

Running Against the Storm:
50th Anniversary of the Greensboro Lunch Counter Sit-In

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Video online at:

http://americanhistory.si.edu/webcast/greensboro_medal.html

Codes:

- BG = Brent Glass
- SC= Dr. Steven Channing
- LB = Lonnie Bunch
- JL = John Lewis
- FR = Fath Davis Ruffins
- WC = Wayne Clough
- JK= Jibreel Khazan
- FM= Franklin McCain
- JM= Joseph McNeil
- DR= David Richmond
- DRJ = David Richmond, Jr.
- P = Participant
- “ “ =interrupting, pause
- [] = not speaker's words

(Off-Stage Host) = Ladies and gentlemen welcome to the National Museum of American History. Please rise for the singing of “Lift Every Voice and Sing.”

(Singing-“Lift Every Voice and Sing”)

BG = Please be seated. I am Brent Glass director of your National Museum of American History. I have heard many renditions of “Lift Every Voice” but I have to say that is one of the greatest and most memorable. Please join me in thanking “clapping” that was the

Afro Blue Ensemble of Howard University and they just did a tremendous job. That was just great. Thank you for joining us this evening as we pay tribute to four Americans from ordinary backgrounds who took extraordinary action that changed history and ultimately made this nation a better place for all Americans. When the four students from North Carolina A&T State University sat down at the F.W. Woolworth's lunch counter in Greensboro North Carolina fifty years ago this week on February 1, 1960; little did they know that their protest would not only desegregate that lunch counter, but it would also spark an awakening among thousands and thousands of young people who came together in that decade to advocate and push for change. The student sit in on February 1, 1960 is considered one of the most significant events in the modern Civil Rights Movement. Tonight we honor and welcome Major General Joseph McNeil, Franklin McCain, Jibreel Khazan and their families, as well as, David Richmond Jr. and Lynn Massenburg who are representing David Richmond. Please join me in welcoming our honored guests this evening. Later this evening we will be joined by another hero of the Civil Rights Movement, the honorable Congressman John Lewis. He will be here shortly. I am also pleased this evening to welcome the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, Wayne Clough and also my colleague and the founding director of the National Museum of African-American History and Culture, Lonnie Bunch, who are here this evening, as well as, the Smithsonian Under Secretary for History, Art and Culture, Dr. Richard Kurin. Welcome to all of you. It is critical that the Museum of American History present programs such as tonight's program. We cannot do that without a tremendously dedicated staff at the museum. We have a world-class facility here with world-class collections and exhibitions and programs. It is only because we have such a great staff and I would like to ask you to join me in thanking the members of the museum staff collectively. We have also to thank for this evening's event and also for all the events we have been sponsoring since early January; since the Martin Luther King weekend program, a number of very generous donors including Booz Allen Hamilton, Jean Bounds and Joe Suarez are here this evening, welcome to you. The National Endowment for the Humanities and the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, Dr. Dr. Carole Watson who is Deputy Chair of NEH and Susan Saidenberg from Gilder Lehrman are here as well. Delta Airlines Incorporated, Ford Motor Company Fund and the Verizon Foundation; please join me in thanking all these generous

sponsors. Before we move forward with this program, I think it is worthwhile to take just a minute to think about the significance and the times in which the Greensboro protest took place. We all know the story or we think we know the story. We think that many of these issues have been settled but we were in the middle of the Cold War. The space race had just begun in the late 1950's. For many people, the decision by the Supreme Court in 1954, Brown versus Board of Education, which ruled that separate, is not equal, and that separate schools were unconstitutional. And that these issues were being pretty much settled in America but in fact, it took a bus boycott in Montgomery, Alabama in 1955, which brought Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. into national prominence. It took federal intervention in 1957 in Little Rock, Arkansas to enforce desegregation of the schools. So in early 1960, these issues were not settled in this country and in Greensboro, North Carolina, many of the traditions and vestiges of segregation were firmly in place. There were separate entrances to movie theaters, separate drinking fountains, separate facilities in many places and at the Woolworth's department store we had separate facilities so that an African-American could take out food but not sit at the lunch counter. At the National Museum of American History, we are committed to telling these stories; of such stories as the Greensboro sit-in and we have committed our museum during 2010, during the fiftieth anniversary year, to a program that we are calling Telling the Stories of Freedom and Justice. Museums are all about the power of objects to tell stories and the section of the lunch counter that is on display here at the museum has always held a special meaning for me for two reasons. First, it represents the determination of thousands of Americans: black and white, men and women, young and old, who understood that racial segregation was wrong and that they needed to do something to end it. Ordinary people achieved extraordinary deeds. Ladies and gentlemen, these men who are being honored here tonight are part of the greatest generation of the Civil Rights activists and second the lunch counter represents this museum's commitment to tell the story of what it means to be an American. It is a story that often involves overcoming barriers to the American dream of freedom and opportunity. Tonight's program is called Running Against the Storm. It is from a song inspired by the words of Ella Baker, a tireless Civil Rights organizer who counseled collage students who met after a flurry of sit-ins and advised them that they should found their own organization; an organization that became the Student Nonviolent

Coordinating Committee. Congressman Lewis was a founding member of that organization. Ella Baker was committed to teaching and preparing youth to “run against the storm.” The Greensboro Four were members of that great generation that took up her challenge and who had the courage to run into the winds of prejudice and racism and discrimination that ran against them. And, now it is my pleasure to welcome Dr. Steven Channing who is a film producer, Emmy Award winning filmmaker and the Executive Producer of February One: The Story of the Greensboro Four.

SC = I am honored to be here this evening and to recognize in the audience the very able young producer of the film you are going to see a short clip of, Rebecca Cerese. Please give a hand to Rebecca. I just want to say very briefly how meaningful the experience of working with these gentlemen and their families has been. They welcomed us into their lives. They opened their hearts and their experiences to us. They never asked to see a rough-cut. They trusted us in an extraordinary way and I finally have an opportunity to say thank you for that. Please enjoy a short clip from our film, thanks.

Film Clip: The next afternoon the four friends gathered in front of the library on the A&T campus.

[JK] I put on my Sunday go to meeting clothes, my hat, my suit and tie. Frank McCain didn't have time to change so he wore his air force blue uniform. Joseph wore his tie and coat. He was dressed to kill. David, of course, had his cap on, his leather cap, and he was dressed immaculately.

[FM] I had some anxiety and my anxiety was the unknown. I really didn't know what was going to happen. I just assumed that we'd be plugged on the head or we'd be thrown in jail. I tell you the one thing that I was certain of, is that we weren't coming back.

[JM] From the time we left the library until we reached Downtown, we were rather somber, silent. I think we're all reflecting on what we're about to do and trying to step ahead in time and project what's going to happen.

[JK] It was like, this is so down, we're like the four musketeers. We're going to our destiny.

When we walked into the store, we wanted to prove that we were customers. I bought notebooks and made sure to get receipts.

We mulled around in the store just trying to get some fix on where we were and what we're about to do.

[JK] I was trying to breathe slow and heavy so my anxiety would not get too high on me. I felt my temperature increase. I could feel my collar and the sweat coming off the side of my face.

[FM] I didn't have to always ask Joe what he was thinking. We looked at each other and both of us looked at the counter at the same time. We just started to walk towards the counter. I mean without a single word that's how it happened. And we took our seats. Almost instantaneously after sitting down on a simple dumb stool, I felt so relieved I felt so clean. I felt as though I had gained a little bit of my manhood by that simple act. And Joe and I looked at each other without saying a word not, not I mean absolutely not a word. It was about maybe some 40 seconds, a minute later, seemed like a lifetime, that the people behind the counter acknowledged that we were sitting.

[JK] The waitress approached us, "What do you boys want?" We said, "We like to be served please." "Now you boys know we don't serve colored people here. Why don't you all get up." And she pointed her finger to the lunch counter instead of lunch counter over there.

[FM] Of course we said, "Well, we beg to disagree with you. You do serve us here and we can prove it. We've got receipts to provide and we bought all these things here and we just want to be served here."

I'm trying to keep myself composed meanwhile I feel my legs shaking. Out came this Negro lady, this colored lady. She was really, she says, "What do you boys want?" "We like to be served please." She says, "I'm going to say this to you. You all need to leave here right now go back to that campus because you're starting trouble. You know it's people like you that make our race look bad. You got that?"

[Geneva Tisdale] I used to wonder sometime why I couldn't sit and you know eat meals. It felt like, "well, what's wrong with me. I'm not good enough to sit at the counter and be served?" I was good enough to work and prepare the food for others but I couldn't sit there and have a meal. And that was kind of hard to take.

[JK] The waitress left and she sent out this tall Caucasian man who we found out was the manager, Mr. Harris. He said, "You know, I don't know who sent you boys but I pride myself of having a good store." He said, "I don't want any trouble." We could see the man is worried. He got a frown on his face. He doesn't know what to do. Meanwhile some of the Caucasian people are getting up and leaving.

[FM] Shortly thereafter, we noticed the policeman who comes into the store and he is as red as your shirt when he sees us sitting at the counter. He took his nightstick out and I said to myself, "You know I think this is it." I mean I could almost feel his hot breath. I mean this guy was breathing fire.

[DR] One of the officers started to take his Billy club and to sort of hit it in his hand and that was perhaps unsettling, to say the least.

[JK] Meanwhile, tension is going full speed now: teeth are chattering, sweat is pouring like water; I mean like a river.

[FM] I could imagine what he was thinking, "I know what I want to do but I have no justification for doing it yet because I haven't been provoked." And once he paced two or three times and didn't do anything, I said to myself, "Aha, he doesn't know what to do. He is frustrated."

[JM] McCain and I are sitting at the lunch counter and an elderly white lady comes and sits next to McCain and starts a conversation about being disappointed in us. McCain inquires, "Ma'am, why are you disappointed in us?" She relates that she's disappointed because it's took us so long to do what it is that we're doing.

[FM] To hear someone say that whom you least expect was quite rewarding. I mean it quite calming. It was quite reassuring. When that was observed by other folk in the store, there wasn't much noise anyway. I mean, people had stopped talking. For a Five and Ten Cent store, it was quiet. I mean it was more like church service. Carroll, as he was called he was truly frustrated. So, he finally goes back to the corner and leans up against the wall and was like, "My God, won't these guys leave here. I mean won't they please get out of my life." I mean that was the kind of expression that he had. Short time later, it was announced that the store was going to close early.

Nothing occurred. The police were there. They didn't arrest us. We were shocked. They closed the store. And we said we would be back.

[JK] I felt relieved. I felt like a great weight had been taken off my shoulder. We had witness between ourselves a great transformation.

David Richmond said, "If I don't do anything else in my life, this is the peak of my life. I think I've done my greatest jump."

[FM] People take on a religion to try to get that feeling. I mean that's what Buddhists try to do all the time and here I am at 18 years of age having that feeling of total freedom; total acceptance. I'm asking myself, "What do I do for an encore?" It's all downhill from here.

On the sidewalk outside Woolworth's, a reporter from the Greensboro Record caught up with the four sit-ins. The reporter had been contacted by Ralph Johns, a local civil rights activist and friend of Joe McNeil's.

[JK] The reporter asked us were we coming back the next day. So we said, “Yeah, we’re coming back the next day.” He says, “You have backup?” We say, “Sure.” We had no backup at all.” So, we went back to campus that evening.

[FM] We need to get some help and the way to get help, Joe and I concluded, is to summons those people on our campus who had leadership positions. We went to the Dudley Building after we passed the word that that’s were the meeting would be. When we started that little session with all those leaders, we spent 90% of the meeting trying to convince them that this wasn’t a hoax. In principle most agreed that they would help us and I can confirm that it was in principle only because the second day, they didn’t come.

BG = Thank you Steve Channing for bringing that wonderful dramatic film to the museum again. We have screened this film here once before and we never get tired of that amazing drama that you created and congratulations to you and your team. I am now going to call on Faith Davis Ruffins to say a few words of introduction about our honorees this evening before they are presented, oh, wait I am going to get back to my script and I am going to introduce my colleague Lonnie Bunch.

LB = We are all so glad the Congressman is here because Brent was afraid I was going to talk for an hour and a half. We are here tonight to remember, to commemorate, and to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the Greensboro lunch counter sit-in and as you saw from this film, what a remarkable moment, what remarkable people, what a remarkable time. Those of us, and I hate to admit it, I am one of them, who are old enough to remember the era of segregation can remember just how important it was that these four students from North Carolina A&T decided to confront injustice. We remember that by sitting down, they helped generations to stand up. We remember that by sitting down, they helped to change America. The Greensboro sit-in invigorated the Civil Rights Movement and became a clarion call for younger Americans to engage in the struggle for racial justice and as a result of the actions in Greensboro, lunch counters throughout the South became one of the most important battlefields in the struggle for

racial equality. Today it is hard for many people, those of us that have kids especially, it's hard for them to understand what a powerful symbol the segregated lunch counter was. A Jim Crow lunch counter was a constant reminder of the second-class citizen status of African-Americans. It was a visible manifestation of the daily insults, injustices, and disparities that were at the heart of racial segregation and it is difficult today to understand the courage that it took. And that is why in some way that film is so wonderful to give us a sense of understanding of what it took, because it is crucially important for all of us here today to recognize and applaud the risk these students took. And I just want to take a moment to applaud you once more for the risk you took. The Smithsonian is so honored that a portion of this lunch counter resides permanently within this museum. Those of us, who had the privilege of acquiring the lunch counter for the Smithsonian in 1993, knew that it was a special icon and let me just take a minute and acknowledge Bill Yeingst. Bill Yeingst is instrumental in this museum receiving this lunch counter. Bill and I realized that this icon could speak volumes about injustice, fairness, commitment, and struggle. To us it was an artifact that symbolized what America once was but more importantly what it could become as a result of the struggles and sacrifices of individuals like those who we honor tonight. While the story of how we acquired the lunch counter is interesting, what is more important is that millions of visitors have now had the chance to experience this history. To learn how the actions of a few can change the fortunes of many. And to understand that profound change is possible even when there is no reason to believe that change was possible. All as a result of being able to come to the Smithsonian to see this lunch counter. So, tonight, we come together to remember and to celebrate four young men whose actions beginning in February 1960 made us all a better country. We continue to be inspired by your courage and your commitment to racial justice. We are honored by your presence tonight, thank you. Okay, I was the warm-up act because it is now my great pleasure to introduce a true American hero, someone whose life has been committed to helping America become a fairer place become a place that lives up to the meaning of its stated ideals. This is someone who has worked since his childhood days in Pike County, Alabama. He has worked during the Civil Rights Movement. He is really an inspiration to all of us and for the past twenty-five years, he has served as a member of Congress and, of course, I know that he will say that one of the highlights of his career was the

sponsorship of the bill that created the National Museum of African-American History and Culture. But this is somebody that we respect so much, who is a great friend of the Smithsonian and more importantly a great friend that has helped to change America. Please welcome the Honorable John Lewis.

JL = Thank you, Lonnie Bunch for those kind words of introduction, Mr. Secretary, Dr. Glass. Let me say to my wonderful young brothers and the family of the Greensboro Four, I am delighted and very happy and very pleased to see you. By sitting down, by sitting in, you ushered in a nonviolent revolution, a revolution of values, a revolution of ideas. You changed America forever. Not just American South. Not just North Carolina or Georgia or Alabama or Mississippi or Tennessee, but you changed America. You inspired all of us that saw those signs that said White waiting, Colored waiting, White Men, Colored Men, White women, Colored women to stand up. You inspired a whole generation to study the philosophy and the discipline of nonviolence. You inspired us as young people to study what Gandhi attempted to do in South Africa; what he accomplished in India. You inspired us to study of civil disobedience. You inspired all of us to study what Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King, Jr. was all about in Montgomery. Your actions inspired this young boy fifty years ago. I was only nineteen years old, had all of my hair and a few pounds lighter to find a way to get in the way. But, when I was growing up outside of Troy, Alabama, fifty miles from Montgomery and would visit a little town of Troy, and visit Tuskegee. And as a student in Nashville, I would come home and ask my mother and my father and my grandparents and my great-grandparents, why segregation? Why racial discrimination? They would say that's the way it is. Don't get in the way. Don't get into trouble. But some of us started saying if the young people, if the students in Greensboro can do it, we can do it too and we started sitting in. We started sitting down. As Lonnie Bunch said, by sitting down we were standing up. I know when we were sitting there sometimes people would come up and put a lighted cigarette out in our hair or down our backs, or spit on us. We were being arrested, maybe jailed, beaten, but we did not give up. We did not give in. We kept the faith and you kept the faith. I come here to thank the Smithsonian and thank all of us for honoring you because if it hadn't been for you, I don't know where we would be tonight. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. who I got to know so well, he was so gratified, he

was so moved, for you and so many others that did what you did. Because of your actions, the sit-ins spread across the South like wildfire. Thank you for sitting down. Thank you for occupying those stools. Those signs that we saw and others saw, they are gone. They will not return. The only place our children and their children will see those signs will be in a museum like the Smithsonian, in a book, or on a video. Because of your actions we are a better people and we are a better nation. Who would have thought that fifty years later, a person of color would be the President of the United States? You created the climate; you created the environment to make it happen, so thank you very much. We congratulate you. Thank you.

BG = Thank you, Congressman. It is always very inspiring and wonderful to have you at the museum; at the Smithsonian. Thank you for everything that you have done for all of us. And, now it is my pleasure to introduce Fath Davis Ruffins, curator of African-American History and Culture at the museum. We will now start to begin our program to officially present the Smithsonian medals to our honorees.

FR = Hello, during this evening we have listened to discussions about memory. However, memory is not static or inert. Museums actively influence, shape, and preserve memories for families, communities, and nations. We are honored to have a section of the Greensboro lunch counter in this national museum, this national place of memory. Because the sit-in movement helped change American life and/is therefore a national story. However, while memory can be national, it is also local. Both elements are important for the complete story to be told. Therefore, we want to acknowledge the opening of the new International Civil Rights Center and Museum, which was dedicated in Greensboro on Monday, February 1st. In some ways, the long-term struggle to establish that museum parallels the history of the modern Civil Rights Movement itself. We want to recognize the founders of that museum who are with us tonight, Chairman of the Guilford County Commission, Mr. Melvin Alston and North Carolina State Legislator, Mr. Earl F. Jones. We are celebrating tonight four men who took action because they did not want to live in the world that lay before them. In the early days of their adult lives, they wanted to make a difference. Mr. McCain called it a down payment on our manhood. While the Greensboro sit-ins were not the first in American

history, this was the first sit-in to garner so much national attention, especially on television. What is more important than not being the first is that it was not the last sit-in. Within weeks after Greensboro, there were sit-ins in nearly seventy cities around the nation. The action in Greensboro galvanized a new generation, an unprecedented cohort of young activists willing to challenge the injustices they saw around them. Tonight we are honoring four of the people who made history in their time and changed the America we have all inherited. It is an honor for me to present each one of you individually to the audience. In alphabetical order, Mr. Jibreel Khazan. Jibreel Khazan received his B. S. in Sociology from North Carolina A&T State University in 1963 and then attended law school at Howard University. He moved to Massachusetts, and in 1968, he became a member of the New England Islamic Center and took on his present name. He has dedicated his life to working for opportunities for poor and disabled people. In 1994, he received an honorary doctorate from North Carolina A&T. Now, Dr. Khazan works with the developmentally disabled people in the CETA program in New Bedford, Massachusetts. Please welcome to the stage, Dr. Jibreel Khazan. Franklin McCain was born in North Carolina and reared in Washington D. C. graduating from Eastern High School. So, those of you from Washington know that school. He received a B. S. in chemistry and biology and an M. S. in public administration from North Carolina A&T. In 1965, he joined the Celanese Corporation as a chemist and now heads its office in Shelby, North Carolina. He has worked on many boards in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg area, including that of NAACP legal defense fund. In 1993, he received the Nancy Susan Reynolds Award for leadership. He is currently Chairman of the North Carolina A&T's board of directors. Please welcome Mr. Franklin McCain. Mr. Joseph McNeil was seventeen when he began the Greensboro sit-ins. Mr. McNeil earned a degree in engineering physics from North Carolina A&T State University in 1963. He then spent six years in the U.S. Air Force and attained the rank of Captain. He is now a retired Major General in the Air Force Reserves. He has worked in computer sales for IBM, as a banker for Bankers Trust, and as a stockbroker for E.F. Hutten. In 1998, he received an honorary doctorate of laws from St. Johns University in Queens, New York. Major General Joseph McNeil please come up. Mr. David Richmond majored in business administration and accounting; after leaving A&T he became a counselor coordinator for CETA but his life was threatened and he moved away to Franklin. After

returning to Greensboro to care for his elderly parents, he worked for the Greensboro Health Care Center. In 1980, the Greensboro Chamber of Commerce awarded him the Levi Coffin Award for leadership in human rights, human relations and human resources development in Greensboro. Mr. Richmond died of cancer in December 1990. North Carolina A&T awarded him a posthumous honorary doctorate degree. His Smithsonian award is being accepted by his son, Mr. David Richmond, Jr. Please welcome him to the stage.

BG = Ladies and gentlemen, it is now my pleasure to introduce the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution and in his career as a professor and a Dean and provost and as President of Georgia Institute of Technology, Wayne Clough knows about the energy and enthusiasm and passions of students. And, now he has brought all of his experience here to serve as the twelfth Secretary of the Smithsonian, please welcome Wayne Clough.

WC = Thank you very much, thank you Brent for introducing me and for your leadership and for all the staff here at the great National Museum of American History which is a tremendous resource to this country. Thanks to all of those of you who come from Capitol Hill and for your support for this great institution and to Steve Channing for your wonderful movie and to Faith for this great evening and the exhibit that will accompany it. Thanks also to Congressman John Lewis who is a friend of mine. We go way back and I can say I had the honor of voting seven times for John Lewis for Congress. These gentlemen here today were young students at North Carolina A&T in 1960 in Greensboro, North Carolina and it just so happens that today I was talking to your Chancellor, Harold Martin who is a good friend, we go way back and talking about you and he sends his greetings to you. They took an important step. They basically said no to a Whites only policy at a lunch counter at Woolworth's. It may be hard for us today to appreciate the commitment that they made, but I grew up in these times in the South and I can vouch for the courage that that step took. These were turbulent times, politically and socially, and the power lay on the side of those opposed to change. At that time, I was fortunate to live in Atlanta, Georgia and go to Georgia Tech as a student and I'm proud to say that they chose to desegregate voluntarily and to enroll African-

American students peacefully. I am also proud to say that they today graduate the largest number of African-American students in the country in engineering and science. I say that because these gentlemen were among those great and courageous Americans who made it happen, because steps towards those actions that were taken had to be triggered by someone. They were hard earned than the actions of the actions of these gentlemen who chose to make a point and make a difference. They prided society to face polices and laws that were wrong and to take the necessary actions to correct them and they made their statement, as Congressman Lewis said, nonviolently in a society where violence lurked very close to the surface. Here is our commitment. What the Smithsonian will do now and long into the future is to tell their story. We will keep it alive among the others who made the sacrifice and those who gave their lives and made this country a better place. In a world where history is too little appreciated, we take on the responsibility to say that this story is what made us as a people. This is a sacrifice that made us better. As historian David McCullough said in November of 2008 when this museum was reopened, “never has an understanding of our story as a people of who we are and how we came to be the way we are and what we stand for been of such importance as today.” His remarks resonate in this room tonight. The Smithsonian understands the responsibility of our role in reminding our people of our history and the stories that go with it. We have a new plan for the Smithsonian and one of the four grand challenges is to understand the American experience and speak to what it is to be an American. So what this museum, as well as the National Museum of the American Indian, the National Portrait Gallery, our Latino Center, the Asian Pacific American Program and our new National Museum of African-American History and Culture . We will tell these stories. The generations that paid the price so that we could live a better life. So to these heroes and to their families we say thank you. James Smithson, an English scientist, even though he never set foot into this country, must have seen something in the principles of the United States and we know he did. He admired Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson and he admired our constitution and what it said. He left his entire estate to this country without ever coming here. He was an unusual person. He decided on his own to make a difference, like these gentlemen did when they were young men and so there is a connection between the folks who are here tonight and James Smithson. It is only befitting then that we award them the James

Smithson bicentennial medal as heroes of our country. The inscription on the medals speak to these men as inspiring role models for young Americans nationwide and an example of the power of the individual to make a nation a better place. And, the inscription speaks of each man demonstration for justice, equality, and lifelong commitment to education, tolerance, and understanding. So please join me in congratulating them once again and then I want to give them their individual medals. Let me make the awards then, Major General Joseph McNeil; Franklin McCain; Jibreel Khazan; and David Richmond, Jr. on behalf of his father.

BG = Thank you Secretary Clough for being with us this evening. I would like to now to invite our honorees to say a brief word here at this historic occasion. I did not think that they would defer to each other.

FM = Good evening, to Mr. Secretary and Congressman Lewis and my personal U. S. Senator, Kay Hagan. I am humbled and honored to be here this afternoon. This is the fiftieth anniversary, I was reminded of that all last week, and this week and I am going to have to change my lie about my age. This is somewhat of a homecoming for me and I am certainly grateful for it. Homecoming in a sense that as a growing boy I was offered the option at a time in my life to either go to Sunday school or come to the Smithsonian. I don't know much about the Old Testament but I know a hell of a lot about the Smithsonian. Now I accept this award on behalf of the masses, the nameless, the faceless, and the forgotten. The true heroes and I am at sort of a crossroads and a position that William Shakespeare probably said it best, some people are born great, and some people achieve greatness, while greatness is bestowed upon others. There is no question in my mind where I alone with my colleagues fall. We fall in the class of the latter. On behalf of many, I thank you. May we continue to honor and deserve your trust and confidence, thank you.

JK= Grace and peace be unto you. To the Chairman and President of the historical Smithsonian Institute of American History, supporters, friends, officers, our distinguished guests, the prince of new vows and peace, Congressman John Lewis who walked many times with us and has never let us down. We greet you in peace and to my

distinguished brothers, Dr. Franklin McCain, Dr. Joseph McNeil, and Mr. David Richmond who is presenting for his father, Dr. David Richmond. We thank our parents and you for the guidance for which we have received as children of the men and women in World War II. I can only say the lives of great men and women remind us all that we can make our lives sublime and departing leave behind us footprints on the sands of time. We thank our life giver. We thank our ancestors. We thank our teachers and our counselors that we have not failed them for they gave us the faith of our fathers and mothers living still in spite of dungeon, fire, and sword. Oh, how our hearts be high with joy whenever we hear those most famous words. A New Commandment, we give unto you that we love and have respect one for another. By this all people know that you are my disciples said Lord Jesus or _____. And, so we are here today to tell you bring our children to this alter of love and this great commandment. For that is what our world needs now is love and respect one for another. All kinds of sentient beings this is what we pray and as you leave here today. We pray that our life giver blesses you in the spirit of nonviolence, love and peace, with Dr. King and Mahatma Gandhi, and Mrs. Rosa Parks, and Ralph Abernathy and Mrs. Coretta Scott King and our families and friends given to us and Lord Jesus Christ peace be upon him, restored upon us, will follow us all the days of our lives and we shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever, amen. Bless you all.

MN = Thank you. Thanks to Mr. Secretary and thanks to other members of the Smithsonian who made tonight's event possible. Thanks on behalf of the four sit-iners and our families. When I reflect on the celebration that we are doing now, the fiftieth anniversary, a couple of thoughts come to mind. In the first thought, were the principals that we were fortunate enough to pick up during the sit-ins. I am thinking two things and the first principal that I learned to recognize was the one that Congressman Lewis talked about so eloquently; about the power of nonviolence and how it could be used so successfully to bring about change. I was blessed to learn nonviolence early in life and it is something that will be with me forever. The second principal the Civil Rights Movement taught me was the importance of service before self; the act of being servants to others and to giving. When I think back to all those people who participated in the Civil Rights Movement, they didn't ask, "What is in this

for me?” What was in it for them and me involving some time in jail. We went into harms way. There were a lot of people who were hurt physically. There were people who lost their lives and so I was blessed by good teachers and others to learn the importance of service before self. The last important thing that I think about from the Civil Rights Movement was I was fortunate to learn to know all the people, all the heroes, all the (she)roes. These guys are heroes from my eyes because they stood up when it mattered to stand up for something. I see Congressman Lewis and I feel the same way. When it was not fashionable, he did not ask, “What is in it for me?” I can tell he probably still carries the wounds and the scars from some of the attacks that we have seen him endure. I think of the people like all those folks who were Freedom Riders: James Farmer who lost an eye, the Viola Liuzzo, the Chaney, Goodman, Schwerner’s. To all the sung heroes and all the thousands of unsung heroes, we thank you.

DRJ = Thank you, thank you on behalf of my family. To the Smithsonian staff, distinguished guests, Congressman Lewis, to the champions of justice, I humbly accept this award for my father. To his three friends for life, thank you for giving me the opportunity to stand beside you to make me feel that I was a part of this moment. You have served as a role model to me. You have brought memories of my father to me and for that, I thank you. I had the opportunity today to see the exhibit for the first time. It was overwhelming. The presentation that was done today; the gentlemen that spoke of Franklin McCain’s words were so authentic that when I turned my head, I had to look and see. I thought, I thought he was standing here. Thank you, Smithsonian staff for your vision, your courage to bring these chairs here. When I look at those chairs it might mark a moment in time in the past, but I see those chairs as the future where each race is sitting at that table conversing, solving world problems, and eating good food. Thank you each and every one for coming here tonight and honoring my father. Dad, this is for you.

BG = Thanks to all of our honorees and please stay on the stage for one more minute. The words of our honorees remind me to remind you to let you know, that tomorrow in this auditorium we will welcome three hundred young students for a team town hall. Our honorees will be here to talk about their experience and answer their questions.

The story will be told to the next generations that they should know what has happened before, why history is such a resource for understanding our own times and our own lives. Following our final presentation there will be a reception up on the second floor by the Greensboro Woolworth's lunch counter and all will be served together. We will now close the program and I would like to invite our speakers and our families of the honorees to join me on stage. We will be joined by the cast of our Sing For Freedom Program which was mentioned by David Richmond, Jr. We will all ask you to rise and first of all again applaud and recognize our honorees and then join our singing for Freedom Cast in the final program.

(Singing- "We Shall Overcome")

BG = Thank you ladies and gentlemen, please join us on the second floor for our reception.