



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

# Press Release

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## MWRD celebrates African American history with Leland Elementary School eighth grade students



In anticipation of African American History month in February, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) held two Lunch and Learn seminars featuring internationally acclaimed Scholar, Educator and Activist Dr. Conrad Worrill. On January 16, the renowned professor spoke about African American history in the context of the Reconstruction Era to the 1930s. On January 23, Dr. Worrill discussed 1966 to present day.

The seminar, coordinated by MWRD Vice President Barbara McGowan and the MWRD Diversity Department, was presented to MWRD staff in addition to eighth grade students from Leland Elementary

School. Chicago Ald. Chris Taliaferro (29th Ward) also participated.

Leland Elementary School is a Space to Grow partner, along with Chicago Public Schools, Chicago Department of Water Management, Healthy Schools Campaign and Openlands. Space to Grow transforms Chicago's schoolyards into vibrant outdoor community spaces for physical activity, outdoor learning, environmental literacy and engagement with art, while addressing neighborhood flooding issues. The partnership has led to educational opportunities in the classroom and at the MWRD, where staff share their expertise on water (*continued*)

## **MWRD celebrates African American history with Leland Elementary School** *(continued)*

management and conservation in addition to other important subjects with the students and teachers.

“I strongly believe it is important to educate our students so they have an appreciation and better understanding of the tribulations faced by those who lived before them as well as the work of Dr. King,” said Commissioner McGowan. “The Leland students and our staff were captivated by both of Dr. Worrill’s presentations.”

“I was thrilled to be asked to participate in this program,” said Alderman Taliafarro. “The students asked very insightful questions and learned a great deal about Dr. King’s legacy.”

These two sessions were held in anticipation of the MWRD’s African American History Month celebration to take place on Feb. 21, the theme of which is “Ascent to the national stage: An overview of Illinois elected officials’ rise from a local to a national area.

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### **Recovering Resources, Transforming Water**

*Established in 1889, the MWRD ([www.mwr.org](http://www.mwr.org)) is an award winning, special purpose government agency responsible for used water treatment and stormwater management in Cook County, Illinois.*