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cover photo/design by Gerod Harder

A Beacon of Ingenuity

By Daria Swisher

Over 100 local innovators descended on Ariel Arena at MVNU last month to discuss the launching of Knox Labs, Inc., a makerspace for Knox County.

Knox Labs partnered with Kenyon College and MVNU to host the Appreciative Summit Inquiry to figure out what the community wants from the makerspace.

The makerspace will be located at MVNU's new downtown engineering building on South Main Street and will serve as a place for the community to come together and exchange ideas about technology and engineering.

Knox Labs' overall mission is to "provide an innovative collaborative environment that inspires community members to discover, develop and share their potential as makers."

Leaders say they want to reach people with common interests in computers, machining, technology, woodworking, electronics and innovation and give them access to a space where they can "meet, socialize, collaborate and build

projects."

They also hope to stimulate economic development throughout Knox County and engage the community through workshops, presentations and social activities for the public.

Knox Labs, founded by Mark Furman in 2015, won a federal grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to hire consultants from MIT-affiliated Fab Foundation to help make the makerspace a reality.

Jeff Harris, the president of the Knox County Area Development Foundation, introduced and helped lead the program.

"This is a planning summit to say what do we want the makerspace to do?" Harris said. "I think over time we'll say 'Hey, we have a makerspace. Come see all the cool things we can do.'"

Harris was surprised at the high turnout for the event and noticed how engaged attendees were

throughout the day. The summit drew representatives from the City of Mount Vernon, Knox Community hospital, Habitat for Humanity, the local schools and more.

"Everybody is here that you would want, who could make an impact to get this thing up off the ground," Harris said in a

KnoxPages.com article following the event. "To me, this is a total success today."

The keynote address was delivered by Dr. Alex Bandar, CEO of Idea Foundry, a successful makerspace in Columbus.

The summit included demonstrations of 3D printers and a CNC milling machine, which cuts or carves 2D and 3D images from a computer for prototyping.

Leaders hope to open the makerspace in August this year. Knox Labs is currently operating out of a 2,000-foot office at 1 Public Square in downtown Mount Vernon.



With new faculty & new facilities, MVNU Engineering is

Moving Forward

By Eddie Dilts

MVNU's engineering program is about to enter a new phase.

While the first engineering majors are set to graduate in May, the University is continuing efforts to build the program.

Most obvious are the program's upcoming move to downtown, scheduled for fall, and the addition of two new faculty members this year.

The program will be housed in the former Farley and Moore Antiques building on South Main Street. The building was donated last spring by Ariel Corporation.

Demolition work in the building was to begin this month, and the building is set to be done in August of 2018. The new location will provide more than 10,000 square feet of shop, lab and classroom space.

The building will also house Knox Labs, a community makerspace which is expected to encourage collaboration between MVNU students and the community.

MVNU's engineering program began in the fall of 2014. The program offers a degree in general engineering with concentrations in mechanical and electrical engineering.

University officials said enrollment in the engineering program is at about 55 students.

The program currently operates in limited space in the Clarence and Jennie Moore Center.

The moving process will bring its fair share of challenges, according to Engineering Department Chair Dr. David Che.

"One of the main obstacles is shuttling students between the main campus and downtown campus," Che said. "It's presented some challenges, but we are working on it."

Meanwhile, as the University continues recruitment efforts for the engineering major, the department's staff is growing, too. Professors Dr. Jose Oommen and Dr. Fei Xie joined the engineering team this fall.

Dr. Oommen brings a variety of experiences with him to MVNU, including stints as an instructor and as head of the Electronics and Communication Department in various engineering colleges in India.

Before coming to MVNU, Dr. Oommen also spent time as an electronics engineer in Kuwait, a field and research engineer at an oil and gas company in Canada, and a graduate and teaching assistant in the Electrical and Computer Science Department at the University of Alabama.

Oommen is excited to be on staff at MVNU. "I believe God has a purpose for me and

teaching in a Christian university like MVNU where I can be a good example," Oommen said. "I truly believe that I am called to cultivate Christ-likeness in my students."

By demonstrating love, understanding and integrity, "I sincerely believe that I can produce a generation of kids who will be a beacon of light in this dark evil world."

Dr. Fei Xie brings biomedical engineering experience that covers mechanical, electrical, computer science and medicine. Biomedical engineering is an interdisciplinary field and one of the fastest-growing fields in the U.S., he said.

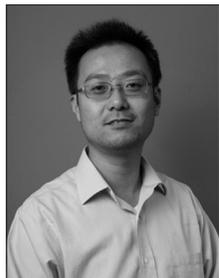
Xie was a research assistant in the Frank Reidy Research Bioelectric Center at Old Dominion University in Virginia while doing his doctoral research. After earning his degree, he stayed at Old Dominion for another semester as an adjunct faculty teaching fundamental courses that he will also teach here at MVNU this semester.

MVNU's small, friendly atmosphere attracted Xie to the campus. He has also found it rewarding to get in on the early stages of a new program with students who are "showing potential," he said.

MVNU also provides resources to help him carry on his research, Xie said.



Dr. Jose Oommen



Dr. Fei Xie

“Brewing Hope”

By Danielle Zoellner

Happy Bean coffee shop in downtown Mount Vernon changed hands in November and is now owned by John and Jill Ballenger.

Both Ballengers already have strong past and current connections with the students of MVNU. Jill is a former Resident Director for Rosewood and Spruce, and John is an English professor on campus.



Photo by Danielle Zoellner
Jill Ballenger is the new owner/manager of Happy Bean Coffee Shop.

The new owners have incorporated a few new accents to Happy Bean since the transfer, including a new menu board, more tea options and a baked goods display case with new gluten-free options and other baked goods customers can pair with their drinks.

Although the Ballengers have made some additions and adjustments in the two months as owners, they intend to continue the shop's tradition of high-quality coffee.

Happy Bean had been run and owned by Cassie and Nate Johnson since its

opening in February 2016.

“They really care about the craft of the coffee business instead of just providing coffee as a second thought,” Jill Ballenger said. “We love the fact that it is the main business and we intend to keep it at the level it is and then raise the level as coffee evolves as an art form.”

Ballenger said Happy Bean will continue to be a place that “brews hope” for the community. She said she wants to continue to instill an exceptional customer service mindset in the Happy Bean staff.

“I hope we can be a little bit of brightness and happiness in customers’ day, more than just providing them with caffeine,” Ballenger said. “I want it to be more than that, I want it to be the mission of each person who works there.”

The Ballengers also want Happy Bean to continue to serve as a venue that hosts events in the community.

The Johnsons began to discuss selling the business in early September of last year. Cassie Johnson said Jill Ballenger reached out the week after Labor Day for help in starting her own business and they have been talking since.

The change in ownership of Happy Bean became part of their conversations in mid-October. They have been working through the required legal documents ever since.

Happy Bean officially closed Friday, Nov. 17, and the ownership transferred to the Ballengers.

Johnson continued to manage the shop and trained Jill Ballenger in the process until the end of the year. Since then, Ballenger has been managing her new business.



Photo by Danielle Zoellner
Happy Bean Coffee Shop offers a new menu, including a variety of baked goods.

Lunch downtown—Anybody have time for that?

By Danielle Zoellner

Students who travel to the downtown locations for classes want to have a hot lunch.

Administrators know it and want to give them that option, but the obstacle they face is time.

“Do students really have time to sit and eat?” Director of Business Services Steven Jenkins asked.

Many MVNU students with classes in Hunter Hall or Buchwald Center take advantage of the current cold sack lunch if they are downtown mid-day. The cafeteria offers cold salads or subs with chips, vegetables and snacks such as granola bars and trail mix in the sack lunch option.

All art, graphic design and nursing students take their major classes downtown.

Engineering students will also move downtown beginning next school year.

Administration has been working to incorporate a hot lunch for those students, but they have run into complications.

“We will provide lunches somehow,” said Steven Jenkins, Director of Business Services. But, whether they will be hot or continue to be the cold option, “we just don’t know.”

Jenkins said he knows disruptive eating in class is not conducive to learning. But at the same time, he doesn’t want students sitting in class hungry.

The other challenge Jenkins and the cafeteria staff face is staying compliant with health regulations.

Jenkins said they have considered the option of hot soup. However, they will need a kettle to keep it at the proper temperature, which can be expensive. There is also the issue of employing a worker.

“It’s tough to keep food hot. It can’t be left unattended,” Jenkins said.

Jenkins said they hope to have a plan in place by Fall of 2018. Once the decision is made, “it won’t take long,” Jenkins said.

Bowling just one new sport set for MVNU

Bowling and lacrosse are in. Wrestling is out.

Football? To be determined.

University officials are moving past the planning stages and taking concrete steps to expand the scope of Cougar athletics.

The goal is to add new programs in hopes of increasing enrollment by offering additional opportunities to prospective students.

Varsity tennis began as a club sport in 2016-17, then moved to varsity status this year. Club lacrosse is scheduled to begin in the fall, and also transition to a varsity sport after the first season. Club bowling also will begin in the fall, along with competitive cheerleading.

University officials have said more programs could be added in the next four years.

Meanwhile, football is still being considered. A football feasibility committee has been meeting all year to research and discuss the pros and cons of adding a football program at MVNU.

Along with financial impact, much of the discussion has focused on the possible negative culture that could accompany football.

So far, “the house is divided,” MVNU President Dr. Henry Spaulding said.



Photo by Becca Maddux

Bowling will begin as a club sport at MVNU in the fall. Team members will practice at Colonial City Lanes in Mount Vernon.

ROLLING OUT A NEW SPORT

By James Hubbard

MVNU Athletic Department announced the addition of bowling as a club sport for the 2018-19 school year.

Bowling is coming to MVNU along with competitive cheerleading and lacrosse next fall. With the expansion of the athletic department, University officials are hoping to bring in new students and recruits.

Bowling is growing as a club sport in high schools.

“There are a good amount of bowlers at the high school level who want to continue, but can’t because there aren’t many options” for them at the university level, Hannah Miller, coordinator of club and JV sports, said.

MVNU will sponsor teams for both men and women. The University is currently advertising for a coach to lead the program.

While the NAIA does recognize bowling as a varsity

sport, MVNU’s bowling program is expected to remain a club sport.

The addition of bowling was an easy decision to come by for University officials.

Typically, bowlers possess their own equipment instead of relying on the University to supply it, thus making it fairly inexpensive to operate.

The team will practice and compete at Colonial City Lanes on Mount Vernon Avenue through a contract set up with the school.

The competitions will be similar in style to that of cross country, where the athletes will compete individually, then the team score is added at the end.

The inaugural team will be competing with schools from Ohio and Indiana.

MVNU President Dr. Henry Spaulding said bowling will be something else for MVNU’s students “to do and feel a part of.”

MVNU freshman wants spot on roster

By Maddie Cogan

MVNU didn't have to go far to find the first prospect for its new bowling club.

Freshman Desmond Rapp heard the announcement about the University's newest sport and contacted the athletic department to find out how to get on the team.

Rapp, a pastoral ministry major from Wauseon, Ohio, has been bowling since his freshman year of high school.

What started as a family tradition, bowling has taken on a new meaning for Rapp.

The bowling alley "is the place I can go and be myself," Rapp said. "It is relaxing and helps when I am stressed."

Rapp learned about the sport of bowling from his uncles.

He then bowled competitively for his high school all four years. His best score is a 265.

Over the years, he has learned that bowling is more than rolling the ball down the lane.

"Bowling is a mental game," he said.

Before coming to MVNU, Rapp was able to bowl more because it was free through the high school, but now he just bowls when he has the money.

With practices and matches four times a week, "I bowled a lot during high school," he said. And, "if I wasn't bowling for the team, I was bowling for fun or for more practice."

By becoming part of the club team at MVNU, Rapp said he will be able to bowl more frequently and continue competing in an activity he's passionate about.

"I can't wait to be a part of this team," Rapp said. "I have been waiting for this for a long time."



Photo by Becca Maddux

Freshman Desmond Rapp releases the bowling ball at Colonial Lanes in Mount Vernon.

Ancient Egypt to Modern Time: The Evolution of Bowling

By Maddie Cogan

The popularity of bowling has risen and fallen throughout the years.

The oldest documentation of bowling dates back to 3200 B.C. in Egypt, where players used stones to knock down objects at the end of the lane.

There are also traces in England of Henry VIII using cannonballs to

bowl with. Under his reign, the sport became so popular that he banned it from the lower and middle classes because he said people were bowling instead of working.

The sport was brought to America by a Dutch colonist in the 1600s.

Originally the game began with only nine pins. In 1841, lawmakers outlawed the nine-pin game due to "the illegal level of gambling that was becoming associated with the game." With the outlaw of the game, 10-pin bowling was created as an alternate.

With the rise of popularity in the United States, bowling became an organized sport in 1875 with the creation of the National Bowling Association. The association set rules and regulations such as the length of the lane (60 ft) and the size of the bowling bowl.

Bowling balls and pins were typically made of wood and the game was played on outdoor lawns. Cities such

as New York City had designated parks for bowling. Bowling Green Park in New York City was once a venue for lawn bowling. "Pin boys" often reset the pins after each ball was rolled. In 1936 AMF Bowling released the first automatic pinsetter, which replaced pin boys.

Indoor bowling alleys gained popularity in the 1950s. They were first used in the western portion of America, then eventually moved eastward. Just like today's bowling alleys, there were other entertainment options to keep guests occupied such as billiards, snack stands and play areas for children.

A two-lane bowling alley was built in the West Wing of the White House in 1947, then moved to the Old Executive Office Building in 1955. A one-lane alley was added by Richard Nixon in 1969.

Bowling participating across America peaked in the 1960s. After the "golden age" of bowling, fewer bowling alleys were built. The "complex scoring system" and a decline in interest played a part in the downturn of the sport.

Since the early 21st century, bowling's popularity has been on a decline with bowling alleys dropping 26 percent from 1998 to 2013.

However, some industry leaders are hoping to see a resurgence in the coming years as a younger, white-collar crowd has begun showing interest in some of the newer upscale bowling sites that combine bars, dancing, dining and other social and recreational activities.

Sources: *The Ultimate and Complete History of Bowling*, *The White House Museum*, *USA Today*.



Photo by Becca Maddux



MVNU cheerleaders ignite the crowd at the basketball game vs. Bethel. The cheerleaders entertain fans with cheers, dances, stunts and routines at men's home basketball games in Ariel Arena. On this year's cheer roster are Sage Baker, Abou Diomande, Danielle Edmister, Lauren Klopfenstein, Madison McCauley, Katherine McConnell, Michael Perry, Corah Pope, Ana Rivera, Danielle Rose, Mikayla Severance, Sandra Spearman, Aliya Stine, Andrew Taylor and Jenae Tracht. The team is coached by Jill Macklin.

Photo by Becca Maddux

Competitive Cheerleading More Focused & More Determined

By Matt Harden

Cheerleading at Mount Vernon Nazarene University will become a competitive sport in the 2018-2019 season.

Like the other sports MVNU has to offer, the co-ed team will compete against other schools in the Crossroads League. So far, only St. Francis and Indiana Wesleyan have competitive cheerleading teams.

Cheerleading coach Jill Macklin said it will be a "positive thing" for the school. Macklin cheered at MVNU in college before graduating in 1990. She came back to coach three years later.

Macklin has judged competitive cheerleading for over 30 years. She has taught around the world, including Malaysia.

Competitive cheerleading is a sport where teams compete against each other with routines and cheers. The routines are judged on a variety of different categories including gymnastics, cohesiveness, facial expressions and cheers.

"The MVNU cheerleaders will get gym credit and they will get scholarships," Macklin said.

Sophomore cheerleader Danielle Rose was involved in competitive cheerleading in high school. Rose said competitive cheerleading will be a "good thing for MVNU."

"It will be more widely recognized," Rose said.

Rose thinks competitive cheerleading is important because it increases commitment and the amount of "dedication the team makes to each other."

Perfecting a routine that has been practiced time and time again is a feeling that Rose enjoys about the sport.

Fellow sophomore and cheerleader Sarah Miller said it will be a positive addition to the MVNU sports programs.

"It will be taken more seriously," Miller said.

Miller's favorite aspect of competitive cheerleading is the "competitive drive and the bond between teammates."

The addition of competitive cheerleading will bring a new aspect to the cheerleading program, including increased intensity and energy, Miller said.

As a result, Miller thinks the team will be "more focused and more determined."

There is excitement about the new sport among the cheerleaders.

"Introducing competitive cheerleading will bring talented cheerleaders to MVNU and will give us the opportunity to make a name for ourselves in a new athletic environment," Miller said.

The current MVNU cheerleading team travelled to an event at the University of Saint Francis last weekend to get a better understanding on the way collegiate competitive cheerleading works. St.

Francis finished in fifth place in the first NAIA cheerleading championship last year.

Tryouts for the MVNU team will take place in the spring.

Those who are not selected for the competitive team will be put on the regular cheerleading team that will cheer at home games.

The competitive team will participate in competitions, while still cheering with the regular team.

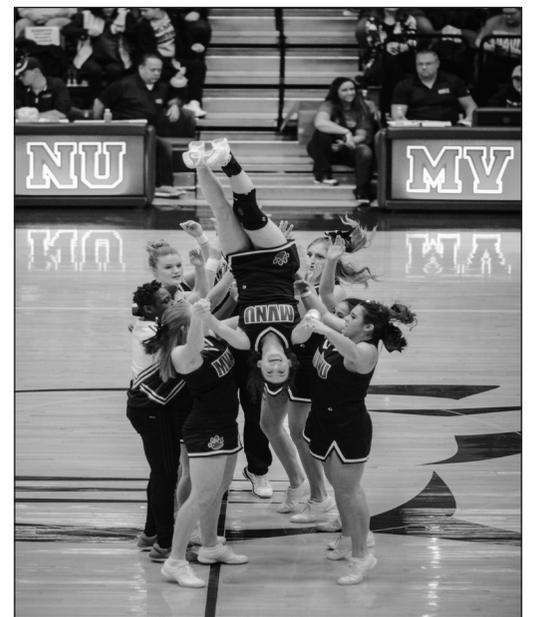


Photo by Becca Maddux
Danielle Rose flips down from a pyramid during a timeout.

A Look into Lacrosse

MVNU's inaugural team begins in the fall

By James Hubbard

Lacrosse will be added as a club sport at MVNU in the 2018-19 school year.

According to Athletic Director Aaron Quinn, lacrosse is the fastest growing high school sport.

Ultimately, the addition of the lacrosse program is to bring in new recruits and help boost enrollment on campus.

MVNU will have an upper hand over other universities who do not offer lacrosse.

"There aren't a lot of options for high school athletes to go and continue their career at a collegiate level," Quinn said. "By adding lacrosse at MVNU, that could give them [recruits] another reason to come here to play and learn."

After one year as a club sport, the team will become a varsity sport during the 2019-20 school year.

The first year will be a "developmental year" for the program.

Currently, there is only one other men's lacrosse team in the Crossroads League.

Due to the scarcity of teams, MVNU will play other schools outside of the Crossroads League across Ohio and Indiana.

During the beginning of the program, the team will share space with the soccer team. The University is working with architects on a plan to get lights at the field which would allow more practice time for both soccer and lacrosse.



Photo courtesy of Henning Schlotmann/
Wikimedia Commons

Farr named MVNU lacrosse coach

By Maddie Cogan

Ryan Farr, a former football wide receiver turned lacrosse player, has been chosen to lead MVNU's new lacrosse program.

Farr is no stranger to getting lacrosse teams off the ground.

"I have become very accustomed to starting lacrosse programs," Farr said. "It is stressful, but it is fun and rewarding."

Prior to coming to MVNU, Farr started a boys lacrosse program at Canfield High School and a girls lacrosse program at Louisville High School, both of which were extremely successful.



Ryan Farr



Photo courtesy of Louisville High School
Coach Ryan Farr celebrates with his team at Louisville High School. Farr led the Leopards to a 10-2 record in their first year of competition.

Eventually, Farr was able to learn the sport and play with confidence within a year.

Since college, Farr has six years of coaching varsity and two years of coaching youth lacrosse under his belt.

Farr said he is excited to bring his talents to his new opportunity at MVNU.

He said he is looking forward to joining the MVNU community "to integrate what I do as a pastor and a coach."

Farr graduated with a degree in youth and sports ministry from Malone University. He is currently working on a Master of Arts in Christian ministries from Liberty University.

When Farr comes to MVNU, he will also be leaving his position as the Sports and Recreation Pastor at First Friends Church in Canton, Ohio, where he directs sports, art, drama and fitness ministries for youth as well as leading adult discipleship classes.

He is also an author who enjoys writing both fiction (mainly sci fi) and non-fiction (ministry and devotional materials).

Learning the basics of lacrosse

Don't know much about lacrosse?

Think of it as part hockey, part football and part soccer.

Sports historians believe lacrosse may be the oldest game in North America, originating with the Native Americans.

Players use the netted head of their lacrosse sticks to catch, pass, carry and shoot the ball into a goal.

Several different versions of the game exist.

The one coming to MVNU is men's field lacrosse, meaning it will be played outdoors.

The indoor game, as well as the women's sport and co-ed intercrosse have different rules and equipment.

Men's field lacrosse is played with 10 players: three attackers, three midfielders, three defenders and a goalie. The field is 110 by 60 yards, with goals 80 yards apart. The goals are 6 feet square.

Games are played in four 15-minute quarters.

An “Unbreakable Spirit”

By Matt Harden

The MVNU men's basketball team relied on grit and hard work to put together a 17-13 season.

The Cougars entered the season with a young team and only one senior.

According to Head Coach Jared Ronai, the season “went well.”

“Our guys grew together and I am excited to continue to watch them grow,” Ronai said.

The Cougars had their share of adversity to overcome this season, but they met that adversity head on, something Coach Ronai thinks has made the team stronger.

“Throughout a college basketball season, there are going to be many adversities a team faces on and off the floor,” Ronai said. “Through all of them, this team continued to grow together and face any difficulty with a collective unbreakable spirit.”

With such a young team, Ronai has been pleased with how his players have performed.

“The team has had several players contribute in their first college basketball season,” Coach Ronai said. “They are extremely resilient and continue to improve each and every day.”

One standout was freshman guard Jevon Knox, who led the team in scoring with 14.2 points per game. Knox also had 83 assists for the Cougars. Other top scorers were junior Brett

Vipperman (12.9 points and a team-high 6.1 rebounds per game); senior Joey Schmitz (11.1 points and 4.8 rebounds per game); sophomore Jacob Paul (9.9 points per game and a team-high 99 assists); and junior Jeremiah Roberts (9.9 points and 4.6 rebounds per game).

Beginning with a preseason retreat and up through the final game of the regular season over the weekend, the team has built strong connections that inspired them to work hard and play as a team, Ronai said.

“It gave the team a chance to build authentic relationships that have a chance to last a lifetime and our guys have really developed great bonds this season on and off the floor,” Ronai said.

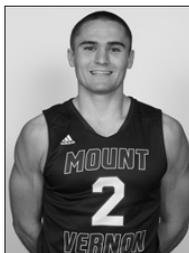
The Cougars finished the season tied for fifth place in the Crossroads League. They play on the road against No. 3 seed Bethel on Wednesday.



Photo by Gerod Harder
Junior Jordi Mas scores a layup against Marian.



Photo by Gerod Harder
Junior Jeremiah Roberts drives to the basket in a game against Huntington.



Joey Schmitz

“A True Leader”

By Matt Harden

Members of the MVNU Cougars men's basketball team honored their lone senior last week.

Coach Jared Ronai praised senior guard Joey Schmitz for being a “true leader for the team both off and on the court.”

In his four years at MVNU, Schmitz has proven himself in all areas of the game.

This year, he's averaging 11.1 points per game, and is the team's second-leading rebounder with 4.8 per game. He is also known as a strong ball handler and a powerful 3-point shooter.

Schmitz said he will “really miss” having the opportunity to play with the team.

“All of the guys on the team, and all of the memories I've made, I'll always remember,” Schmitz said.

“The guys I've played with and the opportunity to meet new people has really stood out to me the most,” he said.

Schmitz said he's thankful for the chance to continue playing his sport throughout college.

“It's meant a lot being able to play basketball throughout my college career at MVNU,” Schmitz said. “It's been awesome, it's been great for me and it's had a positive influence on me.”

Schmitz has been a positive influence on his teammates as well.

Junior Brett Vipperman said Schmitz has been a good role model.

“He's a hard worker. He's always trying to help build relationships and he's helped me be more mature,” Vipperman said.



Photo by Gerod Harder

Senior Joey Schmitz takes the floor with energy at the start of the Senior Night game against Indiana Wesleyan University.

“Amazing” leaders

Basketball seniors balance athletics, academics and faith



Natalie Carpenter



Sierra Basista



Sophie Kinnard

By Matt Harden

The Lady Cougars will be graduating three seniors — Natalie Carpenter, Sierra Basista and Sophie Kinnard — at the end of the season.

Head Coach Amanda Short said she has been impressed with the seniors' performance on the court this season.

“They’ve been through a lot of change, but their leadership is amazing,” Coach Short said.

Senior Natalie Carpenter from Johnstown, Ohio, has been the “leader of the team,” Short said. Carpenter led the team in offense, and scored her 1,000th career point for MVNU earlier this season. Carpenter is thankful for the opportunity to play basketball throughout college.

“It has meant a lot playing basketball at MVNU,” Carpenter said. “Being a part of a program that you can draw closer to God, has really stood out to me. It’s been a good experience realizing that you can play basketball at a college level, while focusing on God.”

Basista, from Mount Vernon, has also been a leader and key scorer this season. Basista recorded her 1,000th career point a couple weeks ago.

Basista has made many friends and many memories through her four years of college basketball.

“I’ve had fun times together with my teammates and the people I’ve met,” she said. “The family environment and all of the friendships I’ve made have really been important to me.”

Basista said she dreamed of playing basketball for MVNU for many years.

“I’ve been able to accomplish a goal I’ve had of playing here, since I was a young child,” Basista said.

Kinnard, from West Virginia, will also graduate this year. Kinnard is a guard/forward who came off the bench and gave quality minutes for the Lady Cougars this year.

“She’s been consistent on offense and she’s been consistent on defense,” Short said.

Kinnard said she’s grateful for the chance to combine athletics, academics and faith during college.

“Incorporating God into it has been the thing that’s most stood out to me,” Kinnard said.

This senior class also made a lasting impact on their teammates. “They’ve been great at pulling us together on the court, and it’s been great playing with them,” freshman Taylor Gregory said.



Photo by Gerod Harder

Coach Amanda Short makes adjustments during a timeout.

A Winning Season

By Matt Harden

As the women’s basketball regular season comes to an end, Head Coach Amanda Short said this year’s success is the result of a revved-up offense.

Short knew going in that the 2017-18 team had stronger offensive capabilities. She said the Lady Cougars capitalized on offense and hard work to put together their first winning season since 2011-12.

“A winning season hasn’t happened in several years, so to have a winning season feels really good,” Short said. “The team excelled this season.”

The Lady Cougars finished 17-13 overall and tied for fifth in the Crossroads League. They will play No. 3 seed Bethel tonight in the conference tournament.

The play of senior guard Natalie Carpenter stands out, Short said, because of “her ability to score points.” Carpenter leads the team with 15.6 points per game. She is shooting 45 percent from the field.

Carpenter and fellow senior Sierra Basista both will finish their career with more than 1,000 career points at MVNU.

The 2017-18 Lady Cougars also trust each other and make each other better, Short said.

“We worked well as a team,” Short said.



Photo by Gerod Harder

Senior Natalie Carpenter directs the offense for the Lady Cougars.

Many of the underclassmen also stepped up to fill key roles. Sophomore Dani Ellerbrock is one who worked hard to advance her game, Short said. Ellerbrock is averaging 9.7 points per game. She also leads the team with 154 assists.

“She has improved, especially on the offensive side,” Short said.

Freshmen Elizabeth Fee, Rachel Perry and Taylor Gregory also displayed their talent and made major contributions to the team this season. Gregory is the team’s second-leading scorer (11.7 ppg) and top rebounder with 7.9 rebounds per game.

All three are “key players” who will help out the team moving forward, Short said.

Short said she expects the team to get better every year.

“We must continue to improve,” she said.

MVNU Baseball

Ready for opening day

By Lilly Buckley

MVNU baseball coach Keith Veale and his team have been working on strength building, skill development and establishing team culture during the offseason to make sure they are in good shape for the opening game.

“During the winter months we learn a lot about ourselves and our team,” Veale said. “There is little down time if you want to improve as an athlete here at MVNU.”

From their play in the fall, Coach Veale said he learned this year’s team can be an exceptional defensive club.

“We have some gifted players around the infield and some outfielders that can run things down in the gaps,” he said.

The Cougars went 4-0-1 in fall play and outscored their opponents 39-8 overall. However, the Cougars have “a couple of key players on offense that are injured right now, so we are seeing how we need to retool our lineup heading into the season,” Veale said.

On the mound, the Cougars will have some “quality arms” at the front of their rotation and some inexperienced and unproven talent that will be “working their way into throwing some key innings for us this spring,” Veale said.

The team is focusing on developing pitching depth, he said. A real key will be “the development of the pitchers in the three through six slots,” Veale said.

“In baseball, nothing is more critical than the pitchers throwing innings on the mound and giving the team the opportunity to win every day we play,” he said.

The Cougars have just one senior, outfielder Jesse Staudt, on this year’s roster. Staudt hit .281 last year, with 47 RBI.

Eight juniors return, including several who played a significant role on last



The 2018 MVNU Baseball Team: (back) Ross Yoder, Devin Pearl, Layne Riley, Ashton Myers, Clint Conner, Jake Glover, Yanni Patten, Aaron Saal, Billy Cooper; (third row) Ryan Goetzman, Jaret Rose, Alex Dhayer, Drew Ritchey, Mark Rader, Shane Ford, Jesse Staudt, Keith Veale, Jeff Estep; (second row) Jeremy Brooks, Trenton Wood, Jacob Roe, Kobe Miller, Payton Booth, Brandt Miller, Adam Goodpaster, Curtis Williamson; (front) Logan Kottenbrook, Gustavo Fuentes, Cory Clark, Nick Moser, Chris Kline, Christian Bacon, Jack Griffith.

year’s 33-24 team. Standouts include Yanni Patten (.389 with 35 RBI), Aaron Saul (.355, 48 RBI) and Christian Bacon (.326, 17 RBI). Trenton Wood (7-1, 3.05 ERA) returns as the most experienced pitcher from last season.

MVNU’s baseball season opens during the annual spring break trip with teams from Florida. Competition includes Southeastern (ranked No. 4 in the country in preseason), Warner and Temple Baptist.

The spring trip games will be a great test, Veale said, because the Cougars will be facing very skilled opponents who “will have a huge running start on their season.”

Because of their location and temperatures, “they will have around 15-20 games in by the time we see them. But it’s a great challenge and will tell us a lot,” Veale said.

The Crossroads League will again be challenging for MVNU this season. The league keeps getting better and “the Friday-Saturday three game sets are a grind,” he said. Still, the Cougars aim to return to the league tournament.

“We finished fourth last season and missed the national tournament for the first time since entering the league,” Veale said. “So we have some work to do.”

While the team is pushing for another shot at nationals, Veale said he also is focused on the bigger picture.

“The life of a team, the value of being on a team, is so much more than results,” he said. “Yes, we want to win games. Yes, we want to get back to the NAIA National Tournament, but if that is all there is, we will be missing a lot. We are trying to use the game of baseball to develop men and our relationship with Jesus Christ.”

MVNU Softball

“Talented, confident and ready to compete”

By Maddie Cogan

As softball season is beginning to take off, Coach Jeana Howald is “excited to see the off-season dedication and hard work pay off.”

Howald said that although the Lady Cougars were talented last year, they were inexperienced. The 2017 team graduated just one senior, outfielder Courtney Rengert. The team finished 20-30-0, and 13-23-0 in conference play.

With 15 returning players this season, Howald said the Cougars “have a better understanding of what is expected of them and what it takes to win at the collegiate level.”

The roster consists of four seniors, four juniors, seven sophomores and six freshmen.

The team’s chemistry is important to Howald as they encourage each other on and off the field.

“They work hard for each other and hold each other accountable,” Howald said.

According to Howald, the Lady Cougars were “inconsistent” offensively last season. The Cougars are hoping to turn that weakness into a strength as they take



The 2018 MVNU Softball Team: (back) Elizabeth Ritchie, Cassidy Cain, Savannah Richards, Sarah Boué, Karmen Huntsberger, Maddie Johnston; (middle) Savannah Bryner, Meghan May, Anna Boué, Courtney Knepper, Samantha Collier, Cassidy Frazier, Alyson Adams; (front) Cheryl Clum, Madison Jackson, Emily Kauble, Hannah Barco, Natalie Carpenter, Jennifer Kurelic, Tyler Bivens.

the field this season.

“They are talented, confident, and ready to go out and compete in the Crossroads League,” she said.

Key offensive players returning this year are sophomore Maddie Johnston, who led the team with a .353 batting average and eight stolen bases last year; sophomore Meghan May, who hit .325 with 11 doubles, three home runs and a team-leading 31 RBI; sophomore Sarah Boué who finished with a .316 average, including 10 doubles, a triple, two home runs and 26 RBI; senior Anna Boué, who finished with a .314 average, and junior Jennifer Kurelic, who hit .306 with 9 doubles and 18 RBI.

The top pitchers from last year’s rotation are also back for the Lady Cougars. Anna Boué led the effort on the mound with a 1.98 ERA and 109 strikeouts Sarah Boué (2.90 ERA) and Kurelic (3.46 ERA) also saw significant time on the mound.

The Lady Cougars’ first 12 games are over spring break in Clermont, Florida. The first home game is March 13 against Spring Arbor University.