

# BC3 vice president chosen as keynote speaker for MLK Jr. breakfast

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(Butler, PA) Equality, said Dr. Belinda Richardson, referencing the visuals of an oft-cited cartoon, is giving everyone the same-sized box upon which to stand to be able to look over a fence.

“You have individuals of different height,” Richardson said. “But everyone gets a box. Everyone gets the same thing.”

Equity is giving to those who need one a taller box to be able to look over the fence – “providing individuals,” Richardson said, “with what they need to level the playing field.”

Which is, according to Butler County Community College’s vice president for academic affairs, “the right thing to do.”

Richardson will encourage individuals to “do the right thing” for underserved communities in her keynote speech Monday during a breakfast that honors the legacy of civic engagement from the late Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at YWCA Butler.

The Martin Luther King Jr. breakfast will be held from 8 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. at YWCA Butler, 120 W. Cunningham St., Butler. Tickets cost \$15 and include a breakfast of eggs, sausage, potatoes, a yogurt bar, coffee, tea and water.

Tickets can be purchased by visiting [ywca2020mlk.eventbrite.com](http://ywca2020mlk.eventbrite.com).

YWCA Butler is the only YWCA chapter in Armstrong, Butler, Lawrence and Mercer counties, according to Elizabeth Short, who became YWCA Butler’s executive director Sept. 1.

Richardson, a member of YWCA Butler’s board of directors since May, said her message Monday will be a call to action for community members to become civic leaders and more involved in YWCA’s mission to eliminate racism and to empower women.

King, leader of the civil rights movement in the United States in the 1950s and 1960s, delivered in August 1963 his “I Have a Dream” speech before a crowd estimated at 250,000 in Washington. “I Have a Dream” is regarded as one of the most famous speeches in history.



Dr. Belinda Richardson, vice president for academic affairs at Butler County Community College, will deliver the keynote speech Monday during YWCA Butler’s Martin Luther King Jr. breakfast.

“I will focus on the original message and what motivated Dr. King and others in that time period to stand up and become advocates,” Richardson said, “and what led them to the action of encouraging individuals to do the right thing.

“I hope my speech will send a message of the importance of valuing one another’s humanity and encouraging individuals and groups to advocate for equity and justice for all.”

Richardson was chosen to speak, Short said, because she “is incredibly dynamic. She is someone who is engaged with the community. And she has a history with YWCA.”

Richardson previously served as director of early childhood education for YWCA of Summit County in eastern Ohio.

“Dr. Richardson has been a leader throughout her career,” Short said. “She is a natural fit for this event.”

Civic engagement will be highly important in 2020, Short said, citing the 2020 Census and primary and general elections.

“Our call to civic engagement is something that can benefit our local community, our state and our nation, regardless of political affiliation, regardless of race and gender.”

King was born Jan. 15, 1929 in Atlanta. He was assassinated April 4, 1968, in Memphis, Tenn., by James Earl Ray. The Martin Luther King Jr. holiday has been observed on the third Monday of January since 1986.

YWCA Butler assisted 57 women and girls and 27 men and boys in the areas of racial justice and civil rights, housing and community services in 2018, Short said. One-hundred percent of those served by its housing program have incomes at or below the federal poverty level, she said.