

**Alfred University honors Martin Luther King Jr. with day of community service in Alfred, Hornell**  
1/22/19



Kathy Woughter and John Lewis give love and attention to some cats at the Hornell Humane Society.

ALFRED, NY – To honor Martin Luther King Jr.’s legacy of service to others, a group of faculty, staff and students from Alfred University volunteered their time Monday in the communities of Alfred and Hornell.

Martin Luther King Day was observed Monday, beginning a week-long celebration on the Alfred University campus of the civil rights leader’s life and legacy. A group of about 20 volunteers were dispatched to six locations: three in Hornell, one in the village of Alfred, and two on campus.

At the Hornell Humane Society, volunteers helped clean and organize the animal shelter and spent time interacting with the cats and kittens. At Elderwood, a rehabilitation and nursing care facility in Hornell, they spent time with residents, baking pies and playing cards, trivia and other games. At A.E. Crandall Hook and Ladder, the village of Alfred’s volunteer fire department, workers cleaned the fire station and helped organize gear. And at the Hornell Community Arts Center, helpers prepared space to be used by Art Force 5’s spring 2019 after school program.

Volunteers also delivered approximately 3,300 pairs of donated shoes, collected on campus to raise funds for the Navajo Water Project, and participated in “Operation Gratitude,” a letter-writing campaign to veterans, active-duty military and first responders.

The event was organized by Brian Saltsman, director of student diversity and inclusion, and Corey Fecteau, art career advisor at the Robert R. McComsey Career Development Center and service learning coordinator for the University. It came on the heels of an impromptu day of service Sunday, when volunteers helped shovel sidewalks and driveways in the village of Alfred following the weekend snowstorm. Saltsman and Fecteau lauded the efforts of volunteers, who braved single-digit temperatures in going out into the community to help others.

“The day of service is truly a sterling reflection and example of the character and compassion of the Alfred University community and its dedication, commitment, and genuine connection to the places we live, those with whom we interact, and the world we share,” Saltsman said. “I am proud and honored to be a part of a community which spontaneously gathered together all available resources to shovel and clear the town in the wake of the snow storm and then came out the following day for another day of coordinated service in the communities. We talk about the magic in our valley – our people and the core of their hearts is the magic. We, like Dr. King, are an embodiment of service to one’s community that is rooted in responsibility, obligation, and charismatic love.”

“Thank you for all your help ensuring that today’s day of service was successful. You showed up early to lead projects and transport volunteers, despite the fact that several of you experienced travel difficulties this weekend and that you all had lengthy to-do lists waiting,” Fecteau said in an email thanking those who participated in Monday’s day of service. “Student volunteers, thank you for showing up on the most bitterly cold morning Alfred has seen in a long time! Many of your peers were prevented from returning to campus in time for the MLK Day of Service by Winter Storm Harper, but you persisted and made it a priority to serve. We are appreciative of your energy and willingness to make a difference for the greater Alfred community.

The day of service was but one of several activities scheduled at Alfred University to mark Martin Luther King Jr. Week.

“The Human Library Project,” co-sponsored by the Alfred University libraries and the Institute for Cultural Unity, will be held on Wednesday, Jan. 23, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at Herrick Library. Volunteers from the University community will serve as “human books” that can be “checked out.” The human books will, according to organizers, “share their insights and life experiences, stories, and musings to both entertain and to educate.”

Also on Wednesday, an informational meeting will be held to discuss formation of a Sustained Dialogues Club. The meeting will be from 5-6 p.m. in Nevins Theater, Powell Campus Center.

Sustained Dialogues International (SDI) is a program which provides training on how to engage in meaningful, substantive, and continuous dialogues on a variety of topics both practical and controversial. According to organizers, clubs and organizations at over 50 college campuses in the United States and Canada have utilized the framework set forth by SDI to help train community members to become facilitators for meaningful dialogues and conversations on a myriad of relevant topics. Saltsman is a trained facilitator with experience assisting in the creation of sustained dialogues clubs.

A Sustained Dialogues Club at Alfred University would serve to expand the existing Common Ground program initiated on campus at the beginning of the 2018-19 academic year. Common Ground is a program for first-year and transfer students at Alfred University, which aims to promote the institution’s long-standing tradition of inclusivity, respect and understanding.

The MLK Community Dinner and Keynote Presentation is set for Sunday, Jan. 27, from 6-9 p.m. in the Knight Club, Powell Campus Center. The keynote speaker will be Steve Prince, Distinguished Artist in Residence at the Muscarelle Museum of Art at the College of William & Mary in Williamsburg, VA. Prince is also director of engagement at the College of William & Mary. The title of Prince’s presentation is “The Great Commission.”

Prince is an award-winning artist born and raised in New Orleans, LA, who combines spirituality, history, humor, and musical performance art to both entertain and educate audiences about social justice, community, and civic responsibility to one another and the broader community. His work is widely regarded by both civic and academic colleagues, where he has been invited to produce works for municipalities, churches, and schools. Samples of his work can be found on the website for the [Eyekons Gallery](#), Grand Rapids, MI.

Anyone wishing to attend the dinner and presentation by Prince can RSVP [here](#). Attendance at the dinner is by reservation only and is limited to the first 110 individuals.