ACBA Homer S. Brown Division’s Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Prayer Breakfast set for Jan. 18

Event Moves to Ebenezer Baptist Church in Pittsburgh’s Hill District

PITTSBURGH – Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. gave his famous “Drum Major Instinct” sermon on Feb. 4, 1968 at the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta. It’s only fitting that the Allegheny County Bar Association’s 17th annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Prayer Breakfast and Program will move to the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Pittsburgh’s Hill District this year, after more than 16 successful years at Mt. Ararat Baptist Church in East Liberty.

The event, organized by the ACBA’s Homer S. Brown Division, will be held on Monday, Jan. 18, beginning at 7:30 a.m.; it is free and open to the public. The breakfast commemorates the life of Dr. King and his contributions that led to changes in the law and social justice.

“This event ties in with the overall mission of the Homer S. Brown Division. Not only do we want to organize events of interest to African-American attorneys, we also want to reach the overall African-American community,” said Quintarra Morant, chair of the Homer S. Brown Division. “This event does just that. It brings those groups together.”

Among the highlights is the presentation of the Drum Major for Justice Award to an individual who perpetuates King’s convictions “to make justice, equality and opportunity a reality for all people.” The award’s name comes from King’s Drum Major Instinct sermon, during which he said, “If you want to say that I was a drum major, say I was a drum major for justice. Say that I was a drum major for peace. I was a drum major for righteousness.”

Receiving the award this year will be Lois Mufuka Martin, chief volunteer engagement officer at the United Way of Allegheny County; in this role, she connects community volunteers with array of local charitable causes. Prior to her work at the United Way, Mufuka Martin was the CEO local nonprofit Bethlehem Haven, where she oversaw women’s shelters, mental health clinics, emergency assistance programs and more.

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“We chose Ms. Martin because of the work she’s done not only at the United Way and Bethlehem Haven, but because she’s done a lot of other things in the community on her own that have not received recognition,” said Morant.

Also being honored at this year’s event will be Marlene Ellis, who will take home the Distinguished Service Award. Ellis worked at the ACBA for 27 years, ultimately serving as events director.

“Marlene was really instrumental in Homer S. Brown, even before it became a division of the ACBA,” said Morant. “She was always very instrumental in putting the prayer breakfast together, and she has always done a lot for us. We felt it was important to thank her for everything she’s done as one of the trail-blazers of our organization.”

Both honorees were nominated by members of the ACBA at large. The Homer S. Brown Division membership then voted to select winners.

One of the main reasons for the move to the Ebenezer Baptist Church is the proximity of the Hill District to downtown Pittsburgh.

“We are excited about this location and it being closer to downtown. Being in the Hill District, we will be able to reach more ACBA members who work in downtown, more students, and more people in the community,” said Morant.

The organizational committee for this year includes Morant, Kimberly Phillips, Barbara Ramsey and Sylvia Winston

RSVP by emailing homersbrown@acba.org or calling 412-402-6658 by Jan. 11. For more information, visit http://www.acba.org/mlk2016.

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Chartered in 1870 and headquartered in downtown Pittsburgh, the Allegheny County Bar Association is a professional organization with more than 6,000 member attorneys, judges, district justices, legal administrators and paralegals.