



For More Information:

Meredith Baldwin

479-709-3766

United States Marshals Museum to Partner with Civil Rights Pioneers

FORT SMITH, Ark. (Jan. 9, 2018) – Three pioneers of the Civil Rights Movement will be joining the United States Marshals Museum for Fort Smith’s Celebrate the Dream Parade on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day on Monday, January 15th. Leona Tate, Tessie Prevost Williams, and Gail Etienne Stripling integrated McDonogh No. 19 Elementary School in New Orleans in 1960, six years after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in the landmark Brown vs. Board of Education case that racial segregation in public schools was unconstitutional.

Together the ladies were known as ‘The McDonogh 3.’ That first year, they attended school by themselves because of white protests and boycotts against segregation. The girls, and their families, heavily depended on the help of U.S. Marshals to protect them from the hate and hostility of the crowds. In doing so, the Marshals upheld the Constitutional rights of all citizens to enjoy equal access to society’s benefits.

Louie McKinney, the first career deputy to lead the U.S. Marshals Service, will also be attending the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day festivities in Fort Smith. McKinney, whose career included enforcing the integration of Southern public schools as a black Deputy Marshal, helps us better understand the social instability that defines American history in the late twentieth century.

While the 1960’s were a pivotal time for Civil Rights in New Orleans and the rest of the country, there still remains much to be done to improve equal access to education. ‘The McDonogh 3’ and McKinney will attend the MLK Celebration Breakfast in the Reynolds Room of the Smith-Pendergraft Campus Center at The University of Arkansas – Fort Smith. The breakfast will also include a panel discussion titled “Love and Unity in the Service of Hope,” which will feature alumni of Fort Smith’s Lincoln High School, who plan to share their experiences integrating into Northside High School. They will then head to the Celebrate the Dream Parade along Garrison Avenue that afternoon, followed by the Meet the Pioneers Happy Hour at the Courtyard Marriott beginning at 5:30 that evening.

WHAT: MLK Commemorative Breakfast and Panel Discussion

WHEN: Monday, January 15th at 7:30 a.m.

WHERE: University of Arkansas – Fort Smith

WHAT: Celebrate the Dream Parade

WHEN: Monday, January 15th at 11:30 a.m.

WHERE: Garrison Avenue, Fort Smith

WHAT: USMM Happy Hour: Meet the Pioneers

WHEN: Monday, January 15th from 5:30 – 7 p.m.

WHERE: Courtyard by Marriott

About the U.S. Marshals Museum

The future United States Marshals Museum will be a national museum located on the riverfront in Fort Smith, Ark. Opening on September 24, 2019, the 230th anniversary of the United States Marshals Service, the museum will tell the story of our nation's oldest law enforcement agency from its establishment by President George Washington through current day. The museum will honor the sacrifice of marshals killed in the line of duty, as well as those who continue to place their lives in harm's way, as they enforce the Constitution.