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Spencer Fane Bone McAllester Hosts Senator Cory Booker for Annual MLK Fellowship Breakfast

Spencer Fane Bone McAllester held their 22nd Annual MLK Fellowship Breakfast on January 16 at the Tennessee State Museum. U.S. Senator Cory Booker served as featured speaker for the event, a Nashville community gathering that celebrates Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on his eponymous federal holiday.

Senator Booker, formerly mayor of Newark, New Jersey, was elected to the U.S. Senate in 2012 and ran for the Democratic nomination for president in 2020. On a professional and personal level, he has long been a supporter of Dr. King's ideals and seeks to continue his mission.

More than 500 people gathered to hear him share personal reflections on Dr. King's legacy which were centered on the idea that little acts create the most impact. Senator Booker encouraged attendees to abandon the "great man theory of history" because change instead comes from "foot soldiers – everyday people who live in accordance [with] their values when no one is looking."

"We are not called to look at others on high [but] to embody the values we believe in," Booker concluded. "It is not enough to like, post, or say the quotes of King if you are not trying to better practice them over the next 365 days. This is the call of our country right now. We don't need heroes, we don't need new presidents, we need the people."

Attorneys Stacey Garrett Koju and Charles W. Bone, founders of Bone McAllester Norton, organized the first MLK breakfast in 2002 and, along with attorney Charles Robert Bone, have fostered its significant growth since. Past featured speakers include former United Nations Ambassador Andrew Young, the late Rev. C.T. Vivian, the late Freedom Rider Ernest "Rip" Patton, and civil rights heroes Diane Nash and

Bernard Lafayette. Stacey, Charles, and Charles Robert honored these past speakers during this year's program, which also included performances from Bethel World Outreach Church, Rabbi Laurie Rice, and Cantor Josh E. Goldberg. In addition, attorney Andrea Perry wrote a poem that was eloquently read by her son, Caleb, a seventh grader at Montgomery Bell Academy.

For more than two decades, the Annual MLK Day Fellowship Breakfast has united the Nashville community to reflect upon the life and legacy of Dr. King and created a space to discuss ways the community can continue to work towards the realization of Dr. King's global vision of the Beloved Community. This vision centers on human decency not allowing for poverty, hunger, or homelessness; sustaining a spirit of sisterhood and brotherhood that replaces discrimination, bigotry, and racism; and striving to build a society where justice prevails over war and conflict to progress social justice in our communities.

View a recording of this year's event here.