

**Chancellor Brian Levin-Stankevich address
Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration, Jan. 17, 2011**

We have heard the words that rang out loud and strong in the 1960s. If these had only some distant historical meaning, our gathering would still have significance. But these words and their exhortation to care, to love, and to dedicate ourselves to fairness in our communities have as much meaning today as they did in the 60s, particularly in light of the growing tendency toward violent solutions to differences between nations, between cultures and between individuals.

In "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," Dr. King spoke about the interconnectedness of all communities and states. The same can be said about individuals in a society. "Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly," he wrote. We need to remind ourselves that success or failure is not only an individual outcome but also one that depends on the privilege or lack of privilege the individual enjoys. An individual's success or failure in turn affects the family and the entire community into the future.

As an institution that must develop the talents of all our students, it is important that we recognize these interdependencies and attempt to enhance the success of all. This is why in our mission statement we expect creativity, critical insight, intellectual courage and empathy. It is why our mission speaks about developing these traits in one another — caring about our fellow student or employee. It is why we state as one of our values a commitment to equity, diversity and inclusivity.

We all need to carry these values throughout our community to make this an even better place to live, work and succeed.

Thank you for your participation in today's celebration.