King's inspiration still burns bright

South Haven pastor receives Diversity Award; Upton cites example set by John Lewis

By LOUISE WREGE

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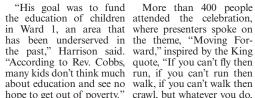
BENTON TOWNSHIP - A South Haven pastor And I'm just who marched twice with so grateful to Martin Luther King Jr. was receive this, the recipient Monday of the and I hope I Martin Luther King Jr. Di- can live up to versity Award during Lake it, the expectations."

Michigan College's 22nd LMC President Emeriannual celebration honor- tus Robert Harrison said

like this award," said Pastor hind the Seed of Hope Aaron Cobbs of Spiritual Scholarship, which was cre-Haven, on Martin Luther Haven.

"Didn't know what to say, but I'm here.

ing the late civil rights icon. Cobbs was chosen because "I never received anything he was the inspiration be-Church of Christ in South ated by residents in South



Cobbs said his favorite speech by King was "Remaining Awake Through a Great Revolution."

speech is that we are all tied move forward into 2017 by together in one garment of destiny," he said. "We all need one another.'

More than 400 people about education and see no walk, if you can't walk then hope to get out of poverty." walk then crawl, but whatever you do, you have to keep moving forward.

arining Awake Through a reat Revolution."

"One line he said in that west Michigan needs to helping each other.

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Students from the All God's Children Community Choir Teen Ensemble perform Monday during the Martin Luther King Jr. Community Breakfast in the Mendal Center of Lake Michigan College in Benton Township.

MLK

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of great change, but also of great adversity and challenges.

"But, the bottom line is, I hope it will be a year of opportunity as well," Upton said. "We're going to have to lean on our neighbors, our friends, our family, our churches, our institutions. We cannot let the divisiveness of the national scene hold us back. Now, more than every, we have got to come together."

Upton said he recently saw the movie "Hidden Figures," which reminded him what life was like for African-Americans not that long

was a powerful movie with certainly a powerful message," he said. "It's about three brilliant African-American women who really set the stage, a pivotal role to make sure that John Glenn got into space and back safely.'

He said the true story happened in 1962.

"African-Americans, especially women, were heavily discriminated He said it is going to be a year against," he said. "And at every turn they'd face harsh segregation and outright hostility.'

Added Upton: "I know that there are a good number of folks in this room and across the country who have also had that personal experience with discrimination, that hateful, cruel hate that's impacted a lot of us," he said.

He said the country has come a long way, but must strive to be better.

We face some real challenges when it comes to racism and discrimination, but the strides that we've made have been incredible," he said. "Yes, (U.S. Rep.) John Lewis is my dear friend. A colleague. An icon. And I feel fortunate that I've been able to walk across the Edmund Pettus Bridge with him in Selma ... three times.

international made news after entering into a public

feud with President-elect Donald Trump ahead of Friday's inauguration.

Upton said that when Lewis speaks, people understand that the scars of the past never go away.

"But for someone who is so brutalized, he's forgiving," Upton said. "He actually went to the bed of Gov. George Wallace to accept his apology before he died."

A Race Relations Council Forum will be today from noon to 2 p.m. at LMC's Napier Avenue Campus in the Brown Lecture Hall. The theme is "Promoting Racial Equality in Education.

The forum will address a variety of strategies for promoting racial equality in education. It will be led by four panelists: Jeffrey Booker, Larry Feldman, Rebecca Fudge and Gladys Peeples-Burks.

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Louise Wrege / HP staff

Keishawn Branscumb, 9, of Benton Harbor listens to the Lake Michigan College Concert Choir perform while sitting with his grandparents, Will and Dorothy Branscumb, during the 2017 Martin Luther King Jr. Community Breakfast in the Mendal Center of Lake Michigan College in Benton Township.