

- Today's guest speaker has been an activist for most of his life. He was born in Ukraine, raised in Duluth, Minnesota, and moved to Durham over 20 years ago. He has been described as being on the cutting edge of social issues here in Durham. So much so that he has even started his own newspaper called The Trumpet of Conscience. His roots in activism have ranged from civil rights to workers' rights to senior citizens' rights. In light of the celebration of Dr. King's birthday it is fitting to note that he has even marched with Dr. King from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama. He described Dr. King as a man who has tried to save the soul of America. Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome Mr. Sam Reed. (audience cheers and applauds)

- Thank you, Ms. (mumbles) I really appreciate your remarks. Brothers and sisters. (audience laughs) (object clatters) I am fully aware that many of you present at this celebration of Martin Luther King's birthday are schoolteachers. And people who make this beautiful institution worthwhile. And that teaches thousands and thousands of young people, young and old for that matter, about not only technique but also teaching them the meaning of life. It is appropriate therefore for me to say something first of all to the teachers. And I quote here from Ronald Misiar. Who said, "Being a teacher "refers less to one who gives answers "and expect conformity, "and more to one who's capable of providing context "and stimulus "to each learner so that each learner can discover "for him or herself. "Such teachers are skillful intermediaries. "and guide in the search for meaning "and self understanding. "Rather than creating followers or imitators, "their objective is to cultivate discoverers "and thinkers. "One of the qualifications, "one of the qualities "that seem to characterize great teachers "is their willingness and capacity "to go beyond given and inherited "or conditional boundaries. "Part of their genius is to be able "to see things differently and act accordingly." I didn't come here to make a speech. I came here mostly to share with you some of the epochal events of the Freedom Movement of the 1960s. And they were revolutionary in content. I want to share with this and (mumbles) his feelings and his characterization of that Freedom Movement of the '60s. He says, "Although we often forget "the work of the artist reminds us "that the transformation of human societies "go with their best possibilities, "it's not primarily a job for political technicians. "Such creativity was one of the hallmarks "of the black-led Freedom Movement "in our land. "In the search for non-violent approaches "to the systemic problems of America, "democracy was one of its best manifestations. "Those of us who mined the post World War II movement "for its human reaped treasures "must certainly move beyond historical cliches "and stereotypes. "But one of the stirring results "of the spinning globe "and the welcome creates cessation "of the Cold War is the growing recognition "of our need for new visions "of human unity. "New understanding of the path "towards reaching human conflicts. "New peace brigades to help us "solve the great problems and meet the great challenges "common to humankind. "So even though a commitment to non-violent struggle "was not uniformly accepted "in the African-American Freedom Movement, "it is certainly one of the elements "most urgently needed in our time. "And the right of these needs and opportunities "for a contemporary moment, "it becomes apparent "that our teaching... "is granted a great gift "when we are able to explore and reflect "on a Freedom Movement in which many leaders "and thousands of other participants "committed themselves to the ways "of non-violence. "A non-violent life

and struggle. "Indeed, a movement overflowing "with the life and testimonials of women and men "who had broken through their fears, "who transcended their weaknesses. "We're saying, we are not afraid. "Even as their knees were quivering. "Who were willing to live and die "for more than a private agenda. "Such a movement and such persons "are perhaps the greatest... "gift to all those of us "who teach about life of the human community. "For here was a greatness of heart and spirit "that had nothing to do with celebrity, "status and bank accounts. "Here are countless models for authentic life "and works, "which may help us to reclaim and restate "the old saying, into words like gold. "The lives of great women and men, "teaches that all of us "may tap the magnificent powers "of divine creativity, "which now lie dormant within us. "And use those powers for the development "of our own life "and the most humane life of our society. "Indeed, these are models "of women and men "who were not satisfied with the transformation "of their own lives. "The breaking of their own tears, "but sowed their own renewal as a call "to participate in the rebuilding of other people "and the nation. "And in the process they found even more "powerful sources... "of personal renewal than they dreamed. "If nothing else comes forth "from the exploration and sharing "of the epic story of our own struggle "for democracy in the United States of America, "such an insight will be reward enough. "And if the insight helps us to guide desperately "searching or desperately trapped "individuals to discover and claim "their own possibilities, "our teaching will have helped "beyond the sharing of information to the sharing of life itself." I think that basically expresses my feelings about the role that the Freedom Movement has for our country, and for that matter for the world. I feel very very proud and happy that I knew Dr. Martin Luther King personally. That I shared with him in the march from Selma to Montgomery. I also feel very very proud to be part of that multitude of thousands and thousands of women and men, and children too, who braved the insults, the injuries, and the terrible name calling that came from white racists. For those who did not really understand that Martin Luther King, and for that matter Malcolm X too, and many many thousands and thousands of others who shared with King and Malcolm X the love of freedom, the love for democracy, and were determined to give everything in their power, and for that matter, their life even, in order to achieve greater democracy for our nation. The celebration of Martin Luther King's birthday should not be looked upon merely as occasion to explain Martin Luther King, although there's no question of the role, the tremendous power and example of Martin Luther King himself. But this celebration is an occasion for us to ponder of the tremendous possibilities of the people of our country. The example of the Freedom Movement was an example of what the American people can and will do. And should be an example to us of what you and I can do for our communities, to do for our nation. Because as you've noticed from the children here today, there is creativity, there is imagination, there is hope. And there is talent in the American people. All we have to do is give it a chance to come forward. Give it a chance to rise to the surface. Not to treat people as numbers but as human beings with hearts, with hope, with dreams. That's the meaning of the Freedom Movement. And it's especially important because the fight for freedom... Is not limited to the '60s. The fight for freedom is today, to carry forward the dream, to accomplish the test that was initiated by many predecessors to make life today truly a happy life for the people. To make our country truly democratic. To be an example to our nation and to the world. That's what today's celebration is all about. And I hope you feel and agree with my sentiments. I want to conclude my remarks with one observation. Martin Luther King and Malcolm X were not the only ones that had a dream. The dream is universal. The dream is the expression and the hope of millions and millions of people. In the past and the present. And artists, teachers, people, creative people, have given expression to that dream. Have given expression to the test facing us. And one of those artists that I want to refer to is a famous, really truly

powerful artist by the name of Langston Hughes. I hope that many of you are aware and acquainted with the writing of Langston Hughes during the '30s and '40s. I want to read to you one poem of Langston Hughes, who best expresses the hope, the dream that must go on. Langston Hughes writes, "Hold fast to the dream. "For if the dream dies, life is a broken-winged bird "that cannot fly. "Oh let America be America again. "A land that never has been yet, "and yet must be. "A land where every man is free. "The land that hasn't been yet, "and yet must be free. "The land that's mine, "the poor man, Indians, Negroes, me, "who makes America. "With sweat and blood, with sweat and pain, "whose hand "at the foundry, "with plow in the rain, "must bring back our mighty dream again. "Sure, call me any ugly name you choose. "The steel of freedom does not sink "from those who live like leeches "on the people's lives. "We must take back our land again, America. "Oh yes, I say it plain. "America never was America to me. "And yet I swear the oath, America will be. "An ever-living seed, "its dream lies deep in the heart of me. "We the people must redeem our land. "The vine, the plant, the rivers. "All, all the stretch of the great (mumbles) state. "And make America again. "Hold fast to the dream, "for when the dream go, life is a barren field, frozen with snow." I fully agree with Langston Hughes. This land belongs to us. And dedicating our day today to Martin Luther King, and to others like Malcolm X. Let us pledge to carry on the dream. Because it's the only way to honor those great people, those great leaders of our nation. Thank you. (audience applauds)

- Sam says he's an ordinary Joe, but we don't think so. Thank you, an extraordinary man. This is something that Paul Lupes and Jessica Green provide to you, because you are a man that has everything. But it is a book, One World, Ready or Not. I think you and he made a trip to Washington to visit this man recently. And we just want to give this to you as our appreciation for (mumbles) today. (audience applauds)

- Thanks to all of you. And what Ms. Brokerd referred to, trip to Washington, that took place only a few days ago. I attended it. Faluki, our senior representative, attended it. We met with 600 other people from all over the United States. And the purpose of that meeting is to form a coalition, a unity of all progressive forces to carry forward the dream of Martin Luther King. Thank you again. (audience applauds)