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Annual Hayward Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Celebration event returns Jan. 20

HAYWARD, Calif., Jan. 16, 2025—Hayward will pay tribute to the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on Monday with a program of music and song, a community-award recognition for the late Palma Ceia Baptist Church Pastor Rev. Tommy E. Smith Jr. and a keynote address by civil rights activist and NAACP leader Rev. Amos C. Brown.

The annual celebratory event, sponsored in 2025 by the Hayward South Alameda County NAACP, the City of Hayward and Hayward Unified School District, will take place starting at 4:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 20, at Hayward Unified School District Performing Arts Center, located at 2390 Panama Street.

The event, held each January on the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. national holiday, is free and open to the public. In the days following the event, a recording will be posted to the City of Hayward [YouTube channel](#) and broadcast on KHRT, available on the [City's website](#) and on local cable TV channel 15.

Event keynote speaker Rev. Brown, who has served as pastor of Third Baptist Church in San Francisco since 1976, came of age in the crucible of the civil rights movement of the late 1950s and 1960s. Born in 1941 in Jackson, Miss., he started, at age 15, the first NAACP Youth Council in his hometown, following the brutal 1955 killing of Emmett Till in nearby Money, Miss. In 1960, he was arrested alongside Dr. King at an Atlanta lunch counter sit-in. Two years later, he was one of eight Morehouse College students in the only college course taught by the great civil rights leader, according to a 2021 [San Francisco Chronicle profile](#) of Rev. Brown.

In addition to Rev. Brown's keynote address and the posthumous community-award recognition for the late Rev. Smith, there will be performances by the Chabot College Choir, Hayward High School Jazz Band and Hayward Unified School District student choirs.