

## Hundreds March To Honor King King Would Have Turned 90 On Jan. 15 CELEBRATING MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

By **JESSICA WETZLER**

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**BRIDGEWATER** — They can kill the dreamers, but they can never kill the dream.

Famous words from Martin Luther King Jr. were uttered by students as hundreds of people braved the cold and marched in honor of the slain civil rights leader, finding strength in numbers as **Bridgewater College** and the town of **Bridgewater** came together Monday afternoon.

Attendees arrived at Oakdale Park being greeted by Keon Nesmith, a junior at **Bridgewater College**, who gave opening remarks before marching to **Bridgewater** Town Hall.

“It is my belief that at a time like now, it is crucial for the human race to come together and spread love, not hate,” Nesmith said. “If it weren’t for Dr. King, I wouldn’t be talking to you all right now.”

Nesmith, 20, of Mechanicsville, said he was grateful for everyone who came out Monday despite the cold weather.

“It is my belief that by the looks of today’s turnout, Dr. King’s legacy has definitely lived on,”

Nesmith said. “Even 51 years after his assassination, that says something. This is what Dr. King would have wanted. People of different backgrounds coming together for not only this country, but to make this world a better place.”

Nesmith closed his remarks by saying that he hopes King’s dream continues to live on.

With assistance from Milton Franklin Jr., **Bridgewater College** chief of police, community members

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**Bridgewater College** students lead the way in the community march in **Bridgewater** on Monday in honor Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Jessica Wetzler / DN-R

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marched their way down Main Street, stopping at the Town Hall before ending their march at the **college**.

Robert Bryant, the associate dean of students for diversity and inclusion, welcomed attendees and introduced **Bridgewater** Mayor Ted Flory and BC President David Bushman.

Flory began his speech talking about the history of King.

“Today’s holiday celebrates Dr. King’s legacy and honors his inspiring life of courage,” Flory said. “I am here to honor the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., whom I have admired since my childhood. He was a remarkable man in a time of great turbulence, and his voice and message continues to resonate today.”

Flory noted King would have celebrated his 90th birthday Jan. 15.

BC student Abigail Allen, 18, of Warrenton, said

the event was an opportunity to give the campus a good name and engage in something important.

“It’s a good way to get more diversity within our campus, too, because that is always a positive,” Allen said. “I know **Bridgewater** wants to improve a lot of things within their diversity category.”

Another student, Annabell Knapp, 19, of Roanoke, said she enjoyed that the **college** held an event this year, unlike last year, when students were just given a day off to commemorate Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

“This is a way to help blend the town of **Bridgewater** and **Bridgewater College** as one and to show what we stand for,” Knapp said. “To try to show people that we want to have a change on campus, and we want to make a positive change.”

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