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[Horizon's Al Kashani is Co-Grand Marshal of the 44th Annual Original MLK Day Parade]

[HOUSTON, TEXAS, January 17, 2022—] Al Kashani, principal of Horizon Group International, served Co-Grand Marshal of the 44th Annual Original MLK Day Parade. Kashani, was joined by Grand Marshal Vanessa Wyche, the NASA Johnson Space Center director, Co-Grand Marshal Claude Cummings, Vice President of Communications Workers of America, and Co-Grand Marshal, Gilbert Garcia, founder of Garcia Hamilton & Associates.

"I am truly honored to act as Co-Grand Marshal for the MLK Day Parade. Oppression is a war that we all must fight against daily, and those that are in a position of leadership need to lead by example," said Kashani.

As a Persian American, Kashani is honored to be an ally for those Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. bravely fought to protect and empower. Kashani brings forth a human-rights leader from his own culture that has set the foundation for the fight for equality.

Cyrus II, the first king of the mighty and vast ancient Persia, made strides towards the advancement of humankind. After conquering the city of Babylon, Cyrus decreed to free those enslaved, allow freedom of religion, and establish laws for race equality. He recorded his decrees on a baked clay cylinder known as the Cyrus Cylinder. This ancient record is recognized as the world's first charter of human rights.

It is the precursor to the Magna Carta (1215), the Petition of Right (1628), the US Constitution (1787), the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen (1789), and the US Bill of Rights (1791)

Kashani has resonated on his upbringing and education as an adult, diving into history with zeal. During these studies, he realized the correlation between Cyrus II and Dr. King goes much deeper than having King in common. As Dr. King famously stated in his Letter from a Birmingham Jail, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly."

Both Cyrus and King understood that equality allows the world to thrive, unsullied by the strife of proffered stereotypes and divisive institutions. Removal of those threats created harmony in Persia that was only disrupted by the reintroduction of these systems.

Dr. King fought for the unification of all. He did it with words, peace, and honor. He was met with anger and violence that eventually killed him. However, like Cyrus the Great's, his legacy paved the way for many others to stand up (or sit down ~ Rosa Parks) for what is right.

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