

Dr. King's life and mission inspire us to move forward—step by step, voice by voice, dream by dream.

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Hi Lauren,

From a barber shop on Jackson Street in Albany, Georgia, to the historic Lorraine Motel of Memphis, Tennessee, and now a stone's throw from Washington, D.C., my journey has been profoundly shaped by the echoes of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s vision.

I was [born in the birthplace of Juneteenth](#) and, in my long broadcast media career, I took on the charge of making sure stories of pain and progress make it into mainstream news. It's a fight that led me right here to JMA. Witnessing moments of triumph and tragedy, resilience and revival—a journey that constantly reminds me of Dr. King's words: **"I've been to the mountaintop ... I've seen the Promised Land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight that we, as a people, will get to the Promised Land."**

On December 16, 1961, Dr. King was arrested along with hundreds of African-Americans during a march for desegregation. These courageous acts were part of the Albany Movement, a campaign that energized the fight for civil rights. As a journalist, I walked those same streets, hearing stories of resilience from people like Eugene Bailey, who marched alongside Dr. King, and Donald Carter, a child then, who watched history unfold.

From Albany, I moved to Memphis, Tennessee, where the fight for justice brought Dr. King to support striking sanitation workers. His commitment to equity led him to the Mason Temple, where he delivered his final speech on April 3, 1968. That night, he spoke of near-death experiences, of surviving an assassination attempt a decade earlier, and of the monumental movements he might have missed: the Freedom Riders, the Selma-to-Montgomery marches, and the Civil Rights Act of 1964. “I’m so happy I didn’t sneeze,” he proclaimed, acknowledging the fragile threads of destiny. Less than 24 hours later, he was gone. Working in Memphis, I collaborated with AFSCME, the labor union that partnered with those sanitation workers—a full-circle moment rooted in the struggle Dr. King championed.

Now, residing within driving distance of Washington, D.C., I’m reminded of Dr. King’s “I Have a Dream” speech, delivered on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. It’s a place of inspiration and a stark reminder of the work yet to be done.

Dr. King’s vision extended far beyond that iconic moment, addressing voting rights, labor equity, and racial justice—issues that remain at the forefront of our fight. **At Jobs to Move America (JMA), we carry forward his legacy by advocating for community benefits agreements, ensuring families can create lasting legacies of their own. His dream inspires us to seek equity, sustainability, and meaningful jobs, knowing that the promised land lies in continuing the work.**

As we celebrate Martin Luther King Jr. Day, we revisit the timeless power of his words. From Sister Pollard’s defiant “My feets is tired, but my soul is rested” to Dr. King’s prophetic “I’ve been to the mountaintop,” his speeches resonate with a call to action. Today, we honor his legacy by continuing the work he began. Whether marching in Albany, organizing in Memphis, or advocating near D.C., we are reminded of the footprints left before us and the road still ahead.

Dr. King’s life and mission inspire us to move forward—step by step, voice by voice, dream by dream. We’re not just working toward a legacy; we’re living it. And as we carry his vision into the future, let us hold fast to his unwavering belief: “We, as a people, will get to the Promised Land.”

In solidarity,



Troy Washington
Communications Director

Join us in the fight for good jobs and healthy communities.

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