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## Dynamic Leadership

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# University of Dayton, Ohio (url: <http://www.udayton.edu/index.php>)



## Dynamic Leadership

**07.27.2007 | President** University of Dayton President Daniel J. Curran will receive the Joseph E. Lowery Human Rights Legacy Award from the Southern Christian Leadership Conference at its national conference in Atlanta on Aug. 7.

Curran is the first recipient of the newly established award, and he is expected to receive it from Lowery, who co-founded the SCLC with Martin Luther King Jr. It's named in honor of the civil rights activist for the way he "fought for the human and civil rights of the excluded, the oppressed and the poor."

The Rev. Raleigh Trammell, chair of the national board of directors of the SCLC, nominated Curran for the honor. "Dr. Curran was chosen because of his dynamic leadership in diversity in this community," Trammell said. "He is committed to a community for all races."

"This award from the SCLC is special because it means that the University of Dayton continues to live its Catholic, Marianist mission. We strive for greater diversity and inclusiveness on campus as we educate students for service, justice and peace," Curran said.

Earlier this year, Curran served as honorary co-chair of Dayton's Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday Celebration and helped lead the popular MLK march that attracts thousands from all parts of the region. He will take on the same role in 2008. For two decades, UD has hosted a popular campus prayer breakfast that honors King's legacy.

As part of UD's Diversity Lecture Series, UD has brought nationally recognized speakers to Dayton to keynote both the Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday Celebration dinner in the community and the annual MLK prayer breakfast on campus. Speakers have included Johnnetta B. Cole, who made history in 1987 when she became the first African-American woman to serve as president of Spelman College, and Clarence Page, nationally syndicated Pulitzer Prize-winning Chicago Tribune columnist. In January, Grammy Award-winning songwriter and musician Kirk Franklin, who changed the landscape of contemporary gospel music, will keynote community and campus events remembering King's legacy.

"Dan has exposed the community and students to so many dynamic speakers and philosophies of thought," said Trammell, a longstanding national and local civil rights leader.

Launched in 2004, UD's Diversity Lecture Series has attracted such notable leaders as Coretta Scott King, Andrew Young, Nikki Giovanni, Paul Rusesabagina and Azar Nafisi. Spike Lee will headline the series this year.

During Curran's tenure, UD also has started new exchange programs in China and launched the Dayton Early College Academy with the Dayton Public Schools. DECA prepares first-generation college students -- most of whom are African-American -- for success in college. All 32 members of the first graduating class are headed to college this fall and have been offered grants and scholarships totaling more than \$2 million. The students earned more than 1,200 college credits while finishing their high school degrees. Ten students will attend UD.

A sociologist by training, Curran is a noted scholar in criminology, juvenile justice and social problems, with a deep interest in international issues. Most of his research has focused on ways to address social inequality.

The Joseph E. Lowery Human Rights Legacy Award is given to recipients "deemed to have worked consistently, effectively and with solemn dedication for the inherent dignity and for the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family." It honors those who believe that human rights form the "legal, moral and theological foundation for liberty, justice and peace on this planet."

The award caps a year of special recognition for the University of Dayton's community outreach efforts. In a national "Saviors of our Cities" list released last August, UD ranked first among Catholic universities and third nationally for the "extraordinary efforts" it makes to contribute to the renewal and revitalization of its surrounding community. Last October, UD was honored with the 2006 People of Vision Award from Prevent Blindness Ohio for its "outstanding philanthropic works" in the community. In January, the Dayton Development Coalition named Curran the Dayton region's most outstanding volunteer citizen for 2006 for his efforts in securing more than \$55 million in Ohio Third Frontier Project grants for the region.

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