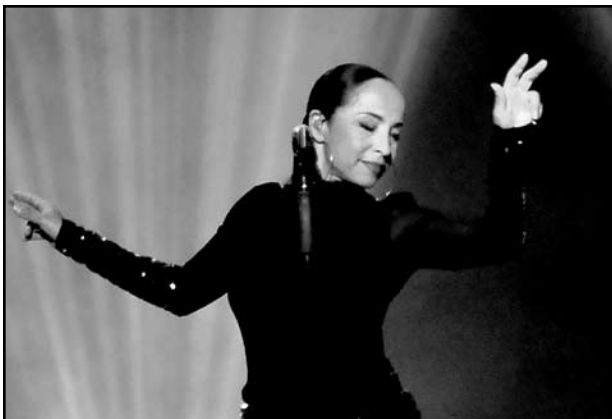
By Edwin Buggage

Photo by Jafar M. Pierre

Elegant, regal, beautiful and sensually soulful are a few words that describe the enchantress of song Sade (Helen Folasade Adu) who has since the late 1980's given the world a brand of music that knows no musical category. With its blend of music ranging from jazz, R&B and rhythms of the Caribbean creating infectious inflected grooves that is a global stew delighting to the sonic palate. After a hiatus from recording and touring Sade is presently on the North American leg of a tour featuring opening act John Legend that recently made its way to the Crescent City.

Performing to a capacity crowd of the grown, sexy and sophisticated their two-hour set was a showcase in how to give the perfect performance. It was a captivating extravaganza as the lovely Sade in all her majesty held court as a goddess of song. During their two-hour set they went through their vast catalog of hits as the crowd danced and grooved along to the music that has defined a generation.

Sade is a woman who throughout her career has been the epitome of authenticity, transcending the fads, trends and marketing schemes of the business and has become successful and sustained her career on her own terms. "I only make records when I feel I



Sade

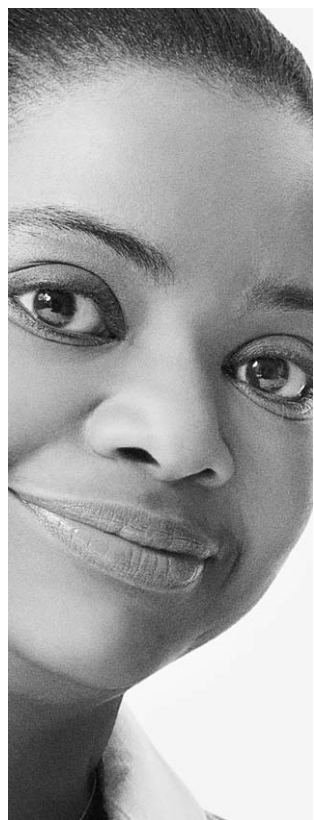
have something to say. I'm not interested in releasing music just for the sake of selling something Sade is not a brand," says Sade.

The music from this creative eclectic foursome that includes bassist Paul Denman, guitarist and saxophonist Stewart Matthewman and keyboardist Andrew Hale has been able to carve a niche with timeless addictive classics from Sweetest Taboo, No Ordinary Love, Cherish and most recently Soldier of Love. This four time Grammy award-winning group has received critical acclaim and sold millions of records globally. And after several decades together how does a group forge

ahead musically, holding on to its distinct sound while breaking new ground. Sade herself says, "I never want to repeat myself, and that becomes a more interesting challenge for us the longer we carry on together."

Being onstage is Sade's first love, the interaction between audience and performer; she feels this is where music really touches people's heart. For she eschews much of the gimmicks of selling an image and feels the music and the songs should speak for themselves and come from an authentic place, "If you just do TV or video then you become a tool of the record industry," says Sade. Continuing she says, "All you're doing is selling a product, it's when I get on stage with the band and we play that I know that people love the music I can feel it and sometimes I yearn to be on the road and the feeling overwhelms me."

As she has begun a tour that will take her to many places to perform for her adoring and loyal fans Sade although an iconic artist she is not interested in celebrity for the sake of celebrity. She is a grounded artist rooted in having a semblance of normalcy she says that helps her creativity and to continue to write songs that connects to people and fuels her evolution as an artist, "You can only grow as an artist as long as you allow yourself the time to grow as a person," says Sade.



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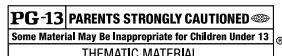
"CAPTIVATING!"

Chris Parente, FOX-TV/DENVER

"FUNNY, TOUCHING, INSPIRING."

Pete Hammond, BACKSTAGE

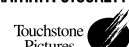
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Asante Awards Highlights

Photos by Christopher Mercadel

Asante / Continued
from page 4.



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National Urban League's Boston Conference Urges President and Congress to Refocus National Debate on Jobs



Marc Morial
President and CEO
National Urban League

President John F. Kennedy

The National Urban League concluded the first conference of its second century of service and economic empowerment this past Saturday in Boston. By all accounts, this was one of the most successful gatherings in the organization's 101-year history. Thousands of citizens from across the country came to the birthplace of America to rally support for jobs and to keep the American Dream alive.

This year's conference which was themed, "Jobs Rebuild America," gave voice to the concerns of 14 million unemployed Americans, including urban communities of color that have suffered the most during the great recession. The National Urban League has been a lifeline of support during this crisis, providing job training, foreclosure prevention, education and health services to a record 2.6 million Americans in 2010. But even with that assistance, our communities continue to fall further behind.

In a new National Urban League report released during the conference, "At Risk:

The State of the Black Middle Class," we found that the great recession has begun to dismantle the crown jewel achievement of racial advancement in America – a strong Black middle class. Our analysis clearly shows that whether one looks at education, income or any other meaningful measure, almost all the economic gains that Blacks have made in the last 30 years have been lost in the Great Recession that started in December 2007 and in the anemic recovery that has followed since June 2009. This means that the size of the Black middle class is shrinking, the fruits that come from being in the Black middle class are dwindling, and the ladders of opportunity for reaching the Black middle class are disappearing.

Our conference was also held in the midst of the debt ceiling debate which for weeks has held the American economy hostage to demands for draconian budget cuts that would spare wealthier Americans from tax increases and further imperil Black America along with middle and working class families.

That is why on the first day of the conference we asked the American people to formally enlist in the war on unemployment. In the spirit of the "Shot Heard Round the World" that rang out from Lexington, Mas-

sachusetts on April 19, 1775 and began the Revolutionary War, we fired an opening volley in the War on Unemployment by urging everyone at our conference and everyone in America to sign an open letter to the President and Congressional leaders. Our letter urges our political leaders to refocus the national debate from deficit reduction to putting America back to work. It calls for a national jobs summit and a national jobs plan based in part on the National Urban League's 12-point jobs plan.

It is my hope that public pressure will achieve what political leadership has thus far struggled to deliver – a fair, balanced and effective solution to the issue of job creation and ballooning budget deficits.

Our thanks to Boston Mayor, Thomas Menino; Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick; and Urban League of Eastern Massachusetts CEO, Darnell Williams for making this year's conference such a success.

To view and sign our open letter to the President and Congressional leaders visit: <http://www.iamempowered.com/article/2011/07/27/national-urban-league-ope...>

Marc H. Morial is the President and CEO of the National Urban League.

To Be Equal

"We face, therefore, a moral crisis as a country and as a people...It is not enough to pin the blame on others, to say this is a problem of one section of the country or another or deplore the facts that we face. A great change is at hand, and our task, our obligation, is to make that revolution, that change, peaceful and constructive for all."



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Changing Homeownership Landscape Focus of Black Realtists National Convention

National Association of Real Estate Brokers (NAREB) grapple with impact of foreclosures, redefined mortgage lending and homeownership prospects for Black Americans and other minority groups.

The lingering economic unsteadiness, unacceptably high foreclosure rates, and changing government-backed mortgage lending policies serve as the backdrop for the 64th Annual Convention of the National Association of Real Estate Brokers (NAREB) scheduled for New Orleans, LA, August 5 -10, 2011, at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel, 921 Canal Street. The more than 600 attendees representing the full spectrum of

the real estate industry including: minority real estate professionals; mortgage lenders; asset managers; financial services executives; Federal housing policymakers; community developers; financial analysts; housing counselors, and homeownership advocates are gathering to plot a new route toward sustainable and affordable homeownership for minorities and all Americans.

"We've got to strike the right

balance and involve the right players to chart a new course toward homeownership for African-Americans and other minority groups. A strong, committed public/private partnership focused on real neighborhood revitalization, the value of sustainable homeownership, combined with local and Federal political will, holds the answer and the solution," said Vincent Wimbish, President and CEO, of NAREB, established in

1947 and holds the distinction of being the nation's oldest minority real estate trade association. "Our communities and our people deserve opportunity now. We are unwilling to believe that homeownership is a dream deferred or denied," Wimbish went on to say.

For more information about the Convention schedule, registration and speakers, visit the NAREB website at www.nareb.com.

Community Advocates, Entergy Employees Seek Sustained Funding for LIHEAP Assistance program helps needy customers pay energy costs

Employees from Entergy New Orleans, Inc. and Entergy Louisiana, LLC are joining community advocates in Washington, D.C. this week to ask Congress to oppose funding cuts to a program that helps Louisiana's low income residents pay energy costs.

If proposed cuts to the federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program are enacted, tens of thousands of Louisianans would lose out on approximately \$35 million in assistance that helps them pay utility bills.

The delegation from Louisiana will be among hundreds of advocates from across the country participating in the National Fuel Funds Network's LIHEAP Action Day on Aug. 2. Employees from Entergy New Orleans and Entergy Louisiana are there as part of their ongoing commitment to help low-income customers. LIHEAP is America's primary tool to help pay energy costs for the elderly, the disabled and working-poor families with young children.

Current budget proposals call for cutting LIHEAP funding in half, from the current \$5.1 billion to \$2.5 billion.

"LIHEAP is such an important program for our friends and neighbors who are truly in need," said Melonie Hall, Director of Customer Service for Entergy New Orleans, Inc. "We understand Congress must address deficit spending, but our elected leaders must also understand the growing need for assistance being seen by our community partners."

More than 400,000 people were added to the official poverty rolls between 2008 and 2009 in the four states served by Entergy utilities. In addition, pressure on the working poor continues to grow with the cost of energy, food and gasoline rising faster than wages.

"This is not the time to cut the safety net for people struggling to survive," Hall added. "We're asking Congress to set aside \$5.1 billion for LIHEAP this fiscal year. If we don't keep funding at least level with last year, tens of thousands of families will be left without help or forced to choose between buying food and medicine or paying their utility bills."

"If LIHEAP funding is roughly cut in half as proposed, it will translate into funding cuts of some two-thirds or more for states like Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi and as much as three-fourths for Texas," Hall said. "The cuts are disproportionate for a region with the nation's highest poverty rate. It's a combined loss of \$250 million for the four states."

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Tim Smooth and the Meaning of Life

Local Rap Legend Timothy "Tim Smooth" Smoot passed away at age 39

By Edwin Buggage

The world lost an amazing talent in the great wordsmith Timothy Smoot known to the world as "Tim Smooth" who lost a bout with throat cancer passing away at the young age of thirty-nine. While Tim Smooth has transcended leaving many family, friends and fans behind to mourn he has made an indelible mark on the music industry. At a very young age as a rapper with his trademark witty wordplay he released an album that would make him a local and regional legend, the classic 1991 "I Gotsa Have It." This album catapulted him into the stratosphere where he influenced many artist including mentoring the future rap superstar Mystikal and also he would later become the go to ghostwriter for several major artist.

I had the opportunity on several occasions to interview and get to know Tim Smooth during his life and he was a playful guy



Rap Legend Timothy "Tim Smooth" Smoot with Data News Editor Edwin Buggage and Mannie Fresh

who was always full of laughter and the life of the party. Just like his braggadocious rhymes he exuded a confidence that drew people to him. Tim Smooth was a leader who marched to the beat of his own drum, defining himself and his music on his own terms.

His music will always stand out head and shoulders above the rest for its lyrical content that was way ahead of his time. Today many hang the title of genius on so many who are underserving, but lyrically Smooth was a gifted genius creating memorable lines

that will never be forgotten.

While major mainstream success eluded him he was a forerunner in New Orleans hip-hop, blazing the trail for many who would come after him. He along with the likes of Gregory D, and several now deceased pioneers of New

Orleans rap Sporty T, Warren Mayes and Smooth's partner Lil Daddy/Baby T who produced and appeared on the album cover of "I Gotsa Have It." It is these people who have created the template for Master P's No Limit Records and the Williams' Brothers and their Cash Money Records Empire.

As much of today's rap features music that is often too loud, too lewd and uncreative Tim Smooth was the real deal. He was the total package able to weave crafty verses over music that people could dance to and feel good. He was one of those artist who will always be remembered in my mind as someone whose music provided the soundtrack for a time when we went on the Lakefront in the summer where I was "chillin" with my boys Glenn, Larry, DeForest, Kelvin and Charlie V listening to the booming beats coming out of the Nissan trucks, 300zx's and IROC Z28's that were popular at the time. Then as the sun went down we would later "jump shob" (get dressed up) and go to Club Flirts.

I look back and it seemed like yesterday, but 1991 was twenty years ago and I have seen so many of my brothers in caskets when they should be turning the page and getting into the cruise lane and really began to enjoy life. Whether it is through illness or being gunned down too many of us are dying before we have had a chance to fully live and enjoy life. It is time for us to begin in our community to live again, to love each other and not simply say the words but show each other in our actions every day for tomorrow is not promised to any of us.

I was fortunate enough to be at one of Tim Smooth's last performances as he did a cameo appearance with Mystikal during his show at the House of Blues. It was a who's who of local rap legends in the building. And it was befitting that he would be among his peers who cheered when they saw him come out and rip the stage one last time. May Tim Smooth rest in peace and his legacy live on, and although the Crescent City has lost a legend heaven has been given an angel. Timothy "Tim Smooth" Smoot is gone but not forgotten.

Orleans Parish School Board Announces the Opening of Architecture Design Engineering Preparatory High (ADEP High)

The Orleans Parish School Board (OPSB) recently announced the opening of Architecture Design Engineering Preparatory High School (ADEP High) for the 2011-2012 school year.

ADEP High, formerly Priestley Charter School of Architecture and Construction, is located at 4300 Almonaster Ave. The school was re-named in mid-July as it is now a direct run OPSB traditional school.

In late 2010, the Priestley Board of Directors voted to relinquish its charter to OPSB, citing ongoing concerns over finances and enrollment. The OPSB re-constituted ADEP High into a traditional

school under the OPSB in early 2011. The OPSB was aided in the decision to reconstitute ADEP by the support from local business leaders and partners Boh Bros., FH Myers Construction and Southern University of New Orleans (SUNO).

"OPSB will work closely with the staff at ADEP High to continue the unique academic experience that students have come to expect," said Darryl Kilbert, OPSB Superintendent. "OPSB is committed to providing additional operational, academic and fiscal support so that the school will flourish."

Priestley was chartered in 2006 as a

high school. Last year's enrollment was 268 students. For the 2011-2012 school year, the school will be open enrollment and is currently accepting new students.

The Orleans Parish School Board operates five other traditional schools and supervises nearly a dozen charters. In 2010-2011, the OPSB ranked third in Louisiana in terms of district performance scores.

"The OPSB is committed to making ADEP High a successful school, and we look forward to exposing new students to the creative atmosphere this program provides," said Lourdes Moran, President of the OPSB.

Local Art Gallery Owner Finds Inspiration In Nation's Economic Crisis

MFrancis Gallery Unveils Six Original Paintings During White Linen Night

Myesha Francis, owner of the MFrancis Art Gallery (601 Julia Street) will unveil six (6) original portraits during the Annual White Linen Night activities on August 6th in the Warehouse District. Francis, who opened her gallery after Hurricane Katrina, used as her inspiration our country's economic crisis and the resulting negative impact on communities. A Look Within is the title of six (6) original portraits by Myesha Francis.

"I could see the results of our country's economic crisis manifesting itself in the expressions and physical language of people I would observe in coffee shops, grocery stores, or just walking the street," stated Francis.

Francis' exclusive A Look Within original portraits are designed to inspire visitors and art enthusiasts to break away from the stress



of their environments, and embrace the peace and tranquility that lies within. Francis believes that we must start by searching within ourselves for calm and grounding. Francis' portraits will feature her trademark female subjects.

"As an artist, business owner and a wife, I understand the impact of our country's

current economic crisis on our daily lives. Therefore, as I began preparing for White Linen Night, a time of year when summer is coming to a close and Fall, the balancing season, is approaching, I wanted to translate this anticipated seasonal change and capture a message on canvas that inspires and challenges us to seek balance, peace and tranquility," Francis explained. "Like you, I am concerned about the financial stability of this country, the impact on my business and my family. As a result, I take time to focus and get centered in order to keep moving forward. This process helps me and I want to share it with others through art."

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28	29	30	31			

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"I HAVE A DREAM THAT ONE DAY
ON THE RED HILLS OF GEORGIA,
SONS OF FORMER SLAVES AND
THE SONS OF FORMER SLAVE OWNERS
WILL BE ABLE TO SIT DOWN TOGETHER
AT THE TABLE OF BROTHERHOOD."

— MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.
AUGUST 28, 1963, WASHINGTON, D.C.

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"So that I was a drum major for justice.
So that I was a drum major for peace.
I was a drum major for right and justice.
And all of the shallow things will not matter."
Martin Luther King, Jr.

On the anniversary of the "I Have a Dream" speech, history will once again be made on the National Mall. The Washington, D.C. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial will be unveiled as the first and only tribute to a man of peace and to a person of color. This August 28th, why just read about history when you can be a part of it? Come to Washington, D.C. and celebrate what will forever stand as a testament to his timeless ideals and legacy of peace.

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