



# THE VIEWER

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## A conversation with Jim Singletary: Diversity, Remembering the Past, and Preparing for the Future

**By Mark Wesley**

Jim Singletary has been a staple in the MVNU community for the past 16 years. In that time, he made countless strides in the name of diversity and inclusion. Jim doesn't just talk. Rather, he valiantly tries to make MVNU as inclusive as possible through his actions. He is a voice to those that may feel excluded. From illustrating the annual MLK Breakfast Ceremony to assisting in the creation of the new African American Experience course, Jim knows the importance of an environment where everyone is welcome. The extensive amount of time that he has spent interacting with students does not go unnoticed; and as such, Jim has been seen by many as an inspiration.

As his tenure at the university comes to a close, I had the opportunity to speak with him about his journey to MVNU, how the campus approaches diversity initiatives, and why it is important that students of color have an environment in which to thrive.

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**Mark Wesley:**

Hello, how are you today?

**Jim Singletary:**

I'm doing well, sir. Thank you for sitting and talking

**JS:**

This is my final year. I'll be done July 1, and this is my final graduating class. This is my final semester, and I get to say goodbye to everyone.

**MW:**

So let's start at the very beginning. How did you get here?

**JS:**

I was living in Youngstown with my family, and I worked at the university of Akron. I was the coordinator of academic support services for minority students. I had a crowd of almost 6,000, and then I was a director of an upward bound program that had about 90 students in it. I left in 2004, and I applied to the job down here and wanted to leave for a big school university. So I applied [for] director of multicultural affairs, and I was hired in August 2004.

**MW:**

What about working with students did you find so appealing?

**JS:**

Well, when I arrived, there was only one [student of color] here. When they asked me my roster, they had one name on it. So, I was over in the admissions office. And because the idea was I would start recruiting students, student recruitment was added to my title, which I did not like but didn't have much choice

Did it help?

**JS:**

No, it did not really because in admissions, you need a policy and a plan to do that. My first group that came to [MVNU] the following year consisted of 41 students of color, which was the largest group that had ever been here. What we discovered was that students of color were realizing that they were the minorities on campus everywhere they go, classrooms, teams, etc. They will congregate together and connect together and hook up together and all of these kinds of things very naturally, and then they're looking out for each other. They're looking for that, for that group, that sameness and culturally what it's in common.

Well they always are gravitating toward my office.

**MW:**

I think it's interesting because many of us consider your office to be a safe haven of sorts. We come to you with issues and sometimes, we just hang out and kick it.

**JS:**

Well, you all always gravitate toward my office. As something very natural for students of color and culture to continue to come together, my office did become a haven. It was that way at the university of Akron at Waynesburg college, Kent state places and the other places I worked. My doors are always open. I cer-

kind of let my hair down and, and feel at home and that doesn't feel at home

**MW:**

How do you explain to people that ask about this thing?

**JS:**

One expression that I early on in higher ed was when students of color came to a predominantly white campus, they feel like strangers in a strange land. The diversity that we have now was created in 2006 by those same graduate students and they created a multicultural room where they could congregate together to relax. And so that still exists until now.

**MW:**

So is that why you think you became kind the person you go to? I remember when you at orientation three and I said to myself, "Oh this guy because he is reachable to me immediately. Seeing you for the first time

**JS:**

Yeah. Well, that and now looks yes.

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**MW:**

[laughs] Yes, that too.

**JS:**

But the other reason that is because I am a person. So, to have somebody that relate to racially, culturally. There was an affinity that was developed among



# Justice, Kindness and Humility

**From the desk of Henry W. Spaulding II, Ph.D.**

Each year, the nation pauses to acknowledge the moral and political contribution of Dr. Martin Luther King to American society. In fact, MVNU celebrates the day with Kenyon College and any interested individuals in Knox County. I am old enough to remember him – I saw the “I Have a Dream” speech on the television. I remember that day with he was assassinated in Memphis, TN. This misguided attempt to silence his voice and influence failed to diminish his prophetic message. I have also lived long enough to read some of his sermons, essays and speeches, and they have greatly deepened my understanding of his legacy. Black History Month affords all of the opportunity to remember the legacy of Martin Luther King.

I grew up in the South at a time when segregation was evident everywhere. I have been on the bus when the line between the back and the front was especially clear. I have walked into J.C. Penny to see “White Men” and “White Women.” On the other side, to see “non” before the gender. It always seemed strange to me, but it was simply the case. Then came Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King and the Montgomery boycott of public transportation. He was a good leader, but we must never forget that he was also human.

chapter on King begins by recounting a time in 1956 in Montgomery when he was a young pastor. He is sitting with his wife, Coretta, at the kitchen table. He was 27 years old. A few days earlier someone, had bombed his home. Anyone would have been afraid. It just made sense to be cautious. He might have taken this as an opportunity to embrace violence and hatred or step away from the circle, but he remained true to his convictions.

Many hated King. Gushee writes, “Whites racists thought him radical, white moderates thought him aggravating, black militants thought him naïve.” The FBI hounded him. The KKK threatened him. Many people in America caricatured, ignored, and distrusted him. Anyone would have understood if King had stepped aside, but he continued to stand upon deeply held moral convictions. He embraced the prophetic and pastoral task of nonviolent engagement with injustice. His faith drove him to continue the struggle with racism in America.

America needed Dr. King then, and we still need men and women to answer the call for racial justice who will provide a witness in the face of evil.

We celebrate the fact that Martin Luther King was first and last a Christian preacher and social activist. He never stopped believing in the power of God to redeem people. He never stopped believing that his message of

gospel to live faith in a way that provides a similar vision for the world. May all of us witness to his hopeful imagination. Hear King’s own words: “I refuse to accept the cynical notion that nation after nation must spiral down a militaristic stairway into the hell of thermonuclear destruction.

“I have the audacity to believe that people everywhere can have three meals a day for their bodies, education and culture for their minds, and dignity, equality and freedom for their spirits.

“I believe we shall overcome.” Remembering Dr. Martin Luther King goes beyond sentimentality to a willingness to embrace his message. We live in a divisive time when it seems



**MVNU President  
Dr. Henry W. Spaulding II**

everyone is madly springing to claim the moral high ground. Some spend entirely too much time claiming innocence and intends to be a community remembers with charity.

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## THE VIEWER

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Editorial Policy:

The Viewer is the student newspaper of Mount Vernon Nazarene University.

Managing Editor:

Ellie Parker

Social Media Editor:

Mark Wesley

Graphic Design Specialist:

Liz Crosby

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# Timpe retiring from MVNU after 45 years

By Ellie Parker

Dr. Randie Timpe has been a fixture at MVNU for decades and will be retiring in March of this year.

Dr. Timpe studied religion at Bethany Nazarene College (now Southern Nazarene University) and went on to earn a master's degree in experimental clinical psychology at Wichita State University and later achieved his Ph.D. in experimental social psychology at Oklahoma State University. From there, Timpe was "drawn to the mission and culture of religiously-oriented private higher education," and in the fall of 1975, began a 45-year journey at MVNU.

After many years as a psychology professor, Timpe worked primarily in academic affairs and has served as the Assistant to the President for Planning and Director of Institutional Research and Accountability since June of 2016. Through his role in academic affairs, Timpe was essential in the development of course schedules, producing the course catalog, and overseeing parts of orientation and advising. In recent years, Timpe has worked to develop and maintain academic quality at the University and was involved in every re-accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission. During his time at MVNU, the University became accredited for the Master of Business Administration and Bachelor of Science in Nursing. MVNU also received a grant that allowed for the development of

Dr. Timpe as the keeper of statistical data and numbers that are critical to the University's assessment and outcomes plan," said Dr. Colleen Bryan, professor of psychology, "[the psychology department] has always had the additional benefit of his wisdom and knowledge of psychology and the nuances of human thinking and behavior in the classroom."

Forty-five years at the same institution leaves a significant mark. Timpe prefers not to think in terms of a legacy, but rather asks, "Have I helped make MVNU a better place? Have I helped MVNU achieve its mis-

sion?"

"Dr. Timpe has served the cause of Christ on the MVNU campus for several decades. He is an expert on Higher Learning Commission policy and a careful researcher. He is distinguished by intelligence, diligence and integrity," said University President Dr. Henry Spaulding. "His quiet demeanor has graced this University as his work has left a mark that will endure."

Upon his retirement, Timpe looks forward to traveling with his family and spending more time volunteering and enjoying his hobbies, which include stained glass and wood working.



**Dr. Randy Timpe is retiring from MVNU in 2020 after 45 years of service.**

Photo from MVNU

## "Familiar Shapes" and the man behind them

By Hunter Hines

Throughout all of recorded history, humankind has felt the desire to create, to leave a fragment of his or her own thinking behind for others to glean from. This desire is often accomplished through art. At Mount Vernon Nazarene University, art is embraced amongst students and faculty alike. MVNU Professor Justin Sorensen has been given the opportunity to share his art with the community in a new exhibition in the Schnormeier Gallery. Sorensen has spent countless hours preparing for "Familiar Shapes," a gallery exhibition composed of a selection of six individual art pieces. At first glance, these pieces seem to



**MVNU Professor Justin Sorensen is sharing art with the Knox County Community with "Familiar Shapes."**

open ended." This idea becomes clear when the themes and ideas behind each piece are uncovered.

"The show is pulling from a lot

work give the viewer the chance to enter the mind of the artist and explore what is important to them.

What could appear to be a

# MVNU hosts 17th annual MLK Breakfast

By Mark Wesley

The 17th annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration Breakfast was held on Jan. 20 in Foster Hall on the campus of MVNU.

The breakfast is a partnership between MVNU and Kenyon College in conjunction with members of the Knox County community. Prominent speakers at the event included MVNU president Dr. Henry Spaulding, newly elected Mayor of Mount Vernon Matt Starr and Lee-man Kessler, the Mayor of Gambier.

Kenyon Professor of Drama Jonathan Tazewell was the keynote speaker, speaking on the theme, “Where do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community.” The purpose of this theme was to “examine the direction of society as we continue to overcome racism, end global suffering and eradicate poverty.”

Tazewell spoke about his time in Knox County and how he sometimes feels like an outsider in his own community. “It is, unfortunately, an irony many American people of color face, not only in their local communities but throughout our nation,” Tazewell said. “Though most of us have known no other country to call our home, the recognition of our full citizenship in this nation, both legal and emotional, has been a continual battle waged by the proud and the righteous.”



**Professor Jonathan Tazewell speaking at the 17th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration Breakfast.**  
Photo by Ben

Reverend Foster is a MVNU alum with a Master of Divinity degree and served as a trustee providing significant leadership in diversity, employment and wisdom. The Foster family was recognized for their work in Columbus through the Fountain of Hope Ministry.

Hogan, a longtime member of the Dr. King Legacy Committee, was acknowledged for her dedication to the annual breakfast as well as her devotion to caring for others over a long career in nursing.

The event was an astounding success that spoke to the

vast impact that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. had on generations after him. Day calls us to remember more importantly to a Spaulding said in his speech. “That is, to creatively and consciously engage the struggle with violence and hate with prophetic imagination.”

## “Familiar Shapes”

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pollution, the Wright brothers, religion in China and the consequences of our culture.

Creating an exhibition isn’t easy. Sorensen said that the majority of winter break was spent installing pieces and lighting for the show. He worked long days, spending up to eight hours at a time installing a single piece. This exhibition is the result of much time and planning. “I

in the show was made in 2019.” Sorensen said, “While I had a lot more work that I could have

included, I couldn’t come fit it into the space, so it go.”

## Justice, Kindness and Humility

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invests in justice and walks with everyone with empathy. Martin Luther King had flaws, but the legacy reminds us that

the Lord require of you do justice, and to love kindness and to walk humbly with God (6:8b)? This month we the opportunity to



## Malisa Simco on D.C. semester and life after graduation

By Ellie Parker

Many academic programs at MVNU offer the opportunity for students to participate in Best Semester off-campus travel programs. Malisa Simco, a 2019 MVNU grad, spent her final semester in Washington, D.C. as part of the American Studies Program offered by MVNU and the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities.

“My semester in D.C. was amazing,” said Simco. “The opportunity to spend a semester in D.C. was just too good to pass up. It was incredibly intriguing to know that I would receive credits for my time in D.C. I’ve lived in small-town America the majority of my life, so I truly wanted to step outside of my comfort zone and immerse myself in a new

culture.”

During her time in D.C., Simco took classes two days a week and completed an internship with the National Archives. The classes were very interactive and gave Simco and other students the opportunity to travel around the D.C. metro area and learn from many guest speakers. “Engaging with professionals was the best learning experience I could have ever received,” Simco said.

“The best part about my D.C. semester was allowing myself to be challenged spiritually, academically and politically,” said Simco. “As Christians, we should be pushing ourselves to constantly pursue opportunities for growth in the world around us.”

The American History and

Journalism and Media Production major is appreciative for her time at MVNU and in D.C. and recognizes the impact her friends and professors had on her academic and spiritual growth. “I am forever grateful to Dr. Wantland and Professor Rinehart for believing in my abilities and constantly pushing me to aim higher. They took the time to invest in me as a student, a friend and as a follower of Christ.”

Simco is currently interning at the Gettysburg National Military Park as a Visual Information Specialist. “Don’t rush life,” she said. “Explore internship opportunities or find a couple of part-time jobs so you can find something you truly love.”

Life after graduation can be tough, but Simco offers this



Malisa Simco

encouragement: “Christ has equipped us with our passions and talents for the advancement of His Kingdom. He knows so He will absolutely place you where He needs you. Don’t be afraid to take chances.”

## Justice Project hosts Privilege Talk on “lifting others up”

By Ellie Parker

Students gathered in Foster Hall on Feb. 10 for a “Privilege Talk” hosted by the Justice Project. Event attendees participated in a group activity as well as small and large group discussion on the topic of “privilege.”

Justice Project coordinator Ellen Baker welcomed students and reminded everyone to come with a posture of grace and learning, and then handed the mic over to Tori Teague who led the group in an activity intended to demonstrate privilege. The group started off lined up in the center of the room then moved spaces

you own a car, were given a car, or have access to a car, move one space forward.” At the end of the activity, students were scattered across the room at varying distances from the center line, demonstrating the different degrees of privilege represented at the event. They then participated in small group conversation to

discuss how the activity made them feel, or if they had a privilege that they were not aware of or hadn’t previously recognized. MVNU students Nana Yeboah, Tyler Leonhart, Sandra Addo and Jake Friday then gave testimonials on how the misused privilege of others has negatively affected them.

Baker and Dr. Stephen Hefner led a large group discussion expressing that privilege is something you ask for and one should not feel ashamed of their privilege, as long as they are making an effort to use their privilege to help others. “We might have a lesser degree of privilege. ‘My privilege is just for me,’ said a student at the event, ‘I should use my privilege to lift others up.’”

The next event is scheduled for March 23 at 7:30 p.m. and will be on the topic of “Violence in the Bible.” The MVNU Justice Project “works to seek out and address social issues that affect our community.”

Justice  
Project  
photo

# Men's basketball is "eager to grow and improve"

By Lexie Merritt

The men's basketball team at MVNU is working towards getting better every day. This season has seen the team through many ups and downs. Head Coach Jared Ronai said, "This year, we have a great group of young men that love each other and strive to become the best that they are capable of becoming one day at a time."

The team is currently 18-6 overall and 6-6 in the Crossroads League. "We have always been a program that is eager to grow and improve," said Ronai. "We have a good mix of veteran leadership and youthful enthusiasm that has helped us progress in many areas on and off the floor this year." The Cougars are looking



Senior Jacob Paul drives the lane against Spring Arbor University on Feb. 1.

Photo from MVNU Sports Information Department.

to bounce back after a 60-75 loss at Spring Arbor University. "The Crossroads League is one of the

best small college men's basketball conferences in the country. Every game presents different

challenges," said Ronai.

The team has reached several key milestones this season, including seniors Austin Johnson and Jacob Paul both reaching 1,000 career points. Johnson has also had impressive season stats so far, with multiple double-doubles. Full team and individual stats can be found at [mvnucougars.com](http://mvnucougars.com).

When asked about the upcoming games, Ronai stated the team will continue to relentlessly prepare for our opponents and use those contests to learn from any mistakes we may make. The Cougars' final regular season game is at 3 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 22 at Grace College. The Crossroads League tournament begins Wednesday, Feb. 23.

## Athletes in Action "makes disciples" across MVNU campus

By Todd McKinley

Athletes in Action is an international, gospel-centered organization with a focus on athletics. An offshoot of the Cru Ministry, A.I.A. seeks to spread the name of Jesus Christ through fellowship in sports and sports-related activities. Under the leadership of Clayton Slemmons and Luke Couchman, the MVNU branch offers students fellowship, friendship, entertainment and aid in building character.

Once a week, athletes from sports teams all across campus



make disciples, that's what the entire organization is built

around." This sports-team-centered model has clearly

brought a measure of joy to the MVNU branch. According to Emma Warren, "Every week, there's always new people coming in. Our goal is to get at least one athlete for every team."

Slemmons said that there are a number of ambitious goals for the group in the next few years. "We talked about future reaching out to the school, trying to get involved with them and maybe even with some of the teams. A bit ... we've even been talking about going out to

"We're just trying to do what

# A conversation with Jim Singletary: Diversity, Remembering the Past, and Preparing for the Future

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a kind welcome face.

**MW:**

As someone that has been here 16 years, how has the campus kind of evolved? Has it become more diverse or less diverse?

**JS:**

I want to say we've come a long way. We are just getting to the place where we're realizing how important it is to deal with diversity from an institutional perspective. Now, I've had a lot of success with events. I think I've put on over 400 events and success with graduation. My graduation rate among students of color is fairly high. I've had a wealth of experiences and I've seen some cross cultural things that are done great. We did not, unfortunately have anything in place a way to address racism and discrimination. Nor did we do a very good job of educating our students. I began to teach a diversity class to try and remedy that.

**MW:**

One thing that I will eternally grateful for you for is that you've been able to kind of connect a lot of us together and you've inspired us to kind of make like institutions you know, Darryl [Daniels] with the BSU and you helped to orchestrate that. I wanted to ask you about a kind of black potential. A lot of us kind of feel like we're kind of like just trapped behind this wall of, well,

The first thing, in this context and even my own life, is keeping God first because keeping God first keeps things in perspective. I see this with students where they come from, from strong family backgrounds, whether they're single parent or whatever. Then I think the notion is we want the next generation to be stronger. I have picked up where families and parents have taken, have left off cause I tell students when they come into the university and you made it this far, you made a phenomenal achievement.

**MW:**

So jumping back a little bit to get African-American experience course, what made you feel like this was the right time to have this course happen?

**JS:**

One of our students, Darryl [Daniels], as well as D'Lasia [Bass] as well helped to organize everything. We had a chance to connect with Kenyon and during the 50th anniversary. But when Michelle [Alexander] spoke, it triggered something in Darryl. Shel came back and said something's got to happen.

**MS:**

You two collaborated on the inner-details of the course, correct?

**JS:**

I joined them and put it together. We ran it across those [people] in the university who are the decision makers and [the course]

## Jim Singltary photo

**JS:**

I believe so. Having an African American experience in our books is big. It signals the fact that the university is willing to take one culture and explore it. And that culture happens to be a culture that many of us need to understand. So yeah, that, goes without saying. UBLACK, the BSU and now, this African American Experience have been steps to bring about changes.

**MW:**

So what do you think the end goal there is? Do you see it kind of expanding out to other cultures as well, maybe the Asian culture or maybe middle Eastern culture.

**JS:**

Number one is that it should become a [general education] course, which means it would be something that every student can take. It should be a requirement. That course and similar courses like gender studies, for instance. We can look at other ethnicities and cultures and develop those

these things are. And I could of a student in this university would not benefit from those classes.

**MW:**

What has been your favorite campus with the student

**JS:**

Oh, that's a tough one. I've had many, particularly building relationships with students. One will be seeing a group of students come watching them graduate, graduating class and the say I've had some great all along the way with different classes and everything else then the experience I'm have as this 2020 class for I can't even begin to think amazing that will be.

**MS:**

Any parting words?

**JS:**

It has been my absolute sure to serve. God has a humor and allows me as a man of color to come in with all that I've been able. And I am thankful for all who have allowed me to be the best that I can be. I salute them, but my student without that is my heart. So all of them, every single that I've encountered and a chance to get to know, there. I don't have enough in my heart because you heart. It's been a good run ready to pass the Baton