



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE  
AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

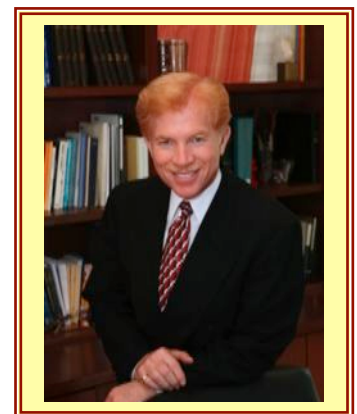
NEWS

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## Dr. Gary P. Zola to Receive Martin Luther King Legacy Award January 16

Marcus Center Executive Director lauded for work in justice, human rights and race relations

**CINCINNATI, OH:—** Dr. Gary P. Zola, Executive Director of the Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives and Professor of the American Jewish Experience at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, has been selected to receive the 2012 King Legacy Award on Monday, January 16, 2012. The honor will be bestowed during the King Legacy Awards Breakfast at the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center. The event begins at 8:00 a.m.



The award — presented annually by the Martin Luther King, Jr. Coalition and the Freedom Center— is given to persons whose lives reflect the characteristics and attributes of Martin Luther King Jr. and to those who have made significant and tangible contributions in the areas of race relations, justice, and human rights.

“Dr. Zola is an inspiration and a role model for living out Dr. King’s legacy,” said Shakila Ahmad of the Islamic Center of Greater Cincinnati. “He has been a dear friend to the Muslim community—and a staunch advocate for interfaith relations and community understanding across our region.”

Dr. Zola is a past president of the Cincinnati Chapter of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Coalition and has been a frequent speaker on issues of faith and freedom at the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center. “This award recognizes the many years of civil and human rights leadership that Dr. Zola has provided our community,” noted Kim Robinson, President & CEO of the Freedom Center. “ Dr. Zola has been a true champion of freedom for all people. His life exemplifies the dream of Dr. King that everyone should be judged by the 'content of their character and not by the color of their skin'.”

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“Rabbi Gary Zola epitomizes the very DNA of Doctor King and richly deserves this award,” added Rev. Damon Lynch, Jr., Pastor of the New Jerusalem Baptist Church. “ He has done much for the cause of human rights and justice.”

Zola serves on the Advisory Council of the American Jewish Committee Cincinnati Chapter; and on the Board of Directors of Cincinnati’s Jewish Community Relations Council. In 2004, Zola served as the Chair of the national **Commission for Commemorating the 350th Anniversary of American Jewish History**, which was organized to help our nation mark the 350th anniversary of Jewish communal life in North America (1654-2004). Zola also served on the Academic Advisory Council of the national **Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission**, and is a past president of the Greater Cincinnati Board of Rabbis.

Last Spring, President Obama appointed Dr. Zola to the **Commission for the Preservation of America’s Heritage Abroad**. The Commission—an independent agency of the Government of the United States of America—is directed by law to fulfill two primary functions:

- To identify and report on cemeteries, monuments, and historic buildings in Eastern and Central Europe that are associated with the heritage of U.S. citizens, particularly endangered properties, and
- To obtain, in cooperation with the Department of State, assurances from the governments of the region that the properties will be protected and preserved.

“This honor pays just tribute to the prominent role that Dr. Zola plays in fostering a community of tolerance and care for all in Cincinnati,” said Rabbi David Ellenson, President of Hebrew-Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. “His work at the American Jewish Archives and the programs he has fostered there as well as the many good deeds he performs in the greater Cincinnati community fulfill the goals of achieving mutual care and respect among all citizens of every race and creed that are the hallmarks of the legacy Dr. King bequeathed the entire world.”

Tickets for the breakfast event can be purchased by calling 513.333.7706. At 10:30 a.m., following the breakfast, the 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Commemorative Civil Rights March will begin at the Freedom Center. An interfaith prayer service will be held at 11:00 a.m. on Fountain Square, after which the March will continue to Music Hall, where the 2012 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day program will begin at noon.

**MEDIA:** For more information or to obtain an interview with Dr. Zola, please contact Lisa Frankel at 513.221.1875.

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The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, founded in 1947 by its namesake on the Cincinnati, Ohio, campus of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, is committed to preserving a documentary heritage of the religious, organizational, economic, cultural, personal, social and family life of American Jewry. The Marcus Center contains over 15,000 linear feet of archives, manuscripts, nearprint materials, photographs, audio and videotapes, microfilm, and genealogical materials.