BREAKFAST

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said the community needs to reclaim the tell-
ing 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 scholar-
skip out there," she said. "But black people,
and I'm talking to the people in this audi-
ence, we have to participate in the preserva-
tion 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 inter-
views 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, includ-
ing King's long surviving sibling, Christine
King Farris.

"She wants the young people to under-
stand that they, too, can be like Martin —
that 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 Martinis. 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 commu-
ity 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 said that he organized the break-
fast every year since 1981, five years before Martin Lu-
ther King Jr. Day became a federal holiday.
This was his last year as the group's chair-
man.

"If it wasn't for people like Carl Snow-
den, 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 Douglass Gansler, prompt-
ly calling the audience to their feet. "Instead we
gather together to see that there's more to do."

Gansler was among a dozen local digni-
taries to offer remarks during the event.
Anne Arundel County Board of Education
President Patricia Pally 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.

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

Wearing Martin Luther King Jr.
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 300 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
changes," asked Julienea Richard-
son, keynote speaker and founder
of The HistoryMakers.

For the 30th year, Anne Arundel
County's political, community and
civil rights leaders gathered for
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
principles and tolerance after the
recent shootings 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, unattainable image of
King with a humanized one — not
just the lion of civil rights, but a
man young people could realistic-
ly aspire to become. And she
(See BREAKFAST, Page A6)