Campus and Community Engagement, a unit of the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, is proud to announce the 2022 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Word from the Mountain Top oratory contest. The purpose of the contest is to recognize and give students the opportunity to reflect on the words of Dr. King while connecting his message to issues facing our nation in the 21st century. In addition, participants are provided an opportunity to display and enhance their own writing and communication skills through oration.

**ELIGIBILITY:** To be eligible all participants must be a high school (public, parochial, military, private or state-accredited home school), community college, or college student currently enrolled in a school located in the Birmingham City, Shelby County, or Jefferson County area.

**HOW TO ENTER:** Students must submit one copy of the completed typed-written speech (title included). This information should be submitted by no later than January 7, 2022, by 5:00 p.m. Speeches can also be submitted electronically to inclusion@uab.edu with the subject line: 2022 MLK Speech.

**CONTEST REGULATIONS:** All speech content must comply with the following contest rules before submission:

- Each speech must reflect the contestant’s own ideas, research, writing, and original thinking.
- Only one (1) speech may be submitted by each contestant.
- Speeches must be typed double space, 500 words minimum to 1,000 words max.
- The delivered response to the assigned speech topic should last for a minimum of five minutes, but no longer than ten minutes. (1)
- Each speech must include a title page with the following information:
  - Speech
  - Author’s name
  - Physical Address
  - Email Address
  - Telephone number
  - School name
  - Total number of pages

The title of the speech, NOT the author’s name, MUST appear on the top of the first page. References should be included and clearly identified. Speeches will not be returned to the author; they become the property of the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at UAB. If selected, we reserve the right to reprint the speeches in educational publications, future promotional material, and use them at community education workshops. Appropriate citations will be given to the authors.
“When our days become dreary with low-hovering clouds of despair, and when our nights become darker than a thousand midnights, let us remember that there is a creative force in this universe, working to pull down the gigantic mountains of evil, a power that is able to make a way out of no way and transform dark yesterdays into bright tomorrows. Let us realize the arc of the moral universe is long but it bends toward justice.” –Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (August 16, 1967)

The quote for this year’s competition derives from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr’s speech at the 11th Annual Southern Christian Leadership Conference Convention. During his speech, he challenged the audience to think more broadly and equitable in addressing social ills. By asking the question, “Where do we go from here?” Dr. King also encourages us to examine our systemic structures, the conditions that cause inequality, and strategize ways to maintain the momentum of the movement.

For this year’s submission, we invite contestants to write an inspirational speech to encourage communities to keep fighting for social justice in the face of current challenges.

ASSIGNED TOPIC: The purpose of the assigned topic is to test the speaker’s knowledge of the subject, the extent of his/her research, and the ability to respond to the prompt as related to the basic principles of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s message.

SELECTION: Three finalists from each category (high school and community college/college graduate) will be contacted and invited to perform their written speeches on January 22, 2022.

Submit entries electronically to:

inclusion@uab.edu

In the prepared oration, quotations must be indicated as such. Where quotations are more than words in length, the author’s name must be given in the manuscript and cited orally.
### ORATORY RUBRIC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>5- Distinguished</th>
<th>3- Proficient</th>
<th>1- Novice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Delivery</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Relaxed, positive; appears confident and calm</td>
<td>□ Some nervousness apparent; sporadic eye contact or only to one person</td>
<td>□ Delivery distracting; eye contact lacking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Maintain eye contact with audience</td>
<td>□ Some nervous gestures, stiff, tense, or too relaxed</td>
<td>□ Gestures lacking or inappropriate for speech</td>
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<tr>
<td>□ Gestures enhance speech</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Vocal delivery</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>□ Enunciates clearly with effective volume</td>
<td>□ Generally uses appropriate enunciation and volume</td>
<td>□ Enunciation or volume a problem; difficult to hear or understand</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>□ Infection conveys emotion and enhances meaning</td>
<td>□ Ordinary inflection</td>
<td>□ Monotone</td>
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<tr>
<td>□ Meaningful pauses build suspense or enhance interest</td>
<td>□ Random pauses with gap fillers (&quot;um&quot;, &quot;er&quot;, etc.)</td>
<td>□ Frequent pauses and distracting fillers</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Pacing</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>□ Delivery is engaging for audience, moving along at an interesting pace</td>
<td>□ Delivery is somewhat uneven</td>
<td>□ Delivery is rather too quick or slow, decreasing interest for audience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction and Closing</strong></td>
<td>□ Introduction captures audience attention and sets the mood</td>
<td>□ Introduction is evident but not outstanding</td>
<td>□ Introduction is weak or lacking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Closing is strong, leaving the audience with a clear message</td>
<td>□ Closing is evident, but average</td>
<td>□ Closing is weak or lacking</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Presentation Style</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>□ Information presented in an engaging, compelling style</td>
<td>□ Presentation style effective, but not especially strong</td>
<td>□ Presentation style does not inspire interest</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>□ Presenter’s personality is effectively integrated into the presentation</td>
<td>□ Presenter’s personality is somewhat in evidence</td>
<td>□ No evidence of the presenter’s personality</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Point Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

1 Speeches that the do not adhere to the time allotment will be deducted 5 points.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WRITTEN SPEECH RUBRIC²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>5-Distinguished</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content is relevant to topic and personal life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Pertinent examples, facts, and/or statistics</td>
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<td>The speech adds value to the experience of those who hear it</td>
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<td>□ Message is meaningful and convincing</td>
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<td>The speech has a good flow</td>
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<tr>
<td>□ Smooth and effective transitions are made between thoughts or sections</td>
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<td>□ Ideas are conveyed in an original, insightful manner that holds the attention of the audience</td>
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<tr>
<td>It is presented with attention to vocabulary and grammar convention</td>
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<tr>
<td>□ No grammatical errors</td>
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<tr>
<td>□ Interesting and varied sentence structure</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

² If the content of the speech does not, in a judge’s estimation, meet the criteria for the contest, a score of 0 should be awarded for content.