

Obama: MLK Continues to Inspire New Generations

It's been 29 years since President Reagan signed the law to create a national holiday in honor of Martin Luther King Jr.

This year for the first time, however, those who wish to honor Dr. King on the holiday will be able to gather in celebration at his memorial on the National Mall in Washington, D.C.

Seven years ago, then-Sen. Obama spoke at the groundbreaking for the memorial.

And back in October, the president spoke at its dedication, where he described the way that Dr. King continues to inspire new generations to work to fulfill his legacy:

"He would not give up, no matter how long it took, because in the smallest hamlets and the darkest slums, he had witnessed the highest reaches of the human spirit; because in those moments when the struggle seemed most hopeless, he had seen men and women and children conquer their fear; because he had seen hills and mountains made low and rough places made plain, and the crooked places made straight and God make a way out of no way.

"And that is why we honor this man—because he had faith in us. And that is why he belongs on this Mall—because he saw what we might become. That is why Dr. King was so quintessentially American—because for all the hardships we've endured, for all our sometimes tragic history, ours is a story of optimism and achievement and constant striving that is unique upon this Earth. And that is why the rest of the world still looks to us to lead.

"This is a country where ordinary people find in their hearts the courage to do extraordinary things; the courage to stand

up in the face of the fiercest resistance and despair and say this is wrong, and this is right; we will not settle for what the cynics tell us we have to accept and we will reach again and again, no matter the odds, for what we know is possible.”

Watch the video of President Obama’s remarks: