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[Keith Hamm](#)

Campus events honor Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s struggle for equality

Back-to-back events at UC Santa Barbara will kick off celebrations for Martin Luther King Jr. Day, including a free documentary screening and a silent march through campus.

Starting at noon on Jan. 15 in 4603 South Hall, the Center for Black Studies Research will screen a recording of King reading his iconic 7,000-word “Letter from Birmingham Jail,” penned in 1963 while the civil rights leader was jailed in Alabama for participating in nonviolent demonstrations against segregation.

A screening of “I Am Not Your Negro” will follow, as part of the center’s [film series](#). Based on an unfinished manuscript by writer James Baldwin, the 90-minute documentary, released in 2016, connects present-day racial issues to the author’s reflections on civil rights leaders, including Malcolm X, Medgar Evers and King.

“Our film series and related events are integral to celebrating and understanding African American culture,” said Sharron Tettegah, the center’s director. A post-screening discussion will be moderated by UCSB lecturer [Wendy Eley Jackson](#) and [Charles Terry](#), a postdoctoral fellow at the center.

“Dr. King was fully cognizant of the history of inequality and repression in the United States, and felt the urgent need to remind the nation of its inherent and supposed

promise of equality, justice and progress,” Terry said. “He dedicated his life to advocating for equal rights for African Americans and urging others to do the same. The struggle to achieve his goal remains ongoing.”

On Jan. 16, Terry will keynote this year’s “Walk With Us” programming, which begins at noon at the Eternal Flame, located on the lawn between the library and Buchanan Hall. Speakers also include communications undergraduate Ajani Washington, alum John Higgins and Gregory Freeland, board president of the Martin Luther King Jr. Committee of Santa Barbara.

Following opening remarks and a singing of the Black National Anthem, there will be a silent march through North Hall to a reception at the Multicultural Center. Events will continue [through the holiday weekend](#) in downtown Santa Barbara, including a keynote by UCSB environmental studies professor Lisa Sideris on Jan. 20.

In related news, [Pulitzer Prize-winner and UCSB Distinguished Professor of Black Studies Jeffrey Stewart](#) will be a guest speaker on Jan. 20 at the MLK Heritage Foundation’s 40th annual MLK Day Breakfast, in Connecticut. Stewart, who also is UCSB’s vice chancellor for diversity, equity, and inclusion, will discuss “Nonviolence: Now More than Ever,” focusing on King’s commitment to peaceful protest.

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About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.