

# 2,000 MARCH TO CELEBRATE MARTYR'S LEGACY



*"Everybody who's got an issue" joins the annual event*

**By Deborah Manog**  
dmanog@staradvertiser.com

Thousands of people lining Waikiki sidewalks cheered for scores of groups that marched Monday in the

27th annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day Parade, marking the holiday as a "a day on, not a day off," said a spokeswoman for the event.

"This is the people's parade, so everybody who's got an issue is here," said Marsha Joyner of the Hawaii Martin Luther King Jr. Coalition. "The only requirement is that there's no hate language."

At least 60 organizations — an estimated 2,000 marchers — representing groups ranging from faith-based networks to local unions, as well as a few businesses, lined up under the midmorning sun to march from Ala Moana Beach Park area to Kapiolani Park.

Dwight Witlarge, who took part in the parade with New

York Life Hawaii, said, "Today's not just an African-American day. I think it's for all equality — for men, women and all minorities."

UNIVERSITY of Hawaii graduate student Ashley Galacgac marched with a large crowd representing 12 different groups, most of which were linked to the university. She described the wide-ranging diversity and multiple generations on display in the parade and among curbside onlookers as a beautiful sight.

"Marching with everyone helped me see that we are all connected because we believe in justice, liberty and freedom for all," Galacgac said.

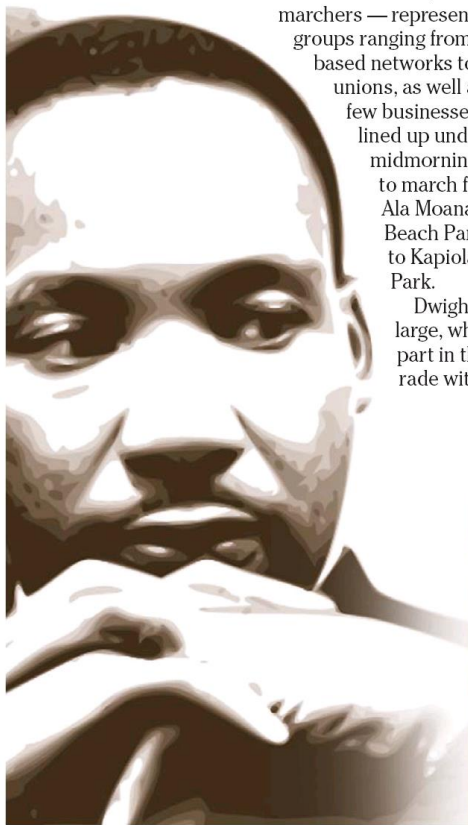
Along the parade route, several groups belted out the protest and union song "We Shall Not Be Moved." Although King is

*Please see PARADE, B3*

**At Ala Moana Beach Park, the Philippine-studies group from Leeward Community College took a group shot as they readied for the parade.**

**The Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc., below, was led by Angel Lopez Jr., left, and Alexander Lee.**

**At left, the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.**



More photos at  
[staradvertiser.com](http://staradvertiser.com)

# PARADE: 'We have more to do,' says a marcher from UH

Continued from B1

remembered for his involvement in the civil rights movement, "people forget that he was a strong advocate for labor unions," said Paola Rodelas, spokeswoman for Unite Here Local 5.

Hotel worker Lily Herrell and her two teenage daughters marched with a group of about 40 workers and others with ties to the hotel union. Herrell said she has marched in the parade for the past seven years to express her support for carrying on King's legacy for justice.

She said she hopes to be a positive influence on her daughters. "Even though they are still young, I want to teach them how to stand up for their rights."

Herrell's 15-year-old daughter, Lei-momi, was thrilled to march alongside her mom in the parade for the second time. The teen contends her age group has the potential to continue King's work for equality.

"We should step up because we are the next generation," Leimomi said. "He (King) wanted to make a change in the world — and that change is really slow, but it's still happening now."

First-time marcher Amikah Hawkins, from Waianae United Methodist Church, brought her two young children along to pay tribute to the slain civil rights leader.

"I thought it was important to give back and honor Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.," Hawkins said. Her 3-year-old daughter, Briana Teriy, proudly inter-



CRAIG T. KOJIMA / CKOJIMA@STARADVERTISER.COM

## Chelsea Council of the Hawaii Bicycling League joined the parade on Kalakaua Avenue, accompanied by her dogs.

jected, "He (King) have a dream."

Hawkins then added, "I teach her about the 'I Have a Dream' speech and everything, so she knows why we marched."

The parade kicked off with music

and greetings of aloha that continued at the annual Unity Rally at Kapiolani Park Bandstand. An estimated 7,000 people turned out for the post-parade celebration, which featured live entertainment, food from various cultures and traditions, and inflatable playgrounds for children.

Dancing to music and flashing a toothy grin, Witlarge of New York Life Hawaii held up a colorful sign that read, "Free hugs." He explained the offer as a friendly gesture aligned with what King stood for: peace, love and happiness.

"This holiday is about being positive and moving forward and building a better life for everyone," Witlarge said.

Although the parade and rally were celebrated in a spirit of camaraderie, Galacgac, the UH graduate student, said more must be done to resolve ongoing civil rights struggles, economic woes and racial conflicts.

"We stand on the foundation of those who have come before us," Galacgac said. "We have more to do to leave a legacy for the future."

This year's parade was dedicated to the late William S. Rushing, who had devoted himself to organizing the local march since its inception more than two decades ago. Rushing died Dec. 23.

This year also marked the first time that the city did not co-sponsor the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday with the Hawaii Martin Luther King Jr. Coalition as it had since 1998, a result of insufficient funds.