

**Albemarle - Charlottesville NAACP Freedom Fund Banquet**  
**September 27, 2019**  
**Dr. Marcus L. Martin**  
**Professor Emeritus, Emergency Medicine**  
**Former Vice President and Chief Officer for Diversity and Equity**  
**University of Virginia**

Thank you, Dr. Turner, for the kind introduction, and congratulations to you and your family for Tamyra's recognition as the 2019 Virginia Banks Carrington Award recipient.

Good evening everyone.

Reverend Jackson, thank you for being our master of ceremonies tonight. I thank our current NAACP president, Jannette Martin, and past president Rick Turner for inviting me to speak and Lynn Boyd for assisting me with details of tonight's program as I prepared my remarks. I want to recognize my family members here tonight; my wife Donna, my son Marcus Jr., and his wife Natalie. I retired from UVA this past July 31 and Marcus Jr. started working at UVA the next day, August 1 as Director of Development for the Ridley Scholarship Foundation.

It is great to see everyone here this evening and indeed a privilege and honor to speak and be among family, friends and colleagues. Congratulations to all recognized on the program and a special congratulations to our two NAACP scholarship recipients.

As a physician of color, I applaud nurses of color who graduated from the UVA/Burley High School nurse diploma program in the late 50's to 60's before black nursing students were accepted to UVA. I applaud Ms. Mavis Claytor, the first black student enrolled in the UVA School of Nursing who graduated in 1970. They fought to become nurses and succeeded during the Jim Crow era. They were winners.

Like many here tonight, I grew up during the Jim Crow era. So, I believe the perception is that I just might have some words of wisdom. However, perception is in the eye of the beholder.

I am reminded of the story of the thief who tried to rob a little old lady in her home. She was well read in the scripture. When she realized someone broke into her home, the little old lady shouted "Stop thief! Stealing is unlawful. Thou shalt not steal and thou shalt not go against Acts 2:38. Repent; Acts 2:38." The burglar froze in his tracks, and when the police arrived later, they asked him, "Why did you just stand there?" The burglar said, "The little old lady had an axe and two 38's." Although the lady said 'repent,' the burglar thought she said "Repeat, an axe and two 38's." The burglar told the police, "I am not going up against an axe and two 38's."

So, I hope your perception and reception of my message tonight is clearer than that of the burglar.

The NAACP, established 110 years ago in 1909, is America's oldest and largest civil rights organization with more than 2,200 branches and half a million members worldwide. The Charlottesville and Albemarle branches were established in 1947 and 1953 respectively.

I want to acknowledge past Albemarle-Charlottesville NAACP presidents for their efforts leading the fight over the years:

Reverend Benjamin Bunn  
John Spears  
John Gaines  
Eugene Williams  
Sheilah Jackson  
Priscilla Whiting  
Moji Olaniyan  
Jeanette Armistead  
George King  
Willie J. Strafford  
Phil Wood  
Lavern Marshall  
A.C. Jones  
James Hicks  
George Ferguson  
Reverend Floyd Johnson  
Edna Jakke Miller  
M. Rick Turner, and now  
Janette Boyd Martin.

The NAACP 2019 national theme is "When we Fight, We Win." The mission of the NAACP is to ensure equal political, educational, social, and economic rights and to eliminate race-based discrimination and to ensure the rights of all people of color to have access to timely quality affordable health care and optimal outcomes. To fight means to exert a strong effort to defeat or achieve something or stop something from happening. Fight against racism. Fight against crime. Fight to create a culture of respect and inclusion for marginalized groups. Fight for equity in education, economic advancement and to eliminate health disparities. Fight to reform gun laws and fight to remove automatic assault weapons.

Our nation's history is conflated in white supremacy, proslavery, bigotry, racism, and racial terror. Racism is pervasive and openly supported by amoral evangelical leaders and top government officials in our country. Racism occurs on institutional/structural, personally mediated and internalized levels.

A gardener's tale provides an allegory of the levels of racism. She tells the story of a couple who bought a home with two large flowerpots on the front porch. One pot already contained soil; dry, rocky, clay-filled and poor in nutrients. The other pot was empty, so the couple bought fresh enriched soil to fill it and sewed their preferred red flower seeds in the enriched soil. They sewed pink flowers in the existing poor soil. Disparities in fertile ground represents institutional or

structural racism. Selection of one color over the other represents personally mediated racism. The red flowers grew quickly and strong, dropping seeds in the fertile soil producing offspring/new flowers that flourished. The pink flowers struggled to grow in the poor soil and their seeds produced offspring that did not grow well. The pink flowers looked at the flourishing red flowers and wished they could be red also which represents internalized racism. With equal resources and institutional support, both flowerpots should have fertile soil. You can apply this allegory to black and white. When both colors flourish with structural support, personally mediated and internalized bias can be deterred over time as offspring see they are equal in beauty and talent. We must fight for a better future for our children and grandchildren and provide them fertile soil to grow. We must close education and wealth gaps, curtail the cradle to prison pipeline, build pipelines to prosperity, build bridges and tear down barriers.

The past, present and future are all connected in the fight. Four hundred years ago captive Africans were brought to Virginia and sold into slavery. The preliminary Emancipation Proclamation was issued on September 22, 1862, and the final Emancipation Proclamation was issued on January 1, 1863. United States Colored Troops (USCT) fought in the civil war to the end 250 years of slavery. They fought and they won, which resulted in the 13th amendment, ending slavery and involuntary servitude within the United States and its territories.

On March 3, 1865 in Charlottesville and Albemarle county, 14,000 enslaved individuals were freed, representing 52% of the population at the time. Over 150 years later, we hold an annual Liberation and Freedom Day celebration recommended by The Blue Ribbon Commission on Race, Memorials and Public Spaces and supported by a Charlottesville City Council resolution.

During the reconstruction period, 1865 to 1877, when all men including those previously enslaved had the right to vote, own land and live in freedom, black codes were used to continue the suppression of African Americans. In 1896, the US Supreme Court decision in the Plessy v. Ferguson case upheld the constitutionality of racial segregation under the 'separate but equal' Jim Crow doctrine. The case stemmed from an 1892 incident in which an African American train passenger, Homer Plessy, refused to sit in a car for blacks. Rejecting Plessy's argument that his constitutional rights were violated, the Supreme Court ruled that the Louisiana state law merely implied a legal distinction between whites and blacks but did not conflict with the 13th and 14th amendments.

Restrictive Jim Crow legislation flourished after the Plessy decision. Separate but equal reasoning was not overturned until the 1954 landmark Supreme Court decision, Brown v. Board of Education when Thurgood Marshall and a team of NAACP attorneys won the fight and dismantled the legal basis for racial segregation in schools and other public facilities. Brown v. Board of Education held that segregation in public education violated the equal protection clause of the 14th amendment. The justices ruled unanimously that racial segregation of children in public schools was unconstitutional. This decision was a cornerstone of the civil rights movement that followed. Chief Justice Warren at the time stated, "Separate but equal has no place, as segregated schools are inherently unequal and contribute to colored children's sense of inferiority." NAACP research showed expenditures on white students were three times that of black students. Schools were definitely not equal.

Unfortunately, the first Brown v. Board of Education opinion did not have a designated timeline for desegregation. Following the first Brown v. Board of Education decision in 1954, the fight continued, and the Supreme Court issued a second opinion, Brown vs. Board II in 1955 which remanded or sent down desegregation cases to lower federal and district courts and school boards to proceed with 'deliberate speed.' However, judicial and political evasion of desegregation followed. Desegregation was not speedy. Some school systems just shut down altogether during the period of massive resistance.

I grew up during Jim Crow directly across the street from my all-black school, Watson, where I attended grades 1-12. Our high school football games were played at the white high school field if and only when they did not have a game scheduled. Our high school football practice field was just a mere cow pasture with cow patties, rocks, dirt, weeds and no turf. The dirt was so hard the cow patties could not fertilize it. Sometimes we played in cow pastures against teams in western Virginia where the terrain was quite uneven. When you were on the upper end of the field, you could run fast past everyone going downhill to the goal line to score. Boy, was I fast on the upper end.

Our football coach who also taught math and science was often pulled to teach elsewhere in the district. A local minister covered as the substitute chemistry teacher and often read the bible during class time. He knew our experiments were subject to blowing up the lab. Many days we had no supervision and we actually blew up the lab one day by mixing chemicals incorrectly.

When we traveled to play teams on the other side of the mountain, our old dilapidated buses invariably broke down, temporarily stranding us until another bus could be summoned. A good time to listen to Motown Sounds. One time, however, we traveled successfully over the mountain to Charlottesville to play against the mighty Burley Bears. I was the quarterback for my team. My knees were shaking as we got off the bus. Boy, was it a fight! My team narrowly won 13 to 7. My Burley brothers know how much I like to reminisce about that fight.

In 1955, NAACP member Rosa Parks fought for her rightful seat on a segregated bus in Montgomery, Alabama. That same year in Charlottesville, the NAACP, students and parents sued the resistant City of Charlottesville School Board for access to equal education. In September 1959, the Charlottesville Twelve, African American children, integrated the previously all-white schools in Charlottesville. They fought and they won!

In 1965, the City of Charlottesville demolished a thriving black neighborhood. The razing of Vinegar Hill displaced and dissolved a community of about 160 families, 30 black-owned businesses and a church. These black businesses had a combined gross income of \$1.6 million annually. Many Vinegar Hill residents were blocked from voting to save their homes from destruction because of a hefty poll tax. Vinegar Hill was leveled into piles of rubble. The Westhaven project completed in 1964 housed many displaced Vinegar Hill residents.

Urban renewal projects seized black-owned property, undermined and dispersed black communities and businesses withered. With institutional enrichment and time to flourish, imagine the wealth accumulation of these businesses in today's values. It is encouraging to see

the efforts of New Hill Development, an African American-led social enterprise established to build a prosperous, equitable, diverse community and open opportunities for financial inclusion, access to higher paying jobs, minority-owned businesses and affordable homes within our community.

I came to UVA in 1996 as the first African American chair of a clinical department in the School of Medicine. However, way before my arrival at UVA, there were remarkable African American trailblazers such as Gregory Swanson, Walter Ridley, the first African American graduate of UVA, Bobby Bland, Vivian Pinn, the only African American and only female in her 1967 medical school class, and Nathan Johnson, the University's first black faculty member hired in 1967. They opened doors. They fought and they won! And even before these giants, the enslaved African Americans laid the foundation, paving the way for us all.

We celebrated the UVA Bicentennial in 2017 which included a cornerstone laying commemoration. The foundation, the cornerstone, the building and sustaining of the university depended upon the enslaved such as Peyton Skipwith, Henry Martin, Isabella Gibbons, William Gibbons and over four thousand more. Resilient, despite broken families and lack of privilege. Being gifted from one individual to another. Not being free to express their own giftedness, the enslaved were cornerstones setting all other stones in reference, thus determining the stability of the entire institution. Although not always readily visible where there is good structure, a cornerstone is in place carrying the weight. Students of color, alumni, staff and faculty and community members are often not visible, but as minorities typically carry a heavier weight than others.

Dr. Robley Dunglison was among the first eight all-white male faculty at UVA hired as a professor of anatomy and medicine. Dunglison lived in Pavilion X on the lawn and served as the personal physician to Thomas Jefferson. He was at Jefferson's bedside the day he died. Dunglison administered to presidents Madison and Monroe as well. During his nine years tenure at UVA, his patients and students were quite homogenous as all white males privileged for education, healthcare and all other resources. I took an oath to practice the art of medicine not permitting diverse human variations to interfere with duty, but to provide compassionate care to anyone in need.

Long after the first eight white male faculty members were hired at UVA, women and minorities were included within the faculty ranks and the numbers are growing. Some of our diverse faculty have given three or four decades of their lives in service to UVA. They are cornerstones, carrying the weight and working to ensure the best future for our students and healthcare for all patients. Subsequent to my hiring as chair of Emergency Medicine at UVA, notable African Americans have served as chairs of departments, Dean of the School of Medicine, and CEO of the Health System. When we fight, we win!

UVA Medical School admission for African American students has risen above the national average. However, inequities and disparities in health care for African Americans remains a major national challenge, including a lack of African American males becoming physicians.

Sadly, more African American males earned medical degrees nationwide during my medical school years in the 70's than in recent years. Consistent and early mentoring by role models and removal of financial barriers will help combat this inequity.

In 2003, following an attack on a minority candidate for president of student council and other bias incidents, the resulting President's Commission on Diversity and Equity recommended establishing the Office for Diversity and Equity at UVA. A university-wide Commitment to Diversity statement was adopted, "promoting an inclusive and welcoming environment that embraces the full spectrum of human attributes, perspectives and disciplines."

From 2007 to 2012, sixty dinners were hosted with professor Julian Bond, former national NAACP president as guest of honor bringing together hundreds of diverse individuals across the University and Charlottesville community. Subsequently, funds were raised to establish the Julian Bond Professorship of Civil Rights and Social Justice.

The President's Commission on Slavery and the University established in September 2013, formed a community relations task force, held community coffees and forums, produced documentaries and exhibits, created the enslaved African Americans walking tour map, held symposia, planted a tree on Founder's Day 2015 in honor of enslaved laborers, established the consortium "Universities Studying Slavery," formed the Cornerstone Institute summer educational program about slavery for high school students, established Slavery and its Legacy course for undergraduate students, commemorated the African American cemetery, named Gibbons house in honor of enslaved couple William and Isabella Gibbons, and named Skipwith Hall in honor of enslaved master mason Peyton Skipwith. In addition, the University renamed Jordan Hall 'Pinn Hall' in honor of Dr. Vivian Pinn, renamed Ivy Lewis Building 'W.W. Yen Building' in honor of the first international student to graduate from UVA and who went on to become premier of China. Both Harvey Jordan and Ivy Lewis were eugenicists. Their names are now removed. The university recently named 'Bond House,' a new upper-class student residence hall in honor of professor Julian Bond. When we fight, we win!

Yet, we have lots of work to continue to do in our community. I recall my early days as a member of the local NAACP Fighters for Freedom youth group. We were taught etiquette, commitment, discipline, scholarship, good will and to stay on a chartered course of honesty and integrity to succeed in life. Similarly, I applaud the 100 Black Men of Charlottesville for providing mentorship year-round and coordinating the men, math, and mission program every summer helping our young African American males close achievement gaps. We need to expose more of our youth to advanced placement curricula where possible.

African Americans lack the wealth and mobility that our white counterparts enjoy. Wealth is the difference between what families own such as homes, businesses, retirement savings and bank accounts minus what is owed in mortgages, credit cards, student loans, etc. In many cases we assume debt from our parents and from our children's education, so we are sandwiched with debt. Whereas, many white families have had the luxury of assuming wealth to pass on to their children. Wealth is increasingly unequally distributed. The wealth gap has grown since the 1950's when the net worth of the typical black household was 20% of the typical white household. Now black households in America have only 10% of the wealth of whites.

The racial wealth gap is the result of systematic disadvantages African Americans have faced on a regular basis. It is not accidental. It is institutionalized racism. It is the product of several hundred years of policies designed to lock communities of color out of the American dream. The implementation of the GI bill, the great American ticket to education and home ownership systematically discriminated against black veterans. Redlining by the fair housing administration restricted the ability of minority families to invest in homes for decades, creating lasting disparities in home ownership rates. The mortgage industry systematically targeted people of color with subprime interest rates and discriminatory predatory loan deals.

Segregation in the Jim Crow era was replaced by the discriminatory application of the criminal justice system. Black men and women are pulled into the court system at rates many times higher than whites, often for minor offenses. We lose voting rights, face discrimination in housing and hiring and we experience the cycle of bad credit, debt collection, driver's license suspension, inability to buy a car to go to work, job loss, depression, and drug dependency in some cases. Discriminatory practices reinforced by federal and state policies have systematically helped the rich get richer through tax loopholes leaving low and middle income families behind.

Corporate power makes it harder for smaller minority owned businesses to compete and grow, exacerbating inequality. Minorities are charged higher interest rates on loans and the probability of business loan denial is 37% higher for black-owned firms compared to white counterparts. During the 2008 housing crash great depression, median loss for white families was 19% and for black families 53%. In 2016, the home-owner rate for white households was 72%, but for black households less than 42%. 43% of white families in Charlottesville make over \$100,000 annually but only 14% of black families make over \$100,000 annually. 14% of white families make under \$35,000, but 53% black families make under \$35,000.

If current trends continue without effective measures of reparation, it will take 228 years for the average black family to reach the level of wealth white families have today reflecting the years of slavery, Jim Crow and current day racism. House bill HR 40 has been introduced since the 80's by Congressman John Conyers and reintroduced this year by Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee. HR 40 proposes a commission to study reparations.

The current state of Virginia and Charlottesville demographics are similar at about 20% black and white alone, not Hispanic is 62%. By the year 2045, 25 short years from now, the US will become minority white. The Census Bureau projects whites at 49.7% and those of color 51.3%. Youth are the engine of future growth. By 2060, 60% of the total US population will be of color. Nearly 70% of the population under 18 will be children of color. You see why Donald Trump wants to build a wall! Some here tonight will be alive to experience the population shift. Even with those of color growing in numbers, the fight will likely continue. Anticipate some form of apartheid the wealthy will pursue to insulate themselves. Gear up to vote in upcoming elections.

The 15th amendment passed in 1870, just 5 years after the end of slavery, provided "the right to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any state on account of race, color or previous condition of servitude." Yet, we have fought for years to overcome voter suppression in the forms of poll tax, literacy tests, and grandfather clause. Your grandfather must have voted in order for you to have the right to vote. That was not possible if your grandfather was enslaved

and his grandson could not vote and on down the line. Gerrymandering, photo ID and other forms of voter suppression also rose despite the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

When women gained the right to vote in 1920, three African American women in Charlottesville successfully registered to vote. They were Ms. Maggie Burley, Ms. Mamie Fairwell and Ms. Alice Grady. Black women lead the way in voting and always have since obtaining voting rights. Men, we have to get out and vote and take others with us.

We have experienced enough of Trump's bigotry, misogyny, racism, xenophobia, homophobia, and anti-democratic practices. In July this year, the NAACP passed a historical resolution at the 110th national convention when over 2,000 delegates voted unanimously to call for Trump's impeachment way before speaker Pelosi's recently announced formal impeachment inquiry. Let's fight and vote in large numbers, vote Trump out and win as we did with President Obama. When we mobilize our communities for a cause we have the power to bring about change. We must fight to close the achievement and wealth gaps; make repairs for past wrongs.

At UVA, the percentage of minority students, faculty and staff have significantly increased in recent years. I served as Principal Investigator and my Office for Diversity and Equity colleague Kristin Morgan, here tonight, serves as co-PI of the Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP). Our Virginia-North Carolina Alliance consists of 12 institutions with UVA as the lead research university, several other Virginia research-one schools, community colleges including PVCC, and HBCUs. With institutional grant support from the National Science Foundation (NSF), we have increased by nearly 200% in ten years the number of under-represented minorities receiving STEM degrees. There are about 45 other LSAMPs around the country. Yet, more scholarships for African American students at UVA, endowed professorships, and minorities in key administrative positions are needed. More support for HBCUs across the nation is also needed.

It is important to acknowledge ongoing challenges as well as progress. The decision to create a Memorial to Enslaved Workers at UVA helps tell the full story of the University's past, as it looks toward its future. The memorial, designed for reflection, learning and healing is purposefully situated in the bustling area of the UNESCO World Heritage site in a field where the enslaved toiled; a highly visible and necessary reminder of the University's history with motifs that echo the bondage but also bear witness to the resilience of the human spirit. The west pathway beside the memorial reflects the angle of the sunset when 14,000 enslaved were freed on March 3, 1865 and the pathway north reflects the historical route toward freedom. A quote from Isabella Gibbons in 1867 will be etched on the memorial: "Can we forget the crack of the whip, cowhide, whipping-post, the auction block... the hand cuffs, the bloodhounds, the iron collar, the negro-trader tearing the young child from its mother's breast as a whelp from the lioness? Have we forgotten those horrible cruelties, hundreds of our race have been killed? No, we have not nor ever will."

This past July, a historical marker was unveiled for lynching victim John Henry James as part of the Equal Justice Initiative's Community Remembrance Project. James was one of thousands of African Americans lynched in the south during the Jim Crow era. The fight for equal and restorative justice requires us to remember and reflect.



As it was for our ancestors, our faith transcends all. Our suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope. Throughout time a mighty warrior has been on our side. The enemy has no control over us when we bring forth the word of truth as a weapon against dishonest schemes.

When we fight, we do not fight alone. When we put on the armor of God, he is constantly at work on our behalf, on behalf of our children, shielding, protecting, strengthening, exposing deeds of darkness and covering us from attacks even when we are unaware. The swollen sea of bigotry, hatred, and racism will ultimately be parted. Our children and grandchildren are our future. Let's keep fighting for their success.

As in the case of the little old lady, thieves come only to steal, kill, destroy, and take away what rightfully belongs to us. Much has been stolen from us throughout history, but we must continue to fight. The fight requires all in the village to give in some way. Read with children regularly and provide advanced curricula and support families in need. Register to vote and encourage others to do so. Give time and energy to develop and advance our community upon the foundations laid and energy given by so many before us. When we give cheerfully and accept gratefully, we are all blessed. We all win!

As I end, I adapt from Maya Angelou:  
When we fight,  
We leave behind nights of terror and fear.  
We rise!  
Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear.  
We rise!  
Bringing the gifts that our ancestors gave.  
We are the dream and the hope of the slave.  
When we fight, we win!!  
We rise!!!  
We rise!!!  
We rise!!!

Albemarle-Charlottesville, everyone; Let's keep fighting. Let's win. And let's rise!

Thank you, and may God bless all!!

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