



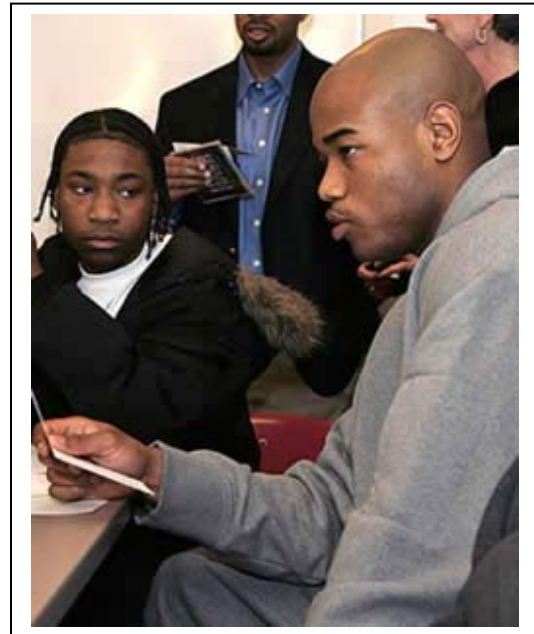
## Martin Luther King Jr. Celebrated By Trail Blazers

*Traci Rose and Heather Atiyeh*

PHOTOS [Gallery](#)

January 16, 2006, marked the 20th anniversary of the Martin Luther King Jr. federal holiday. Hundreds of thousands of Americans remembered and memorialized Dr. King by participating in service projects in their communities. The Trail Blazers honored the day lending an assist to events that reached out to communities far beyond Portland.

Trail Blazers Juan Dixon, Theo Ratliff, Jarrett Jack and Charles Smith teamed up with **Hands On Portland** and students from Open Meadow High School to participate in a "Love Letters" project. The athletes shared life stories and reflections on Dr. King with the students, and then assisted them in creating letters of hope and encouragement that are being sent to high school students in New Orleans.



"A lot of people have just forgotten about us," said Kathy Graff, a counselor at Eleanor McMain Secondary School in New Orleans. "These kids are just trying to get back to normalcy. Your project means so much to them."

As part of the national "Operation Home Deliver" effort, Portland Habitat for Humanity was selected to build a home in Portland that will be sent to a family in Lafayette, Louisiana who lost everything in Hurricane Katrina. Travis Outlaw joined community members in the construction of the walls and other pre-build prep of the home at the Oregon Convention Center. The disassembled pieces are being shipped to Louisiana where the home will be built and ready for the family by the end of February.

"I know how much work needs to be done back there," said Outlaw, a Mississippi native. "Not being able to be home right now, I'm glad I have this opportunity to lend a hand."

In observance of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Trail Blazer Sebastian Telfair generously sponsored his former boys basketball team from Abraham Lincoln High School (Brooklyn, NY), to participate in the premier King Classic basketball tournament at the Rose Garden Arena.

Telfair, who hosted the Brooklyn team at his Portland home, was proud to share his new lifestyle in Portland with former New York teammates. Sebastian's high school coach, mentor and friend Dwayne Morton remarked, "Sebastian has been so generous and giving. He opened his closet and told the team they could keep anything that they could grab. This reassured me that Sebastian's head is still level despite his many accomplishments."

Telfair, who annually funds a New York AAU team, two basketball tournaments and two camps, was delighted to expose his New York basketball family to Portland.

"I wanted my team to get the opportunity to come to Portland and to see where I live, to witness the differences and to show them how hard work ultimately pays off," said Telfair.

Lincoln didn't disappoint Telfair either as they rallied to defeat Hillsboro, 60-52.