



A Celebration for All Americans

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In her father's footsteps

The Rev. Bernice King tells it straight

By JAMES W. WADE III
Staff Reporter

The legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is always in the air at the Cleveland Clinic's annual MLK celebration breakfast, but this year that legacy took form in a physical presence, as well.

The Rev. Bernice King, youngest child of Dr. King and Coretta Scott King, delivered the keynote speech at the event held at the Inter-Continental Hotel on the Clinic's downtown campus.

Born Bernice Albertine King, in Atlanta, she is the second daughter and youngest child of civil rights leaders Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Coretta Scott King. Bernice is the only King child to become a minister.

Bernice King first came to public notice at age 5, when she was pictured in a Pulitzer Prize-winning photograph that showed her sleeping in her

mother's lap during funeral services for her slain father.

Nationally and internationally known as one of the most powerful, motivating and life-changing orators and speakers, the Rev. Bernice A. King leaves her audiences spellbound and challenged. Bernice began her oratorical journey when she spoke in her mother's stead at the United Nations at age 17. Over the years, Bernice has had the occasion to speak in such places as The White House, DuPont Corp., Warner-Lambert Corp.,

AT&T, Lockheed/Martin, DIA, University of Toledo, Xavier University, University of North Carolina, Duke University, Pepperdine University, Department of Defense, Salvation Army, and in such places as Sydney, Australia, Lubock, Germany, and in Argentina.

As an ordained preacher, Bernice is an elder at New Birth Missionary Baptist Church in

Atlanta under the dynamic leadership of Bishop Eddie L. Long.

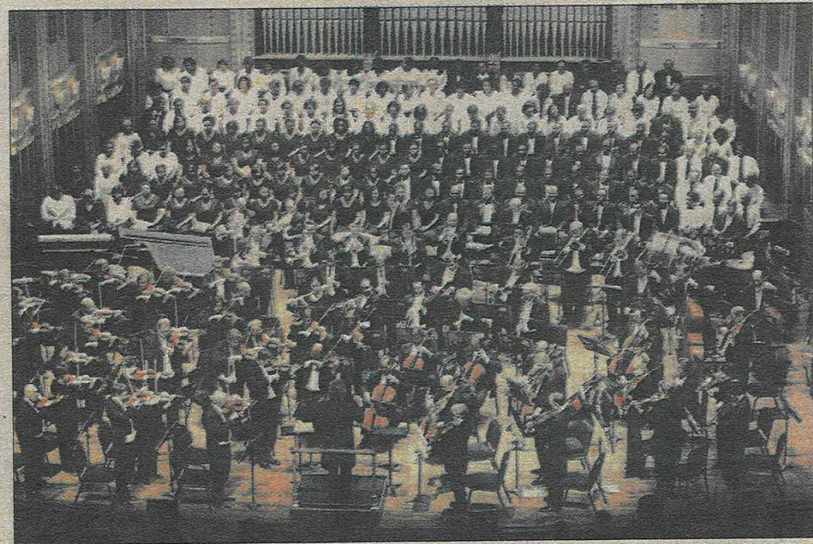
In addition to being a speaker/orator/preacher, Bernice has planned and organized numerous conferences, seminars and workshops for all walks of life. She has successfully coordinated nonviolent conflict resolution conferences for college and university students and women and family conferences; she has conducted a class on race relations at Mississippi College in Jackson, Miss., and taught a year-long leadership development class at her church.

Cited in Ebony Magazine as one of the "Ten of Tomorrow" in leadership, she is actually a strong leader of today.

In a face-to-face interview King shared with me the importance of being herself. Being the child of a man whom many Americans idolize cannot be an easy task. Walking in his footsteps has to be, at best, a tremendous burden.

(SEE BERNICE/PAGE 5A)

MLK Celebration Concert



The Cleveland Orchestra's 29th annual MLK Celebration Concert was held Sunday, Jan. 18, at Severance Hall. The Central State University Chorus, in dark robes, joined the orchestra's MLK Celebration Choir, in white, and moved the crowd to "Lift Every Voice and Sing." See story on page 7A. (STAFF PHOTO BY MYCHAL LILLY)