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Teen-agers 'walkin' the walk for Rev. King

By Neil Graves

When youngsters in the acting community discuss the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., they say they're not just talking the talk.

They're also walking the walk.

Yesterday afternoon at the Actors Theatre Workshop on West 28th Street, 10 students from the Young Peoples Creative Workshop captured the essence of King's dream. During a program of written compositions.

Later, they spoke of their own dreams.

Maya Merker, 13 of JHS 157 in Queens, said she "Hopes to share what I have learned with younger children".

Maya aspires to become an actress. Her idol is, "Julia Roberts".

"When she acts. It's very real and we're learning how to be real. How to open up our imaginations," Maya said.

She even found social commentary in that vintage classic "Pretty Woman" a flick that for Maya was shot a third-of-lifetime ago.

"It showed how someone went from becoming a street person and rose to overcome obstacles, and that's good", Maya said.

Scott McKenna 14. Of New Hyde Park H.S. said classics at the workshop have him thinking positively about dealing with his fellow man.

"It's not just acting here". Scott said, "I think it's more about caring for each other."

When asked what he'd say to the slain civil-rights leader if he could speak to him today. Scott said: "I'd ask him, how did he put up with all the racist remarks"? How did he live an everyday life?

Maribel Marrero. 14, said her uncle failed at becoming a lawyer and eventually gave up the dream. Maribel. A judo enthusiast and a model, said, she wants to continue the family's quest to have a lawyer in the family who will fight for the downtrodden.

"Ever since I was a little girl, I wanted to be a lawyer", said Maribel. A student at IS 364 in East New York, Brooklyn, I said, "I will do this just for you, uncle".

Artistic director Thurman Scott said King's legacy of helping and building offers a challenge for everyone.

"Rhetoric is cheap". He said, "the question to ask is, What do we take from this moment that will help us tonight, tomorrow, and the next day"?