Three days of MLK events still on

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Organizers expect to go ahead this weekend and Monday with most of the community events held each year to celebrate the Martin Luther King Jr. Day national holiday.

University of Georgia officials announced early Wednesday that the annual Freedom Breakfast scheduled Friday morning would be rescheduled because of lingering snow and ice from the winter storm Sunday and Monday.

They also called off today’s reception with Mary Frances Early, the first black person to graduate from UGA, and plan to reschedule it as well. Early was to be the speaker at the Freedom Breakfast.

But events scheduled for Saturday, Sunday and Monday are still on, including Saturday night’s 32nd annual MLK Awards Banquet and a community celebration planned Sunday afternoon at the Lyndon House.

Monday’s MLK Day of Service, when hundreds of volunteers give a few hours of their time in service to the community, also probably will go ahead as planned, said coordinator Dawn Aiello.

A steering committee for Monday’s service events will huddle again this morning, however, and could decide to alter the schedule.

Planners don’t expect bad weather, but they are uncertain if they’ll be able to get and distribute tools to more than a dozen work sites throughout the community, Aiello said.

Weather closings this week have hampered efforts to recruit volunteers on campus for the Day of Service, said Rick Gray of Service Ambassadors at UGA.

Classes were supposed to begin this week, but UGA closed Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday after snow and ice left roads impassable or dangerous.
Other weekend events also will go forward.

The Rev. Abraham Mosley, longtime Athens educator Johnnie Lay Burks and Athens businessman Richard Boone will receive community service awards at Saturday night’s MLK Awards Banquet, said Charlie Maddox of the Athens Area Human Relations Council, which sponsors the banquet.

Students receiving the council’s annual college scholarships also will be recognized, Maddox said.

On Sunday, the Lyndon House Arts Center will hold a community celebration beginning with a hands-on family activity at 2 p.m., and musicians and other performers showcasing their talents in honor of King from 3-5 p.m., said Lyndon House Director Nancy Lukasiewicz.

On Monday, unless organizers change the schedule, volunteers will gather at the Morton Theatre, 195 W. Washington St., for a ceremonal breakfast, then head out to dozens of sites for the Day of Service.

Also on Monday, an ecumenical service will be held at noon at Chestnut Grove Baptist Church on Epps Bridge Parkway.

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