



Columbia Values Diversity Celebration

An Annual Celebration of the Life and Teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Student Writings Program ***Building an Inclusive Columbia***

Students in grades 4-12 are invited to submit their original writings for possible publication in the 2017 Columbia Values Diversity Celebration Student Writings Booklet. This booklet will be distributed to over 1,000 people at the annual community celebration on January 12, 2017 and published on the Celebration website at: www.como.gov (Search: Diversity Celebration)

Theme

The theme for the 24th annual Columbia Values Diversity Celebration is: **“Building an Inclusive Columbia.”** Because Columbia is a city of many ethnic groups, religions, cultures, and opinions, it is important that all community members know that their story and their voice are important and valued. Submit an essay or poem describing how there is inclusion and acceptance in our community despite our differences.

Writing Suggestions

To help you get started, consider using one of the following prompts:

- **Narrative:** Write a story, real or imagined, describing how two or more individuals from diverse backgrounds work together to create a more inclusive community.
- **Persuasive:** In what ways is Columbia inclusive of people of diverse backgrounds and in what ways does our community still have room to grow in this regard?
- **Expository:** Research and describe an individual, organization, or event in our community that has actively worked to establish a more inclusive environment in Columbia.

Submission Guidelines

Students in grades 4-12 throughout the Columbia area are eligible to participate. Student writings should not be more than one page typewritten or two pages handwritten. An independent selection committee will choose selected writings from all grade levels for publication. The booklet will be distributed at the Columbia Values Diversity Celebration on Thursday, January 12, 2017 and published on the celebration website. Four or five students will be selected with the opportunity to read their works and be featured in a video produced by the City Channel, which will be played at the Celebration as well as broadcast after the event.

Students should include: name, age, grade level, teacher's name, and school on the essay/poetry submission. Entries will not be accepted without this information.

The deadline for submitting writings is Monday, November 14, 2016.

Send or deliver essay/poetry entries to:

<u>Columbia Public Schools students</u> Michelle Baumstark Community Relations Columbia Public Schools 1818 West Worley Columbia, MO 65203	<u>All other students</u> Columbia Values Diversity Celebration c/o Office of Cultural Affairs 300 S. Providence Rd. Columbia, MO 65203 E-Mail: OCA@como.gov
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Contact

For more information please contact the Office of Cultural Affairs:

Phone: (573) 874-6386

E-mail: OCA@como.gov

Web: www.como.gov (Search: Diversity Celebration)