



A MESSAGE FROM INTERIM PRESIDENT

**Daisy Cocco De Filippis, Ph.D.**

## **OBSERVING MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY**

**Monday, January 18, 2021**

*“...Cowardice asks the question, ‘Is it safe?’ Expediency asks the question, ‘Is it politic?’ Vanity asks the question, ‘Is it popular?’ But conscience asks the question, ‘Is it right?’ And there are times when you must take a stand that is neither safe nor politic nor popular, but you must do it because it is right.”*

*– Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

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On Monday, January 18, the nation celebrates the life and legacy of a remarkable man: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. His impact upon American life has been profound and long-lasting. The King Center neatly summarizes his achievement: “During the less than 13 years of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s leadership of the modern American Civil Rights Movement, from December, 1955 until April 4, 1968, African Americans achieved more genuine progress toward racial equality in America than the previous 350 years had produced.” Dr. King and his colleagues set an example we follow to this day.

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*“This is the great new problem of mankind. We have inherited a large house, a great ‘world house’ in which we have to live together – black and white, Easterner and Westerner, Gentile and Jew, Catholic and Protestant, Muslim and Hindu – a family unduly separated in ideas, culture and interest, who, because we can never again live apart, must learn somehow to live with each other in peace.”*

*– Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

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Dr. King’s use of non-violent civil disobedience as a means of combating racism and other evils continues to inspire activists around the world. He was assassinated in 1968, but his dream of a nation whose citizens are not “judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character” will never die.

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*“I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word in reality. This is why right, temporarily defeated, is stronger than evil triumphant.”*

*– Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

Dr. King warned of the dangers of bitterness and despair – dangers we still face when contemplating the current scene. 2021 finds the globe suffering bitterly from a horrific pandemic; our nation's political life is in a state of turmoil. We understandably feel overwhelmed and powerless at times. Dr. King's words remind us that we can change the world around us – if we act. Our participation will always be required to help create the just and equitable world of his galvanizing dream.

Making that a dream a reality requires of us the courage to face any and every challenge to the recognition of our shared humanity.

Dr. King showed us the way.

*Mil gracias y bendiciones,*

Daisy Cocco De Filippis, Ph.D.  
Interim President

To honor Dr. King's legacy and continue meaningful conversations about being Black at Hostos, the following events are planned for the Spring semester.

### **The Stories We Tell: Race in America**

February 17 from 3-5pm

A town hall discussion where we ponder, "Who is an American?", "Who gets to decide?" and "What factors shape that definition?" We will cover three distinct periods in history – the Constitutional Convention, the Reconstruction Era, and the Civil Rights Era. Participants will be asked to define Americanism, citizenship, and who gets to claim the American Dream.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KStXc6QrO8U>

### **Becoming Jim Crow: A Long, Legal History**

March 9 from 3-5pm

In this town hall, we'll explore the long history of anti-black racism and its codification in the laws of the United States. Taking a visual journey through America's history, we'll explore the question, "Despite all of this, how do we continually survive and thrive?"

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PbC5\\_vOszII](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PbC5_vOszII)

### **We Too Sing America: From Experimentation to Participation**

April 14 from 3-5pm

This town hall is focused on a most timely and critical issue - race, medicine, and healthcare in the United States. Detailing the country's long and reprehensible history of medical experimentation on Black Americans, we'll discuss the rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine and what it means for historically marginalized communities.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RvwogCDmYD4>

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