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Honoring Dr. King Through Fair Housing

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GULFPORT (WLOX) -- "We Shall Overcome."

They're the words that have come to represent a movement that gained momentum largely in part from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Hand in hand, those who gathered Friday night took a moment of silence in honor of the slain civil rights leader. On this day, they also came together to address a part of King's legacy they say has yet to be fulfilled - fair and affordable housing for everyone.

"Housing is integral to your life. Where you live determines where you go to school, where you work, your economic opportunities, your educational opportunities, so housing is a key component to us," says Charmel Gaulden, Gulf Coast Fair Housing Executive Director.

Gulf Coast Fair Housing organized the service. In honor of Dr. King's contributions, the group has organized a campaign it calls 40 for 40, that's 40 years of fair housing for 40 more years. Those who came out say the issue is even more pressing post-Katrina.

"Everyone should have a chance to recover and restore their home through the homeowner grants, but not everyone has had that opportunity," says Biloxi resident Roberta Avila.

"I challenge all of our local leaders to look at our community block grant funds and to make sure they reach the communities that need them the most," says Gaulden.

Gaulden say's it's the people who have to stand up to get leaders to make fair and affordable housing a reality.

"Dr. King would describe himself as an ordinary man and not so much a great man. He was an ordinary man who was empowered by his community to make it had equality on all levels and each of us has that same power within us."

Gulf Coast Fair Housing is looking to raise \$40,000 in the coming year to assist them in their efforts. If you would like to help them or learn more about their 40 for 40 campaign, you can call Gulf Coast Fair Housing at (228) 396-4008.

By: [Krystal Allan](#)



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