

BREAKFAST

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said the community needs to reclaim the telling of black history and not let the stories and victories of African Americans die with the older generation.

Richardson said that the bulk of people researching black history today are young white women.

"That's fine, they're doing good scholarship out there," she said. "But black people, and I'm talking to the people in this audience, we have to participate in the preservation and the telling of this history. We have to... Why, if we don't value our history, how can we expect anyone to value us?"

Richardson's organization, Chicago-based HistoryMakers, has recorded video interviews with nearly 2,000 African Americans in an effort to chronicle black history in the voices of the people who made it.

About a dozen people from Anne Arundel County have already been interviewed, along with more famous civil rights figures, including King's lone surviving sibling, Christine King Farris.

"She wants the young people to understand that they, too, can be like Martin — this iconic figure that, to kids, he just as well could be George Washington cutting down the cherry tree," Richardson said. "She wants people to understand there can be lots of Martins. That they can grow up and be like him."

gymnasium of Anne Arundel Community College, where the event was held.

Carl Snowden, civil rights director for the Maryland Attorney General, took up Richardson's theme, urging the community to keep King's teaching relevant in their everyday lives.

"It's not enough to come and talk about Dr. King in the past tense," Snowden said. "We have to talk about him in the present. You have to ask yourself, 'What would Dr. King say?'"

Snowden has organized the breakfast every year since 1981, five years before Martin Luther King Jr. Day became a federal holiday. This was his last year as the group's chairman.

"If it wasn't for people like Carl Snowden, we'd be at home, thinking, 'Wow, it's Martin Luther King Day. Let's sleep in and try to make the world a better place,'" said state Attorney General Douglas Gansler, prompting laughter from the crowd. "Instead we gather together to see that there's more to do."

Gansler was among a dozen local dignitaries to offer remarks during the event. Anne Arundel County Board of Education President Patricia Nalley said educators were doing everything possible to close the achievement gap between white and black students.

"We are closer than ever to Dr. King's goal, but we still have a long road to travel," she said.



Photos by Shannon Lee Zirkle — The Capital

Keynote speaker Julieanna Richardson, founder of The HistoryMakers, challenged each of the attendees to apply Martin Luther King Jr. Day's emphasis on community service to their daily activities.

Amid King's legacy of service and tolerance, more work to be done

Hundreds gather at annual memorial breakfast in Arnold

By ERIN COX
Staff Writer

Were Martin Luther King Jr. alive today, he would "lie down and cry" about the state of our inner cities, said the keynote speaker at a breakfast honoring King yesterday.

She challenged each of the more than 350 attendees to apply the holiday's emphasis on community service to their daily activities.

"We have these breakfasts, they're happening around the United States, but how many of us are really going to go back to our community and make real change?" asked Julieanna Richardson, keystone speaker and founder of The HistoryMakers.

For the 30th year, Anne Arundel County's political, community and civil rights leaders gathered for



More than 350 people attended the 30th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Breakfast yesterday at Anne Arundel Community College.

breakfast to commemorate Martin Luther King Jr. Day and inspire each other to continue King's fight for equality.

Richardson urged politicians and community leaders to renew their preaching of tolerance after the recent shooting spree in Tucson, Ariz.

"One can only think, however, that the seeds of intolerance were

sown in that state long ago," she said, pointing out that Arizona did not adopt the King holiday until the 1990s.

She asked educators to replace the lofty, untouchable image of King with a humanized one — not just the lion of civil rights, but a man young people could realistically aspire to become. And she

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