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## Celebrating Accomplishments in Equality

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# REFLECTION

## CELEBRATING ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN EQUALITY

SHARON BRECKENRIDGE THOMAS†

This year we celebrate the 40th anniversary of the passage of the Civil Rights Act and the 50th anniversary of the Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*. In this, and subsequent issues, we will celebrate the meaning of these anniversaries. While we are acutely mindful to remember our past, with great anticipation we embrace our future.

We understand that we are the benefactors of those who sacrificed life and liberty so that we could freely engage in the civic, economic, and social rights guaranteed the citizenry of this country. Therefore, in our celebration, we posture ourselves to give critical thought and serious discourse to the accomplishments resulting from the sacrifices of past generations.

Indeed, we have the audacity to celebrate! We rejoice in the availability of public and private education, the defeat of the segregationist, and the death of 'Jim Crow' laws. In addition, we are careful to commemorate the implementation of laws designed to eradicate age, disability, employment, and housing discrimination, to name a few.

And while we are celebrating, it is important to remember the accomplishments of those who leave us a blueprint for success. We hold in highest regard inspirational persons such as Halle Berry, Richard Carmona, Elaine L. Chao, Cesar Chavez, Connie Chung, Congressman Charlie Gonzalez, Dr. David Ho, Texas Supreme Court Justice Wallace Jefferson, George Lopez, Senator Barack Obama, Edward James Olmos, Colin Powell, Irma Rangel, Condoleeza Rice, David Robinson, Russell

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Simmons, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, Vera Wang, Denzel Washington and Oprah Winfrey. Their successes will be used as foundations for our generation to build upon. We likewise must leave a legacy and blueprint for success to the coming generations.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. once declared: "I have a dream." Our generation now declares: "We are the dream manifested." Join us in this celebration.