By Ashley Williams

A candlelight vigil, in-spirational words from civil rights advocate the Rev. Marie Butler Ferguson, music and readings from Dr. King by members of the UNCP family marked the seventh annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., remem- brance program on Jan. 13.

The candlelight vigil in honor of Dr. King first gath- ered everyone around in a circle on the University Center Annex lawn at 7 p.m. where they said what their dreams were.

During the program, Rev. Ferguson said to the audi- ence that people can con-nect themselves to one another through their shared vulner- ability. She said that November 1960, a group of students led by Dr. King and also Bishop Desmond Tutu. She re- minded the audience that Gandhi said, “If you want to change other people’s behavior, you must change your own.”

Rev. Ferguson said, “I like going to the university environment. In you, I touch the future.”

Rev. Ferguson’s words were informative and inspira- tional. She worked as a civil rights advocate for the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 as a member of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE).

“Tired of being insulted and a second-class citizen, I loved it,” audience member James Hampton said. “It was very informa- tive, first-hand information from someone who was there.”

Rev. Ferguson is the great niece of legendary civil rights leader Mary McLeod Bethune. “She in- spired me and continues to inspire me today,” she said. Bethune, “I’m inspired by her boldness and how she broke ground every step of the way.”

Music was interwoven throughout the event. Rev. Ferguson approached the podium singing “I Wish I Knew How It Would Feel To Be Free” and sang “Lift Every Voice and Sing” along with the audience.

Hollie Ondine of Southeastern Family Vio- lence Center sang “Wind Beneath My Wings” as her husband, Lee, played the piano for her.

Additional words of in- spiration came from mem- bers of the UNCP family. Freshman Brandon Payne did a rendition of the Dr. King’s song, “I Have a Dream Speech.”

Teresa Oxendine, assis- tant vice chancellor for Ad- vancement, read a poem about Dr. King entitled “Amazing Dancer.” She drew comparisons between Dr. King and the founders of the university pointing out that they all started out as ordinary citizens.

Ondine echoed Rev. Ferguson’s mention of Gandhi. Oxendine said Dr. King’s method of peaceful protesting was inspired by Gandhi and that Gandhi was Dr. King’s hero.

Oxendine quoted Dr. King by saying, “We must live together as brothers or perish together as fools.”

“I thought the event was incredibly timely,” said As- sociate Director for Resi- dence Life Cynthia Redfearn. “The message was very poignant, it was a new and different perspec- tive on the life and times of Dr. Martin Luther King.”

Also during the event, the first Dr. Collie Coleman award was presented to stu- dent Troy Cotton. The award was presented by Robert Canida, director of the Multicultural and Minority Affairs and Kappa Alpha Psi Omega chapter, Anne Coleman, assistant dean for Research Services at the Library, Zeta Phi Beta member and winner of the Dr. Collie Coleman award, Kyle Chavis Coleman, Phi Beta Sigma member and son of Dr. Coleman.

The Dr. Collie Coleman Award of $500 provides fi- nancial assistance to a member in good standing of UNCP’s National Pan-Hel- limic Council (NPHC) who demonstrates high aca- demic achievement and fi- nancial need. The student must have a GPA of 2.5 or higher. The award honors and memorializes Dr. Cole- man, the first African Amer- ican Associate Vice Chancellor for Outreach at UNCP, who passed away in 2008, as a true educator, mentor, community activist, leader and visionary. He was a life-long member of Phi Beta Sigma.

“I loved the event,” said freshman Destin Russell. “I liked the event, it brought up some good points,” said AmeriCorps Vista and NC-ACTS Pro- gram Assistant for the Of- fice of Community and Civic Engagement Derald Dryman.

The event was hosted by the Office of Multi- cultural and Minority Affairs and the university’s NAACP chapter.

Despite the fact that it snowed three days before the event, Canida said that approximately 80 people at- tended the event.

Little Rock Nine member describes experience

By Hilary Akers

Staff Writer

Dr. Terrence J. Roberts, one of the Little Rock Nine, described his experiences of being one of the first stu- dents who volunteered in 1957 to integrate an all-white school in Little Rock, Arky. He spoke to a crowd of 150 students, faculty and community member, Jan. 19 in the UC Annex.

“There is nothing I enjoy more than talking with people, sharing ideas, and learning from each other,” Dr. Roberts, 68, said.

Through his retelling of the events that took place in Little Rock, Arky, he gave the audience many tips on handling situations that they face.

He described his re- sponse to those who are less-than-kind. “Smile and walk off, my usual response to idiocy.”

Dr. Roberts also empha- sized the point that “each of us is unique.” When talking about segregation he said, “We as Americans, decided at some point that it was perfectly fine to separate people by race.” Dr. Roberts also underlined his belief that “there is no such thing as race.”

Dr. Roberts shared his experiences at Little Rock Central High School. About his treatment by other stu- dents he said, “They seemed to have a lot of in- formation about me as a mother,” and “They ex- plained to the newspapers of the world I should return to.”

Dr. Roberts also de- scribed how he was treated by faculty and staff.

“I felt bad for them,” he said. “They were being or- dered by law to bring us in.”

He also said that in the faculty, as in the whole popu- lation of Little Rock, there were those who were against and for them being there.

He said his math teacher was one of those who was supporting of them and re- ferred to that class as a “safe haven.”

Dr. Roberts also gave advice to the students about getting as much education as possible. As referred to himself in high school by saying, “I wanted to be ban- nished in education.” He said there is a need for every person to learn, even if they think they know everything.

“The biggest thing we own is a storehouse of igno- rage,” he said “but I spend everyday trying to diminish the ignorance.”

Dr. Roberts gave a charge to the audience to “get busy and active on finding out what the truth really is, not always taking what people tell you.”

He stressed the impor- tance of helping others and knowing that just one per- son cannot achieve great things. “You get enough people together who share the same vision and you can get things accomplished,” he said.