

In 1963, Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. delivered the iconic “I Have a Dream” speech during the March on Washington. He and others played a significant role in shaping the rights and freedoms of all in America. Like those who marched on Washington, I believe I have contributed to my community in several ways. Dr. King set a high bar when it comes to societal contribution. He dedicated his life to social justice, and even in death, he serves as an inspiration for me—and others similar to me—to aspire to seek his goal of a better world where we are all treated equally and fairly.

For many years now, I have looked up to the example that Dr. King set throughout his life. The way he led people to equality, fought for justice, and championed equality has been a pillar of my goals and initiatives. I believe that even one person can make a difference, and Dr. King helped instill that belief within me. Over the last 4 years, I have served in a variety of elected positions in my school’s Student Council, from Vice President to the first director of communications. In those positions, I have tried my best to help achieve goals such as more community outreach, programs to help students, and other events within my school community.

Last year, I participated in Mansfield’s Local Government Academy. There, I learned about how my town works, and all the ways people help shape it and its services. I was shocked to learn from this academy that even though my town offers so much, they rarely receive donations. Inspired by Dr. King, I have been leading a program in our Student Council to assist these varying agencies, such as the Mansfield Senior Center. Since then, I have graduated from the program and applied the additional knowledge to help my community further. I believe that this fits into Dr. King’s dream, as he sought throughout his life and career to better not only his community, but society as a whole by educating himself and others on how to make a difference.

Overall, Dr. King and all his supporters have influenced me and my understanding of how I can make an impact in many ways. Through my service in the Student Council, and how I learned to benefit my community, Dr. King and all who believed in his dream have served as a strong influence and role model on me and my work. Dr. King’s work and his teachings have meant so much to me-- and the world.