

40th Anniversary Commemoration
Of
An Appeal for Human Rights
And
The Atlanta Student Movement
1960-2000


March 31—May 12, 2000

Atlanta University Center
Robert W. Woodruff Library
Virginia Lacy Jones Exhibition Hall
(upper level)

Press Conference and Dedication of Historic Marker
CAU Trevor Arnett Quadrangle March 31 3:00pm

Workshop - Virginia Lacy Jones Exhibition Hall
April 1 9:00am - 5:00pm

Ecumenical Service King Chapel Morehouse College
April 2 10:30am



In 1960, students of Atlanta University, the Interdenominational Theological Center, and Clark, Morehouse, Morris Brown and Spelman Colleges joined with students across the South in taking up the battle of civil rights. The Atlanta Student Movement began with the publishing on March 9, 1960, of a full-page advertisement in the Atlanta newspapers of *An Appeal for Human Rights*. In the *Appeal*, students set forth certain grievances, rights, and aspirations. They made clear their dissatisfaction with the status quo conditions of segregation and discrimination and the slow pace at which inherent human and civil rights were being meted out to Blacks. On March 15, 1960, Atlanta students staged sit-ins at nine eating establishments, putting into action their declaration, "...to use every legal and non-violent means at our disposal to secure full citizenship rights in this great society."

The civil rights movement's technique of non-violence and mass action quickened the pace of racial desegregation and changed the course of history in Atlanta, Georgia, the South, and the nation. Atlanta University Center students staged sit-ins at eating facilities and theatrical performances, held kneel-ins at churches on Sundays and organized picket lines at retail stores to push for the hiring of Blacks in better job positions. Student leaders in Atlanta, serving as their own attorney, filed and won a lawsuit desegregating public recreational facilities in Atlanta. They also initiated the first "freedom rides" in December 1960, when they tested segregation laws in a demonstration using public transportation to travel simultaneously to four southern states.

During the struggle in the early sixties, many students made great sacrifices. They delayed completion of their education, withstood physical beatings and arrest, and sometimes became isolated from their family and friends because of their commitment to struggle. Through it all, they persevered and pushed society to change. Because of the actions of the students and others working in the civil rights movement, today Atlanta enjoys a reputation as an international city and is the economic, political and social capital of the South.

It has been 40 years since the publication of *An Appeal for Human Rights* and the beginning of the Atlanta Student Movement. On March 31, 2000, a second *Appeal* was issued to stimulate, provoke and challenge this generation of students and community leaders to examine the current issues and heed the call to action for positive change.