

Martin Luther King Jr.

The story behind one of the most influential men in our nation's history.

Early Life

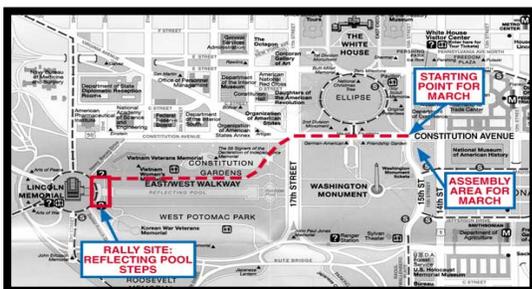
Martin Luther King, Jr. was one of the leading men involved in the civil rights movement. King was born in Atlanta, Georgia. King's family environment discouraged any prejudice based on race, religion or economic situation. These lessons would be the founding base for King's beliefs for the rest of his life. By 1948, King attended *Morehouse College* and then *Crozer Theological Seminary* in Chester, Pennsylvania. He graduated when he was 25 years old and became pastor of a Montgomery, Alabama church.



Dr. King gives his famous "I Have a Dream" speech.

Rise of Civil Rights

December 1, 1955 was the date that Rosa Parks, a Black American woman, refused to give up her seat to a white person and was arrested. The segregation and prejudice of the time was bad and the local chapter of the NAACP met with King and other community members to arrange a boycott of the bus system. King was elected to speak to the community and this speech started his career on the road to the many protests against unfair situations. Dr. King encouraged and participated all types of non-violent protest efforts. In 1963 King organized a demonstration in Birmingham, Alabama. Police turned fire hoses on the demonstrators and the attention for mistreatment became nationwide.



The map of the March on Washington

His Impact

King worked with others to organize a demonstration to Washington, D.C. Over 200,000 people showed up and it was there, at the podium, that Dr. King gave his famous "I have a dream" speech. Tensions were mounting in cities and towns across the country and it became obvious that

change in discrimination had to occur. Dr. King's actions helped the

passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and Dr. King received the Nobel Peace Prize. On April 3rd, while standing on a balcony in Memphis, Tennessee, he was killed by a sniper bullet from a former convict and one that was discontented with the message that Dr. King was sending.

