

## **King's legacy recalled in Roxbury**

**Governor joins students at annual breakfast**



Governor Deval Patrick was the guest speaker at a Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebration at the Yawkey Club in Roxbury. (Jonathan Wiggs/Globe Staff)

By [Hannah McBride](#)

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**Young students clad in black and white reenacted a Freedom March, hoisting signs of “Equal Rights Now” and “End Segregated Kids in Public Schools” and singing a 1960s-era protest song to an auditorium crowded with family, friends, and local dignitaries.**

**The annual breakfast celebrating Martin Luther King Jr. Day at the Yawkey Club in Roxbury yesterday morning recalled the civil rights movement, pausing to draw connections to current events.**

**Governor Deval Patrick joined community leaders in remembering the civil rights leader and kicking off a yearlong celebration of the club's 100th anniversary. Patrick called for a moment of silence for those killed by the devastating earthquake in Haiti, saying that people should remember King's message of service to others and reach out to quake victims.**

**“While so many of us are feeling powerless, I ask you to think about Dr. King and what you can do for someone else,” he said.**

Eleven-year-old Tayo Stuppard recited an abbreviated version of King's "I Have a Dream" speech, with the cadence and gestures of an experienced preacher. Applause punctuated his speech, and when he finished, the auditorium leapt to its feet.

Tayo, who said he has preached at church, also recited the famous speech at last year's celebration. "Every time I do it, I understand more why I do it and why it's important," he said.

Tayo said he strives to follow King's model. "He knew you can do more than just feel bad for the black community," Tayo said. "You should help people . . . I encourage those that need encouraging."

The club's teen director, Ronald Carroll, said the yearly breakfast gives the students a chance to display their talents to the community and reinforces King's message of community, education, and service.

"My kids need one day out of the year to see how important Dr. King's legacy is," he said. "This is a stark reminder that, 'Wow, this is what's important.'"

One of the freedom marchers, 8-year-old Nia Simpson, carried a sign that said "I Am Somebody."

"It means I'm a person that fights for freedom," she said. "It helps the world know that Martin Luther King is a hero." Nia said King changed the way people relate to one another. "He gave us freedom . . . to let us be friends," she said.