

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS; Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. devoted his life to advancing equality, social justice, and opportunity for all, while challenging all Americans to participate in reconciliation and the never-ending work of building a more perfect union, and;

WHEREAS; Dr. King emphasized that this dream excludes no one from its promise and protection and that it affirms that every individual's rights are God-given and neither conferred by nor derived from the state, and;

WHEREAS; Dr. King recognized that everyone can be great because everyone can serve, requiring only grace and love to do so and, during his lifetime, encouraged all Americans to serve their neighbors and their communities remembering the urgency of now, and;

WHEREAS; Dr. King warned us not to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred. That dignity, discipline and non-violence were the way forward. That we cannot walk alone in this walk to justice and, that we cannot turn back, and;

WHEREAS; in 1994, Congress initiated the King Day of Service, a nationwide effort to transform the holiday honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. into a day of community service, focused on Dr. King 's example of working to solve social problems while focusing on bringing people together and breaking down the barriers that have divided us as a nation, and;

WHEREAS; serving on the King Holiday is an appropriate way to honor Dr. King, meet local and national needs, bring our citizens together, and strengthen our communities and nation, and;

WHEREAS; the King Day of Service is the only federal holiday commemorated as a National Day of Service, and offers an opportunity for Americans to give back to their communities on the holiday, as well as a time to make an ongoing commitment to service throughout the year; and;

WHEREAS; King Day of Service projects are organized by a wide range of nonprofit and community organizations, educational institutions, public agencies, private businesses, and other organizations across the nation;

THEREFORE; I, Robert T. Barnett, Mayor of Downers Grove, in honor and recognition of the contributions of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., to the advancement of equality in our Country, proclaim January 19, 2026 as **Martin Luther King Jr. Day** in the Village of Downers Grove and urge our citizens to honor the memory of Dr. King, follow his example and to put his teachings into action by participating in the MLK Day of Service, and to find ways to give back to their communities through <https://serve.illinois.gov>, <https://www.givingdupage.org> or <https://www.americorps.gov> and by searching MLK day of Service.

Dated this 13th of January 2026, at Downers Grove, Illinois.



Robert T. Barnett, Mayor