

Wednesday, October 7, 2015

Actor LeVar Burton to keynote OU's 2016 Keeper of the Dream Awards Celebration

For its annual Keeper of the Dream Awards Celebration, Oakland University will welcome actor, director, producer and literacy advocate LeVar Burton to campus on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Monday, Jan. 18, 2016.

With a career spanning nearly 40 years, Burton is known for his iconic role as Kunta Kinte in the landmark television series "Roots" and also gained fame as Chief Engineer Geordi La Forge on "Star Trek: The Next Generation." In addition to numerous feature film credits, Burton is also recognized for his work as host of the Emmy-winning PBS children's series "Reading Rainbow," which aired from 1983-2009.

"We are pleased to have Mr. LeVar Burton as this year's keynote speaker and look forward to the day when we may boast of having such a renowned presence on our campus," said Omar Brown-El, director of OU's Center for Multicultural Initiatives.



LeVar Burton will visit Oakland University for its annual Keeper of the Dream Awards Celebration on Jan. 18, 2016.

In 2012, Burton along with Mark Wolfe, co-founded RRRKidz, Inc., a digital reading service offering more than 500 children's fiction and nonfiction books and more than 150 video field trips. With more than 20 million books and videos enjoyed since launch, Reading Rainbow is consistently a top-ranking app on iTunes and the recipient of numerous awards. In addition, a recent record-setting Kickstarter campaign raised more than \$6.4 million, which will enable RRRKidz to introduce Reading Rainbow Skybrary School, a supplemental education resource for teachers and students. Reading Rainbow published Burton's first children's book, "The Rhino Who Swallowed a Storm," in 2014.

Burton's career achievements include 12 Emmy Awards, five NAACP Awards and a Grammy Award. In 2014, on the heels of the Reading Rainbow Kickstarter campaign, he was named Geek of the Year during the Geekie Awards, listed as one of Ebony Magazine's Power 100 and earned the World Tech Award for Education from the World Technology Network.

Apply for a 2016 Keeper of the Dream Scholarship

Established in 1993, The Keeper of the Dream Awards Celebration pays tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. for his pioneering work on behalf of civil rights. The event also awards scholarships to OU undergraduates who have contributed to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy by breaking down racial and cultural barriers.

Students can apply for a 2016 Keeper of the Dream Scholarship at oakland.edu/kodapplication. Applications must be submitted by **Friday, Oct. 16, 2015**.

The Keeper of the Dream Awards Celebration is jointly sponsored by the Center for Multicultural Initiatives and the Student Life Lecture Board.

Scholarship sponsors include: OU Credit Union, OU Alumni Association, L&L McIntosh Scholarship Fund.

Unity sponsors include: Key Bank Foundation and Avis Ford.

For additional information, contact the Center for Multicultural Initiatives at cmi@oakland.edu or (248) 370-4404.