

Student Name: Rykeria Crowell
School: City Springs School
Grade: 5th
Coach: Megan Miskowski
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Claudia Colvin was 15 years old when she refused to give up her seat and move to the back of the bus. Most people know about Rosa Parks and the Montgomery Alabama bus boycott that began in 1955. Few know that there were a number of women who refused to give up their seats on the same bus system because most of them were quietly fined and no one heard much more. Claudia was the first to really challenge the bus system. She was a member of the NAACP Youth Council and attended Booker T. Washington school.

It was black history month that her segregated school had just been studying black leaders like Harriet Tubman the runaway slave who led more than 70 slaves to freedom through a network of safe houses known as the Underground Railroad. They were also studying about Sojourner Truth, a former slave who became an abolitionist and women's rights activist. They were also studying injustices they were experiencing daily under the Jim Crow segregation laws, like not being able to eat at a lunch counter, not being able to try on clothes in a store or shoes, they had to use a brown paper bag and draw a diagram of their foot.

On March 2, 1955 Claudia's mind was so full of black history and the oppression they were going through that when she was told to give up her seat she felt like Harriet Tubman was on one side holding her down and Sojourner Truth was on the other side

holding her down, and she couldn't get up. All Colvin could say was she paid her fare and it was her constitutional right to sit on the bus.

There was this teenager 9 months before Rosa Parks, in the same city, the same bus system with very tough consequences, hauled off the bus handcuffed jailed and nobody knew about it. Her classmates on the bus witnessed her being took to jail went quickly and told her mother Mary Ann Colvin who was a maid. Ms. Colvin called her Pastor Reverend H.H. Johnson and together sped in his car to bail Colvin out. Later on that night the whole neighborhood stayed awake because there were still lynchings and cross burnings by the Klu Klux Klan. Claudia had stood up to a white bus driver two white cops and challenged the bus law. Her father sat up all night with his shotgun.

Worried or not Claudia felt proud she'd stood up for her rights. Claudia knew Reverend Johnson was an adult who everyone respected and his opinion meant alot to her. Reverend Johnson told Claudia "everyone prays for freedom. We've all been praying and praying. But your different, you want your answer the next morning, and i think you just bought the revolution to Montgomery."

There are many reasons why Claudia has been pretty much forgotten. She hardly ever told her story when she moved to New York City. People up North were not talking about integration they were talking about black enterprises, black power, and Malcolm X. The NAACP and all other black organizations felt Parks would be a good icon because she was an adult. They didn't think a teenager would be reliable. After Claudia's arrest she found herself shunned by parts of her community. She experienced various difficulties and one year later became pregnant. Claudia later testified in a Montgomery Federal Court case Browden vs. Gayle. Browden was one of four women (Mary Louise

Smith, Susie McDonald, Aurelia Browden and Claudia Colvin) who all testified in court which declared segregated busing unconstitutional. Gayle was the Mayor of Montgomery. Claudette Colvin is now a 70 year old retiree living in the Bronx. She has an autobiography titled "Twice Toward Justice" written by Phillip Hoose.

Black civic leaders had been thinking about what to do about the Montgomery buses for years. Thanks to the courage of unsung heroes like Claudia Colvin who paved the way for history to be made. Thank you Claudia Colvin-

By Rykeira Crowell

5th grade

Student Name: Darren Meredith
School: City Springs School
Grade: 4th
Coach: Megan Miskowski
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My name is Darren Meredith. I would like to talk about Mr. James Meredith, not only because we have the same last name, but because James was a black male who made his education important. Mr. Meredith knew what it meant to have an education. My education is very important to me. I liked learning about Mr. Meredith and how he fought for what he knew was right. Mr. Meredith inspired me knowing that now I would be able to apply for college and not worry about racism.

James Meredith attempted to become the first African American to gain admission into the University of Mississippi. Mr. Meredith knew that it was because he was black that he did not get in, but he did not let that stop him. Mr. Meredith's complaint was rejected by a district court, but, on an appeal, the fifth judicial circuit court supported Mr. Meredith and ruled against the district court. They stated that the University of Mississippi was opposed by state officials and students. The attorney general, Robert Kennedy, decided to send marshals to protect James Meredith from threats of being lynched. Mr. Meredith made the world a better place for me to live in knowing that I do not have to go through what he went through in his time that he was living in.

On June 5th 1966, Meredith started a march against fear from Memphis to Jackson to protest against racism. He was shot by a sniper. Others like Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Stokely Carmichael, and Floyd McKissick decided to continue the march. After Mr. Meredith was treated for being shot he rejoined the march against fear on June 25 1966.

James Meredith supported economic sanctions against South Africa and making Dr. King's birthday a national holiday. Mr. Meredith encouraged people to vote. I cannot wait until I am able to vote. I would know what I am voting for and will have understanding of what voting is about.

The civil rights movement would not give into the white racism. Mr. Meredith fought for what he knew was right. After time at the University of Mississippi, Meredith continued his education at the University of Ibadan in Nigeria and Columbia University from 1966 to 1968.

Mr. Meredith needs to be spoken about more because he was one of many that paved the way for us as African American people and me as a student. I listen to my mother tell me that my education is important everyday. I understand the reasons that it is important. Mr. Meredith and others that were in the civil rights movement fought for me to be in school. I would like to go to college and know that Mr. Meredith went even though he was rejected a few times. Someone could do the same to me and I would understand my rights and what I could do. Giving up would not be an option. Mr. Meredith or Dr Martin Luther could not give up on things they knew were right. What's more important in life than knowing about the people who paved the way for me to be whom I want to be in life and not have to fight like they did in their lives? They had a struggle. I know what it means to struggle, but I do not know what it is like to actually struggle in the life that I live in now.

James Meredith has spent his whole life in the struggle to make every American a Full-First-Class Citizen with complete equality. He has traveled the world studying and researching the questions of Race and Color. More importantly, James Meredith has

spent the years writing and speaking about his experiences, Mississippi, and American history.

Mr. Meredith was a strong African American that believed in himself. As a child, learning about Mr. Meredith makes me believe that I can finish school, go to college, do not have to worry about racism, or go through what he went through growing up because Mr. Meredith paved the way for myself and others.

By Darren Meredith

4th grade

Student Name: N'Dia Langhorn
School: City Springs School
Grade: 6th
Coach: Megan Miskowski
Gerald Loiacono
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I could continue Martin Luther King's dream by keeping up with the I Have A Dream Program. At the age of 35, Martin Luther King Jr. was the youngest man to have received the Nobel Peace Prize. When notified of his selection, he announced that he would turn over the prize money of \$54,123 to the furtherance of the Civil Rights movement. I hope I could win the Nobel Peace Prize and give it to the furtherance of the Civil Rights movement.

The person who is important to me is Martin Luther King Jr. He inspired me because he tried to help the Negro people. He is also inspiration to hundreds of other people. In 1957 and 1968, he traveled over six million miles and spoke over twenty-five hundred times. He told John F. Kennedy he has a dream. He was also arrested for upwards of twenty times and assaulted at least four times. He was awarded at least five honorary degrees. He also made a law that black and whites could equally ride the bus. That's why Martin Luther King Jr is an inspiration to me.

Now I see why over one hundred people love Dr. King. He loved to have the world as one. In Washington D.C., in front of two hundred and fifty thousand people he delivered his address, "I Have a Dream". My dream is to help the Negro and the white people equally.

The thing that I would get involved with in my community is helping people that do not have anything for holidays like Thanksgiving and Christmas. We could give out presents for the homeless and people who cannot afford things for Christmas. I want the

whites equal as blacks were I live. The white and black people can come together to have a great community with no gangs and no violence in our community.

What was important to Dr. King was having one as equal, having a dream, and helping other people with their dreams. If people had more than one dream he would try to make it happen. People are struggling because they are a different color (black people). They have unsung stories because they did not have a chance. They were killed or became sick from something really bad. This is so important because it could help the Civil Rights with homeless people of both colors.

N'Dia Langhorn
City Springs School
6th Grade

Student Name: Shardai Little
School: City Springs School
Grade: 6th
Coach: Megan Miskowski
Gerald Loiacono
Jenae Toulson

To continue the work of Martin Luther King Jr. and make the world a better place, I could be a prominent teacher. I could also be a heroic leader. I could become a Civil Rights activist early in my career. Dr. King led the 1955 Montgomery Bus Boycott and I would like to lead something similar. Like today, I could deliver a speech to the world.

By showing people not to be blind, I could represent peace on people and hopefully people would represent it on others like Dr. King put peace on the world. I could continue his work by doing that and going green.

I could graduate and earn a Master's Degree. I could be a strong worker for Civil Rights for members of my race. If anything ever happened to anyone I lived with and I was being abused I would still be a strong leader just like Dr. King. For instance, during the Boycott, Dr. King was arrested and King's house was bombed on December 21st, 1956, but he stayed strong.

I would like to be selected as the president of a leadership conference, company, or organization because of my work. Like Dr. King in 1957, I will provide new leadership for the Civil Rights Movement. I will show my excellent techniques like writing speeches, fighting for peace, being a leader, sharing my part, and much more. I would like to travel and speak. I would like to write books. I would like to protest for things that should not have happened.

I, Shardai Little, would like to be a leader. I would like to write a biography telling the inspirational life story of a peace maker and a leader of a movement that continues to transform America and the world. I would like to win a Nobel Prize. I would donate the money to foundations for the needy just like Dr. King did when he won the award. I could be significant, make speeches, preach, publish writings, and speak about the most well known ways for peace and justice.

I can dream big because of the other's who went before me. I want to follow in the footsteps and too learn to never be afraid to accomplish my dreams.

Student Name: Quenetta Williams
School: City Springs School
Grade: 6th
Coach: Megan Miskowski
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Dr. Martin Luther King was a strong and inspirational man from the past and for the future. He was known for helping others doing the Civil Rights and having a dream that was all should be treated equally and help one another know matter what the color of your skin. Dr. King accepted awards for his leadership for being the first great African American against violence demonstration of contemporary times in the United States, he helped with the bus boycott. He completed college with his doctorates degree and became a pastor. I believe with god all things are possible and I just believe in him to show you the right path. No matter what the went through he was strong and worked hard to accomplish his dreams. Dr. King experienced things such as his home being bombed and being arrested but that did not stop him. Dr. King taught me as a young girl with plenty of ambition and dream, I too should never give up on what I believe in and work as hard to accomplish my hopes and dreams. In doing so I should also help others as it was me in need and love one another know matter what the color of my skin is.

Every sense I could remember I wanted to be a lawyer when I grow up. My mother always taught me things do come easy and I have to work hard if I want to make something out of my life. I will always remember that and never give up on being a lawyer. I must keep good grades, study, pay attention to what others tell me, do after school activities such as debating, and get help such as tutoring. Everyone have their

moments when they don't want to complete something or have others putting them down, but that wouldn't stop me because I love me and I can do it if I put my mind to it. Dr. King helped free people with his words and I want to do the same thing but by freeing them for a crime that they did not commit. If they are unable to pay I will help them not matter what the cost it. I was also taught that life is to short and make the best of it and that is what I will do. When I pass on I want to be remembered 50 years after I die as a person who tried hard. In the research of Martin Luther King Jr., I found that he was known for some of his quotes such as, "A man who won't die for something is not fit to live," and "Let no man pull you low enough to hate him."

In all of Dr. King's hard work and accomplishments, he was able to have a care and a family. He was married to a women who live a inflectional life to help others, and a loving family that he can depend on. My plans are to first finish school, become a lawyer, help others, then have a family. Family and friends are important and you should never forget them or leave them behind. Everyone needs someone to help them that the problem with a lot of people because they forget to love.

Dr. King stated, "A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual doom." At the age of thirty-five, Martin Luther King, Jr., was the youngest man to have received the NQbel Peace Prize. He announced that he would turn over the prize money of \$54,123 to the furtherance of the civil rights movement. I believe with out money you can't survive in the world because you can't get the things you need in life. Dr. King showed me you can make money, but it's not everything. I want to use my money to help others so if I make a lot of money I would give back to the community the old and

the new. Help children with disabilities and volunteer my time to show children you can be what ever you want to as long as you work for it. Just like Dr. King showed me. Living a strong life like this would make me happy. Hopefully there are other young children who remember the fight and dreams of Dr. King to help them with their hopes and dreams.