



CITY OF DECATUR ILLINOIS

#1 GARY K. ANDERSON PLAZA

DECATUR, ILLINOIS 62523-1196

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 6, 2023

37th Annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. events in Decatur

Decatur, IL – Please join the City of Decatur in celebrating the legacy of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. during the 37th Annual Freedom March.

The Freedom March is set for Monday, January 16, 2023 starting at 10:00 a.m. The march will commence from **one** location at Mueller Park and then will proceed north to the Decatur Civic Center, 1 Gary K Anderson Plaza. After the march, a program will occur at 11:00 a.m. in the Civic Center Theater, located on the second floor. The program's theme is "Teaching our Past Improves our Future" led by Richard Hansen, author and a history teacher with 26 years of experience.

Students from DPS-61 were invited to participate in a contest where they submitted essays, poems, and/or artwork with the theme "Now is the Time to Live the Dream." The winners will read their essays and poems during the program, and the winning artwork will be on display.

The annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration is coordinated by a subcommittee of the Decatur Human Relations Commission. We look forward to the community's participation!

Follow the Facebook event for updates: <https://www.facebook.com/events/705960527701475>. Contact City of Decatur Human Resources with any questions 217-424-2805.

About Richard Hansen:

Rich has taught history at Mt. Zion High School for 26 years. He was born and raised in Rutland, IL and attended Eastern Illinois University in Charleston, where he earned both a Bachelor's degree in Social Science Education and a Master's Degree in History. Rich teaches a variety of history courses, including U.S. History, AP U.S. History, Contemporary America, and The African-American Experience.

Through his teaching of African-American history, Rich has become involved with the African-American Cultural & Genealogical Society of Illinois, Inc. located in Decatur. He currently sits on the board of directors and has his students create exhibits that are permanently on display at the museum. Through his efforts with the museum, Rich received the annual "Game Changers" Award from the Decatur branch of the NAACP in 2017 and was named the state's "Olive Foster Teacher of the Year" in 2018.

Rich became a published author in 2017 with the release of his first book *Education Has No Color – The Story of Thelma Mothershed Wair, One of the Little Rock Nine*.

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