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WASHINGTON (TEWire) – After months of conflict, which Elder Bernice A. King described last year as suffocating the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, she has selected to step down from the presidency of the organization before ever really taking the helm.

“After numerous attempts to connect with the official Board leaders on how to move forward under my leadership, unfortunately, our visions did not align. Therefore, after praying mightily and seeking wise counsel, I have decided not to assume the presidency of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference,” King said in a statement released last week.

Then, in an interview with the Trice Edney News Wire, she explained that she had made her decision after being offered a contract that appeared to be irreconcilably board-driven when she had – at the board’s request three months ago – submitted her vision of a more affable style of leadership between board and chief executive.

In a nutshell, King was elected as president and CEO in October 2009, but did not assume the office during legal turmoil surrounding the 53-year-old organization co-founded by her father, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Then, following a September 2010 court ruling, which determined SCLC’s legitimate Board of Directors, King reached out to the court-recognized board leadership regarding her transition but there was no agreement on how to move forward.

“When there was no consideration for talking about it, discussing a win-win situation,” she said in the interview, “I felt it was in my best interest as well as in the best interest of the organization if I declined the position and allowed them to move in the direction that they choose to move in.”

But, as the youngest King daughter, renown for her oratorical skills, she appears to be moving ahead with clarity of vision and purpose. She outlined three key roles that she will take on in coming years in her mission to continue her family’s legacy of progress for people of color.

She announced that she is shifting her focus to further grow the legacy of her mother, Mrs. Coretta Scott King, who maintained a vision for women leadership development through the Coretta Scott King Young Women’s Leadership Academy in Atlanta.

She spoke excitedly of how she just kicked off 100 days of non-violence on the day after the King Birthday Holiday “and will culminate on my mother’s birthday on April 27.”

Amidst record youth violence and bullying, she said she anticipates carrying the message of non-violence further into other Atlanta schools, “particularly those named after my father” and then to other parts of the nation as well.

Her goal, she says, is to “have an army of young people who are committed to embracing non-violence.”

King also spoke guardedly about a “ministry initiative” that she will be announcing later this year. But, she declined to expound.

Finally, King announced that she has formed a partnership with Rev. Samuel Rodriguez, president of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference, which was inspired by the SCLC.

“We’ll be dealing with the Black-Brown divide, addressing issues of education and health disparities” with 6-9th graders, she said.

Leaving behind the SCLC controversy, King indicates that she carries no bitterness or ill will: “I will continue to pray for SCLC’s growth and resurrection and wish the organization great success in its mission.”