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Madison, WI 53703  
Satya Rhodes-Conway, Mayor



Room 421  
210 Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard  
Madison, WI 53703  
Joe Parisi, County Executive

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## **Dane County Executive Parisi, Madison Mayor Rhodes-Conway Announce Martin Luther King, Jr. Humanitarian Award Honorees**

Today, Dane County Executive Joe Parisi and City of Madison Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway announced Ashzianna Alexander, Mathias Lemos Castillo, and Dr. Jack Daniels as this year's recipients of the combined City-County Humanitarian Awards honoring Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The award winners were selected by the City-County Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Commission and are community members who reflect the values of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

"Ashzianna, Mathias, and Dr. Daniels all embody the spirit of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. through their dedication to serve our community and build a better tomorrow," said County Executive Parisi. "Whether it be Ashzianna's skills as a youth leader, Mathias' efforts to build community, or Dr. Daniels' legacy in higher education, each recipient has dedicated themselves to making our community a better place to call home. Congratulations to each honoree for receiving this award."

"Ms. Alexander has advocated for youth for years, doing the hard work and never shying away from the truth. Dr. Daniels has led Madison College's cultural transformation through collaborative government and alignment with principles of equity and inclusion. And Mathias Lemos Castillo has focused his work on building community and engaging voices that are not always heard," said Mayor Rhodes-Conway. "I thank them all for their work exemplifying the vision of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and congratulate them on being chosen for this honor."

The City and County will present the awards at the annual City-County Martin Luther King, Jr. Observance on Monday, January 15 at 6:00pm. More information can be found at <http://mlkingcoalition.org>.

### **Ashzianna Alexander**

Ashzianna Alexander is a tireless youth leader in the community who has been working to make a change in local schools and communities for over five years. Prior to becoming a youth leader, she was a member of the Black Girls Matter group. Due to her ambitious nature and strong leadership qualities while in the group, she was given an opportunity to be a part of the Freedom Youth Squad. It was there that her determination as a

youth leader stood out. Ashzianna advocated for the youth in her community and never shied away from speaking her truths, especially regarding the school system, where she even traveled around the nation to show support for her causes.

In Ashzianna's free time, she may be volunteering at The Freedom Inc. organization by organizing or assisting with an event. This has helped mold her into being a successful leader in the community. She has begun her first year of college and is seeking to learn more about African American youth. She shows no signs of slowing down.

### **Mathias Lemos Castillo**

Mathias Lemos Castillo is a seasoned consultant, dedicated to effective and culturally-relevant community engagement. Born and raised in Uruguay, he brings a unique perspective to his work. In January 2022, he founded MLC Consulting, LLC—an organization that focuses on helping individuals and organizations achieve their goals through intentional community engagement.

Prior to founding MLC Consulting, Mathias held leadership positions with various local and national organizations, including the Local Voices Network at MIT. In these various roles, he refined his skills as a conversation facilitator and community builder, gaining the ability to effectively convene community members, work with diverse audiences, and ensure exceptional partner satisfaction.

Mathias's community-oriented background is a valuable asset in his consulting work, which includes the City of Madison. Mathias has experience working with people, communities, and entities at both local and national levels. His fluency in Spanish and English enables him to communicate effectively with a wide range of audiences. Additionally, Mathias serves as the Board Chair of the Latino Professionals Association of Greater Madison and serves on the Madison Public Library Board.

### **Dr. Jack Daniels**

Dr. Jack E. Daniels, III, brings over 40 years of profound experience in higher education, spanning diverse institutions from community and technical colleges to graduate schools. His multifaceted career has seen him in various capacities, from esteemed professor to dedicated dean and college president. Notably, during his tenure as president of Madison Area Technical College, Dr. Daniels has been instrumental in fostering a collaborative governance environment that champions respect and acknowledges the invaluable contributions of faculty, staff, and students. His visionary leadership has reshaped the college's response to its diverse communities, propelling its transformation into a culture deeply rooted in principles of equity and inclusion.

Under Dr. Daniels' guidance, Madison College has achieved significant milestones, including the establishment of the Goodman South Campus in 2019—a testament to his commitment to providing educational and community resources to the city's most underserved populations. His initiatives encompass the development of high school academies, workforce training programs, transfer agreements with HBCUs and support for guaranteed transfer programs with various institutions. Recognized as one of the most influential African Americans in Wisconsin, Dr. Daniels has received many prestigious awards. A native of Chicago, Dr. Daniels holds a Ph.D. from the Wright Institute Graduate School of Psychology in Berkeley, California. He is happily married to Kimila Daniels, with whom he shares four children and four grandchildren.

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