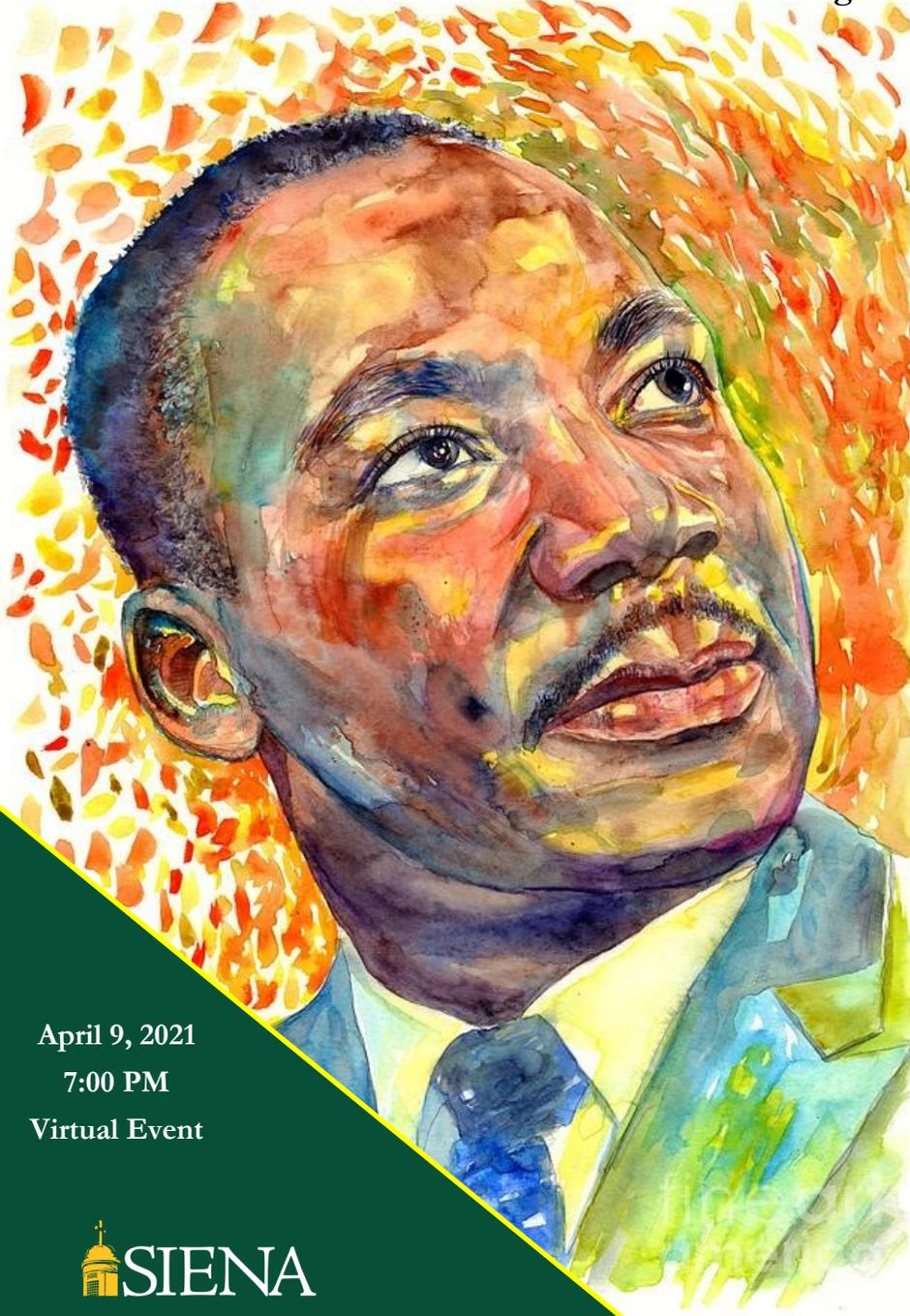


34th Annual

Martin Luther King Jr. & Coretta Scott King Lecture Series on Race and Nonviolent Social Change



April 9, 2021

7:00 PM

Virtual Event



The 34th Annual Martin Luther King Jr.
and
Coretta Scott King Lecture

Virtual Event

Friday, April 9th, 2021

7:00 p.m.

Lecture Link

[https://siena.zoom.us/meeting/register/
tJMlfu2upjwsGdJTPJSawGOAw1_3rsm_SYW9](https://siena.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJMlfu2upjwsGdJTPJSawGOAw1_3rsm_SYW9)



Virtual Program

Opening Remarks

Christopher P. Gibson, Ph.D. '86

President
Siena College

Welcome

Ambassador Douglas Hickey '77 H'16

Having known Kerry Kennedy for years and hearing her speak on several occasions with regard to human rights, I welcomed the opportunity to nominate her to deliver the MLK JR/CSK Lecture this evening. Following in her father's footsteps, she has devoted her entire adult life in the pursuit of equal justice, the promotion of basic rights, and the preservation of the rule of law. I commend Siena College and the committee on this lecture series, as a whole, and for inviting Kerry as our 34th annual speaker. Ambassador Douglas T. Hickey '77 H'16

Keynote Address

Kerry Kennedy

President
Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights

Concluding Remarks

Margaret E. Madden, Ph.D.

Provost and Senior Vice President



The 34th Annual Martin Luther King Jr. and Coretta Scott King Lecture

Kerry Kennedy

President

Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights



Kerry Kennedy is President of Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights. She is the proud mother of three daughters, Cara, Mariah, and Michaela. A human rights activist and lawyer, she authored New York Times best seller *Being Catholic Now*, as well as *Speak Truth to Power* and *Robert F. Kennedy: Ripples of Hope*.

Kerry, the seventh of Ethel and Robert F. Kennedy's eleven children, has devoted more than 40 years to the pursuit of equal justice, the promotion and protection of basic rights, and the preservation of the rule of law. She works on a range of issues, including child labor, women's rights, disappearances, indigenous land rights, judicial independence, freedom of expression, ethnic violence, criminal justice reform, immigration, impunity, and environmental justice.

She has led hundreds of human rights delegations in support of these causes. Under Kerry's leadership, Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights partners with the bravest people on earth to create lasting change.

She appears regularly as a commentator on national and worldwide television networks, and is a frequent contributor to newspapers and magazines.

Kerry served as Chair of the Amnesty International USA Leadership Council for over a decade. She serves on the board of directors of the United States Institute of Peace, Human Rights First, Kailash Satyarthi Children's Foundation, Laureate and Leaders, Nizami Ganjavi International Center, HealthEVillages, as well as RFK Human Rights' numerous international chapters. She is on the Advisory Committee for the Association of American Indian Affairs, the Albert Schweitzer Institute, Sankofa, San Patrignano, and the Center for Victims of Torture.

Kerry has received high honors from President Lech Walesa of Poland for aiding the Solidarity movement, The Humanitarian award from the Congress of Nobel Peace Prize Laureates, and many other honors.

A member of the Massachusetts and District of Columbia bars, she is a graduate of Brown University and Boston College Law School. She holds honorary doctorates of law from Le Moyne College, University of San Francisco Law School, and University of New Caledonia, and honorary doctorates of Humane Letters from Bay Path College and the Albany College of Pharmacy.

Commemoration of Robert F. Kennedy

Donated by:

Ambassador Douglas Hickey '77 H'16

To commemorate the 34th Annual Martin Luther King, Jr & Coretta Scott King Lecture Series on Race and Nonviolent Social Change at Siena College and to honor a dear friend and guest speaker, Kerry Kennedy, the College was pleased to accept an art donation from Ambassador Douglas Hickey '77 H'16, his wife, Dawn Ross, and family. Doug is a distinguished alumnus and an honorary degree recipient. Doug, Dawn, and their family are transformational donors at Siena. Their names are etched on the College's Ring of Honor in recognition for their philanthropic funding of the Hickey Chair in the School of Business, Hickey Field, and the Hickey Financial Center, among other support.

Their recent art donation to the College (*pictured below*) is a Metallic C-Print on chromogenic plexiglass that was created for the Robert F. Kennedy (RFK) Human Rights Foundation, which the Hickeys purchased at auction. The artist is Paul Gerben of NYC. This same print was purchased by Prince Albert of Monaco in 2018 at the 50th Anniversary Gala of the RFK Foundation. Etched into the print is RFK's famous Day of Affirmation speech. This speech was given on June 6, 1966 at the University of Cape Town in South Africa and is considered perhaps the greatest speech of his life.

After this evening program the print will be prominently displayed on campus with a commemorative plaque marking the Hickey/Kennedy family friendship and featured lecture.

You can read (or listen to) this full speech by accessing the URL link below:

<https://www.jfklibrary.org/learn/about-jfk/the-kennedy-family/robert-f-kennedy/robert-f-kennedy-speeches/day-of-affirmation-address-university-of-capetown-capetown-south-africa-june-6-1966>



The 34th Annual Martin Luther King Jr. and Coretta Scott King Lecture



Program Remarks

REX SMITH

Editor-at-Large of the Times Union

The Times Union has been proud to sponsor this lecture series for so many years because we believe that it has helped to define the role of thoughtful citizenship in our community. The messages of noted speakers here have resonated deeply, in their calls for justice, healing and growth across barriers of race, class, gender, identity and religion. The presence this year of Kerry Kennedy carries forward that tradition.

For decades, Kerry Kennedy has pressed forward for global action – not just words, but work – to expand the rights of all people. She has worked on child labor, women’s rights, freedom of expression, domestic violence, workplace discrimination, sexual assault and environmental justice. She truly follows the footpath trod by Martin Luther King Jr. and Coretta Scott King... and, indeed, that of her honored parents, Robert and Ethel Kennedy.

One of the notions that Dr. King often addressed is especially relevant to those of us here – because just by our presence, we may be assumed to be people of good will, with surely the best of intentions. Hear these words of Dr. King, then: “Shallow understanding from people of good will is more frustrating than absolute misunderstanding from people of ill will.” And on another occasion, Dr. King said: “The ultimate tragedy is not oppression and cruelty by the bad people, but the silence over that by the good people.” This series of lectures is aimed at combatting the shallow understanding of people of good will – that is, defeating “the silence of the good people” – and we are grateful to have the opportunity for inspiration by a true heir of the legacy of America’s greatest leaders in the fight for justice.



Remarks from the Vice Chair



ANNE POPE

Vice-Chair

*Martin Luther King Jr. & Coretta Scott King
Lecture Series on Race and Nonviolent Social Change*

We are grateful tonight for those of you who have joined us at our 34th Martin Luther King, Jr. and Coretta Scott King Lecture Series on Race and Nonviolent Social Change. We believe this is one of the world's premier lectures. We have brought forth some of the most acclaimed speakers and tonight is no exception as we welcome Kerry Kennedy. This lecture series focuses on exposure, education, and making the world a better place to live in.

We have been imprisoned for one year in our homes, waiting for the disappearance of the coronavirus (COVID-19). We have been washing our hands, wearing our masks, practicing social distancing, and quarantining against our families and friends. The virus has taken its toll but we are strong. As we view the world we see the devastation of poverty and racism, but we are learning how to look out for others, to care and share, to love and show concern. We see how much hatred and prejudice is in the world and the struggle for equal rights is still difficult.

We must help change the world. Now is the time to help the needy by "getting in good trouble," to quote Congressman John Lewis.





PAUL MURRAY, Ph.D.
Siena College
Professor Emeriti - Sociology Department
MLK Advisory Board

Courage Awards Remarks

Each year hundreds of Capital Region students are recognized for their outstanding accomplishments on athletic teams, their superlative grade point averages, their top scores on standardized tests and their impressive theatrical and musical performances. The three recipients of the 2021 Courage Awards were selected based on their record of leadership in standing up for the human rights of all individuals.

In his speech at the March on Washington Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., taught us that we should judge others not by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character. The Courage Award recipients have embraced this message by defending the rights of their fellow students regardless of their color, ethnic or religious background, sexual orientation or physical or intellectual abilities.

In their schools and their communities they have demonstrated a consistent commitment to the values that Martin Luther King, Jr., and Coretta Scott King stood for. Siena College is proud to recognize these three outstanding young people.



The MLK Lecture Series

STUDENT COURAGE AWARDS

The Martin Luther King Jr. and Coretta Scott King Lecture Series on Race and Nonviolent Social Change Advisory Board proudly announces the recipients of the 2021 Student Courage Awards.

The Courage Awards were established to recognize Capital Region students in grades 6-12, who have demonstrated personal courage by taking positive action against racism, prejudice, bias-related violence and other forms of intolerance in their respective communities. The awards were developed in response to an increase in intolerance, bullying, gangs and racial discrimination among youth in the Capital Region. A selection committee comprised of education, business and civic leaders selects the winners based on the contributions of the nominees in addressing intolerance in any form.

2021 Student Courage Award Recipients

Jessica Airhienbuwa **Guilderland Central School District**

Jessica is a young visionary and talented leader. Alongside a peer, Jessica is one of the founders of our BSU, moved to do so following the events of this spring and summer. Jessica has taken the initiative to draft out statements of purpose, create materials and resources for members, and contacted building administration in order to find out what steps she would need to take to get the movement under way. Through her efforts, we already have a leadership team of six members supporting our thirty-one active club members, as well as the rest of the student body at large. She coordinated the presence of our first guest speaker, and efficiently and effectively communicated designated roles to the rest of her leadership team. Through building wide messaging that has already gone forth, and future plans yet to come, Jessica has lead BSU to become a presence, event in this unprecedented year.

In terms of wisdom, Jessica is far beyond her years. While looking to form BSU, she looked not only to members of the Black community, but to the broader student body at large. As a result, our BSU is a multi-racial group that reflects the interest of a range of backgrounds unified in a common mission. In one of our meetings centered around micro-aggressions, Jessica was brave enough to put herself out there, sharing her personal experiences in written form with the entire group, providing and indeed servicing as a springboard for others to enter into the conversation as well, knowing that this was truly a safe space for all members regardless of race, age, gender, or any other factor. As we know, safe spaces must be created intentionally and maintained through action, not simply through words or labeling the environment as such.

2021 Student Courage Award Recipients

Jessica Airhienbuwa
Guilderland Central School District

Furthermore, Jessica also serves on our building-wide anti-racist taskforce, and serves as one of the leaders of the student voice committee whose goal is to empower students as agents of change. One example of such work was when she was involved in a school-wide event involving an optional moment of silence and ensuing discussion following the broadcast of George Floyd's killing. She embodies the ideals of the No Place for Hate Program, and is a perfect example of what it means to lead both in word and in deed.



Guilderland
CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT



2021 Student Courage Award Recipients

Mia Cosh **South Glens Falls High School**

Mia’s dedication to eradicating injustice, hate, and bias within the school community and beyond is evidenced in her active role as president of South Glens Falls High Schools “No Place for Hate” committee. During her time as acting president, Mia has demonstrated impressive leadership qualities in uniting members of the student body to sign a pledge against hate, discrimination, and bullying within the school. She has a complex and passionate understanding of the meaning and dangers of prejudice, discrimination, bias, and hate and explains them in a relatable way to her fellow peers. This demonstrates the courage Mia possesses. She takes on the challenge of introducing discussions of potentially uncomfortable topics with her peers as she understands that spreading the message of ending hate is more important than avoiding a possible negative reaction from peers.

Additionally, Mia has played an active role in planning activities aimed at creating a more harmonious, peaceful, and accepting environment. She led the organization of a school wide walk against hate within the physical education classes, a required course for the entire student body, to ensure that all members of the school could participate. Following the walk, Mia facilitated discussion about the walk against hate, which encouraged students to describe their own opinions on standing against hate, bias, and discrimination. It is also important to mention that while South Glens Falls School District is operating on a hybrid schedule this year, Mia is a fully virtual student. The reason we mention this is because she was able to plan, organize, and follow through on these school-wide activities from home. Mia is an incredible leader who is able to think outside the box to reach a larger portion of the school community in spreading the message of ending hate.

Mia’s passion and dedication to ending hate and the bravery she models in doing so makes her a perfect candidate for this recognition.



2021 Student Courage Award Recipients

Zoe Thomas

Bethlehem Central School District

Zoe Thomas has impressed all of us with her thoughtfulness and activism inside and outside of class. She shows courage and leadership on a day-to-day basis. Zoe, along with a few other students attended the Teen Human Rights Symposium at NYSUT and they published an article about her endeavors.

Here is a piece of the article:

Educator-led human rights institutes inspire students in New York, across the country. Author: Liza Frenette

Since participating in her first human rights symposium two years ago, Bethlehem student Zoe Thomas has become involved with several activism groups at school and in her community. She's raised funds to help victims of human trafficking and worked to bring attention to the lack of diversity in her school's curriculum.

This summer, she met with the head of her high school English department to discuss why only one Black author has been assigned in four years. Thomas helped stage a read-in where students and alumni, wearing masks and practicing safe distancing, read a poem or book excerpt from an author of color. It was followed by a protest to address the need for training on racial bias and racism within the school.

Beyond this, she helped start and run an Instagram account called [@meetoobethlehem](#) in order to draw attention and promote awareness. The account anonymously publishes stories from sexual assault and harassment survivors. This is a powerful site that brings voice to so many who have felt ignored and forgotten. The account received a lot of stories over this past summer, and as a result Zoe along with others are currently working with school resource officers to discuss their role in situations of sexual assault and harassment. She is a true advocate.

Last spring, in response to the death of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and others deaths and instances of racial hatred, she organized a read-in to bring attention extra space to and then advocate for curricular change. They read African-American authors and discussed ways to put in the literature and history of African Americans into our Social Studies and English curricula. As a result, the English department committed to examining new literature and including at least one book written by a Person of Color into every year's English classes.

Zoe is the vice-president of our Amnesty International club at the high school, which has been a strong awareness club. However, they take the next step and turn it into advocacy and change. This year they are going to teach 8th graders about social awareness and media literacy. It will be very similar to the Teen Human Rights Symposium at NYSUT but including more students within our community.

Zoe is truly admirable. She has a passion for social justice which has made our community better.



The Martin Luther King Jr. and Coretta Scott King Lecture Series on Race and Nonviolent Social Change gratefully acknowledges the following individuals and organizations for their contributions:

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**MLK Lecture Series speakers through
the years ...**

1988	Harry Belafonte
1989	The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton
1990	Reverend Allan Boesak
1991	Ruby Dee
1992	Robert Coles
1993	Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot
1994	Elie Wiesel
1995	Henry Louis Gates, Jr.
1996	Marian Wright Edelman
1997	Jonathan Kozol
1998	Cornel West
1999	Johnnetta B. Cole
2000	Lani Guinier
2001	Eric H.F. Law
2002	Bernice A. King
2003	Dr. M. Joycelyn Elders
2004	Calvin O. Butts
2005	Morris Dees
2006	The Honorable John R. Lewis
2007	Julian Bond
2008	Bernice Johnson Reagon
2009	Michael Eric Dyson
2010	Charles J. Ogletree
2011	Van Jones
2012	Bishop Howard J. Hubbard
2013	Julia Alvarez
2014	Douglas A. Blackmon
2015	Geoffrey Canada
2016	Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II
2017	Dr. Robert Bullard
2018	Luis Alberto Urrea
2019	Tim Wise
2020	Winona LaDuke
2021	Kerry Kennedy





www.siena.edu/MLK