

AABE® Atlanta Chapter Celebrates 2017 King Day

Thursday, Jan. 12, 2017 – Hundreds of employees packed Georgia Power’s Arkwright Auditorium at 241 Ralph McGill for the 18th Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration. During the event, attendees were educated and motivated by Dr. Robert M. Franklin Jr., senior advisor to the president of Emory University and president emeritus of Morehouse College, which is Dr. King’s alma mater.



Willie Palmer, Atlanta Chapter President

The event was sponsored by Georgia Power’s Energy Exchange and the Atlanta Chapter of the American Association of Blacks in Energy®. The national anthem was performed by Antoinette Brown, environmental analyst at Georgia Power. The talented Martin Luther King Jr. High School chorus performed two outstanding selections. Kiaya Robertson, a senior scholar at the Coretta Scott King Young Women’s Leadership Academy, spoke passionately of Dr. King’s vision and issued a call to action to attendees. “On this day of celebration and remembrance, we must ask: How can we take action,” Robertson said.



Robert Franklin Jr., PhD, Keynote Speaker

Sharing excerpts of King’s writings, Franklin, a professor of moral leadership, focused on the importance of global diversity and how all people are somehow connected. He reminded the audience that King believed coexistence – irrespective of origin – is grounded in respect for one another.

“The success of interdependent, strong communities, nations and global communities, depends, first, on the virtue in our heart – every single citizen, every single person, how we practice the virtues of hospitality, generosity that is manifest in forgiveness, cutting people a little slack and going out of the way to engage in, what I like to call, random acts of kindness,” he said.

With his eloquent delivery, Franklin noted that King’s impact spanned just 13 years – from age 26 to 39 before his assassination on April 4, 1968, in Memphis, Tenn. He asked employees and guests “How will you honor King’s legacy?”

“What will you do today, this week, in the next six months to move the needle toward greater appreciation of our interdependence and respect and generosity for those who are different? That is the great ethical challenge that Dr. King places before us,” he said.

Franklin also talked about the importance of hope and forward progress – reciting inspirational sayings by poet Maya Angelou and writer Kent Keith. He reminded everyone that King never lost hope.

“Even to the last day he spent on this Earth, there in the great city of Memphis, Dr. King said ‘I’m a captive of hope,’” Franklin said. “So today, hope embraces all of us.”

As a token of appreciation and in the spirit of service, Mike Anderson, senior vice president of community and corporate relations at Georgia Power, presented a \$1,500 donation to the [Interdenominational Theological Center](#), an organization that Franklin led as president.

Anderson spoke of Georgia Power’s tradition of honoring King’s legacy with a day of service by volunteering and making a positive difference in the communities it serves. Since 2005, more than 11,000 employees have volunteered for approximately 525 MLK Day of Service projects, totaling more than 46,000 total service hours. This year will be no different as hundreds of employees will volunteer on community service projects throughout the state.

-Bryan Daniels

Scenes from 2017 King Day Program



Kiaya Robertson, Coretta Scott King HS student



Martin Luther King Jr. High School Chorus



AABE Atlanta leaders with Dr. Robert Franklin Jr.



King program attendees



AABE Atlanta & Energy Exchange members with Dr. Robert Franklin, and students from Coretta Scott King Young Women's Academy & Martin Luther King Jr. High School