

THE VIEWER

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ALMOST THERE

Race and Politics Under the Microscope

By **Zoe Bricker**

The Justice Talk on Oct. 26 was entitled Race and Politics. The speaker, Justin Giboney, who co-founded the AND campaign and is also an attorney and a political strategist, zoomed in to tell Mount Vernon Nazarene University's campus about what he does and how we can get involved in fighting for justice. Giboney first stated, "In the Gospel, we see an emphasis on love and justice, but also we see an emphasis on moral order."

Giboney went on to say, "Most people, when discussing politics, either go to the very far left and focus on justice and neglect moral order, and vice versa, for the other side, but this is a false dilemma."

The AND campaigns mis-

sion states -- "As Christians, we are called to civic and community engagement. We have a duty to impact culture in a manner that reflects the truth (and) love of Jesus Christ. This commission includes participation in the political arena, wherein actions or inaction can have a profound effect on all aspects of society. Life, freedom and the general well-being of all citizens can be significantly enhanced or diminished by political dynamics"

There is no doubt that this election year has caused a massive divide in our nation. When asked about taking a side in the election and voting, Giboney responded, "We have let our political affiliation to become religious in nature to

where we can't tell a difference between what beliefs come from our ideology and political party rather than what is Christian."

There was a massive emphasis on the need for unity.

The best thing that we can do as Christians is to love God and love others. We need to not only care about our moral order but also offer love and justice in our community.

Taylor Takes Reins of Intercultural Life at MVNU

By **Grant Stelzer**

Here at Mount Vernon Nazarene University, the staff and faculty work around the clock to make the campus as inclusive and accepting as possible. Tavaris Taylor, the new director of Intercultural Life at MVNU, is looking to continue to improve the campus inclusivity as much as possible.

Intercultural Life is an organization here on campus that allows partnerships between people to put on events and provide activities that celebrate diversity and inclusion. Some events include "I Have a Dream" partnership with campus ministries, the Black Student Union, and more. All of these peaked Taylor's interest in the year 2020.

Taylor visited MVNU in May of 2020 and toured the campus and also took interest in the newly open Director of Intercultural Life position. At the time, working at another campus, Taylor was eventually offered the job in mid-June and accepted just a few days later.

One of the largest tasks to tackle for Taylor was replacing and filling the position of previous Director of Intercultural Life, Jim Singeltary. "[Replacing Singeltary are] big shoes to fill due to the investment in the students' lives that

he had" said Taylor, adding "It has not been challenging because he has been helping me out a lot. I'm actually going to call him in a few minutes." He then explained how even though there is a 40-year age gap between the two, they still have experienced life similarly and see the world through a similar lens.

Intercultural Life also has such a big impact on students' lives here on campus. Taylor put it this way, "What [Intercultural Life] does is brings impact to diversity on campus, the more diverse the better the change and we can grow and drive as a whole."

As well as impacting nearly every part of daily life, COVID-19 also has greatly impacted Intercultural Life events as well. Taylor said that COVID has effected Inter-

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Tavaris Taylor

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Fun and Games at Oaktoberfest

By Colin Berg

Even though the Covid pandemic has canceled so many events this year, nothing stopped us from celebrating the fall season; and on Oct. 6 and 7, MVNU celebrated fall by having a two-day event called Oaktoberfest.

According to the website mvnu.edu/oaktobberfest, it states that, "Starting Tuesday night, and going through all of Wednesday, campus was filled with opportunities to gather together, have fun and embrace the fall season! Oaktoberfest events included a music festival, costume relay race, Sanctum: A Nighttime Interactive Trail Experience, hayride, pumpkin carving and painting, pumpkin smashing, movie nights, photo booth, carnival games and, of course, all the fall foods and drinks you could ask for!

This list is just the beginning of what you would have found at Oaktoberfest. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, families were not invited to Oaktoberfest since it would not only be a risk to the students and staff but to the families visiting as well. Also, according to Student Life's video update <https://vimeo.com/464222207>, Vice President for Student Life Rev. Tracy Waal stated that, "special precautions were taken to make it a very special day with engaging events for you." For example, there was free Troyers donuts for the first 300 students. There was free apple picking at the orchard behind our campus for the first 50 people that showed up. There was also a pumpkin launching event, axe throwing, tournaments, hayrides, and



The pumpkin launch was the one of many fun events enjoyed during Octoberfest on Oct. 6-7 at MVNU.
Photo by Zoe Bricker

Sanctum, which was an eerie trail experience.

When talking with students on campus, the overall feeling was relief. Not only did students get a day off of classes, but they got to enjoy so many fun things to allow them to relax for a day and not think about homework being due that night. While some students enjoyed their day painting and carving pumpkins, others patiently waited around for the tweets from President Spaulding where they would be able to win Spaulding Bucks to use at the food truck.

Oaktobberfest was definitely the break many students needed to allow themselves to push through the rest of the seme-

ster. Even though fall break was a little different this year, MVNU did everything they could to make it enjoyable for students. It's nice that even when we hit some bumpy

roads in life, we can always find a time to take a deep breath, relax and enjoy life. With all the pumpkins around, autumn is definitely the most gourd-geous season.

Tavaris Taylor

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cultural Life saying, "By this time we would've had several events, without COVID bigger events could be possible" adding shortly after, "[You have to] be more creative do more things through zoom. It's also hard to reach people as easily."

In the future, Taylor suggested that he would love to see

a week or summit on global diversity to "Take a week and look at the world." Taylor then said that he loves his job and wouldn't imagine himself doing anything else, adding "Some people say that they love their job and don't really mean it, but when I say it, I totally mean it."

Friday Night Live to Friday Night Online

By Ellie Perry

The COVID-19 pandemic causes one to reconsider how to go about everyday life as a whole, especially on colleg campuses with myriad campus activities and extracurriculars. Mount Vernon Nazarene's variety show, Friday Night Live, is no exception.

"FNL has had to make major changes this year," said Hunter Hines, a junior studying journalism and media production, who is also the leader of the group. "The biggest and most obvious being the lack of a live show.

This semester, we have become FNL Online." He went on to say that instead of having a live show at the end of the year, their team tries to release a new video every Friday.

Currently, FNL has 15 members, and it takes all of them to "keep things going, especially when we are constantly

trying to produce content," admitted Hines.

Four participants of FNL had varying responses when they were asked what inspired them to join FNL. "I have always loved FNL," said Alyssa Sidle, a senior studying philosophy. "So I really wanted to be a part of it. I love making videos, and doing funny skits has been something



I've done since childhood." Preston Whiteman, a sophomore youth ministry major, commented that he chose to participate because his friends told him he should do it.

"I love to be funny," said Nathan Lahr, a sophomore who also studies Christian ministries with an emphasis on youth ministry. "When I went to my first FNL showing, I saw how funny the people were, how much fun they had, and how much joy they were able to make other people feel. I just had to be a part of it."

Waverly Reidenbach, a sophomore communication sciences and disorders major with a Spanish minor, answered: "I was in theater in high school, and I wanted the opportunity to continue to act in college. I also have been super interested in film and video, so FNL is the best of both worlds for me."

All four of the students

interviewed play a different role in FNL. Waverly, for example, helps organize "a lot of logistical, behind the scenes features." She also runs the Instagram page, works with the process of marketing FNL and does a bit of filming as well. Lahr writes, directs, and acts out the scripts. He added that he would be doing live skits if those were still going on. "I write scripts, I act, and I make and edit videos." Sidle contributed. She went on to comment on the group's unanimous mindset when it comes to participating in FNL.

"I love the little community that we've made," She said. "I also love that we can bring joy and laughter to the MVNU community, which is so needed right now."

Be sure to check out their page on YouTube, follow them on Twitter @MVNU_FNL, and follow their Instagram: mvnufnl.

Rezzies enhance campus life

By Grant Stelzer

MVNU works day and night to get students and everyone on campus involved socially as much as possible. Even in the time of COVID, MVNU still puts on events to connect students while in the midst of confusion and uncertainty.

One of the most social parts of being a part of MVNU's student body is activities related to Residence Life (Res Life). According to Zach Sherman, a Resident Director here on campus, Res Life is "dedicated to the care of residential students on MVNU's campus. This includes co-curricular programming, facility care, crisis response, mentoring, and all things pertaining to housing." Res life also puts on a lot of events that connect students together including the Res Life Games. Some of these events are events like a Tug of War contest, a boat race, and The Rezzies. The Rezzies is "a video contest between residence areas and commuters. Typically, this is the capstone event for MVNU Games—a month-long competition across campus involving all students," according to Sherman. There are also other events that take place such as "Tea and Testimonies that involves sharing stories with one another and is a great way for people to connect."

All of these aspects of campus life and residence life create a more accepting and social feeling on campus, even in times of COVID-19. Res Life helps with the social side of things and also contributes to the hard work of making the campus of MVNU run as smoothly as it possibly can.

Leadership and Guidance Offered by New Resident Directors

By MacKenzie Holder

During the summer of 2020, four new Resident Directors were hired to work for Mount Vernon Nazarene University. New resident directors were hired for the resident halls for Pioneer, Oakwood and Galloway and the apartments of Cedar, Birch and Redwood. Interviews for these positions were held throughout COVID-19; but by mid summer, decisions were made, and the recently hired resident directors had started in the middle of July.

These four new Resident Directors went through an intensive interview process before being hired. Josh Kusch, Director of Resident Life, explained this process of how becoming a Resident Director works. Kusch stated, "We started with a normal application asking questions about themselves, providing us their resume and cover letter, and we were then presented with 40 applications to look over and review."

An interview panel was put with the task of hiring the four new Resident Directors, and the panel included Josh Kusch, Zach Sherman, Jim Singletary, Brittney Estep and Dr. Phobia George. This panel conducted initial interviews over Zoom and narrowed down to one-half the applicants.

Through the many interviews the applicants went through, they met with different people who are a part of campus life and many different campus partners to



New Resident Directors at Mount Vernon Nazarene University are, from left, Zac Sherman (Cypress and Spruce), Josh Kusch (Head of Res life), Michaela Bruce (Cedar, Birch, Redwood), David Calvarese (Oakwood), Brittany Estep (Elmwood, Maplewood, Rosewood), Sarah Mowry (Pioneer) and Cara Boyd (Galloway). Photo by Liz Pound

get to know the community a little bit better. Kusch stated, "When we began narrowing down our applicants, we had them meet some of the MVNU community so they were able to feel more comfortable. They met with Pastor Stephanie, President Spaulding, Tracy Waal and previous resident directors."

Resident Directors here at MVNU are tasked with many different things, including helping students find connections in their area, helping facilitate growth, and having events help authentic connections in their own identity.

In a video interview with Michaela Bruce, the new Resident Director of Cedar, Birch and Redwood, she explained why she applied for the job and what being a Resident Director means to her. Bruce said, "In a weird way, I love responding to crises and being able to help students

through all of the things they are going through." As Bruce just previously stated, this year is a different year here at MVNU, especially with many new rules and regulations in the residence halls and apartments.

Cara Boyd, the new Resident Director of Galloway stated, "I love being a Resident Director, because making connections with students is really the reason I applied for this job. I am loving the new task of trying to find new ways to connect with everyone in Galloway. We do lots of different events for the floors, so we are not all together or oftentimes we do grab-and-go type of events, so students are able to still have fun but go back to their room after."

This year Resident Directors are tasked with a few more things than a normal year. A lot have jumped into some of Covid responses as we are de-

veloping new ways of connecting with students and allowing students to connect with each other. Kusch stated, "We are looking at everything through a Covid lens and trying to make everything we do go within campus guidelines and finding that balance of making connections and developing friendships while still being in alignment with the guidelines."

Kusch stated, "All four of our new Resident Directors have been so great. They are stellar, and we are so thankful for the team that God has brought us. They go above and beyond in so many different ways, they are so aware of students' needs, and they demonstrate those in creative ways."

Make sure you don't miss out on the sit-down interview video to go along with this story on our website at www.lakeholmviewer.com!

Historic Season For MVNU Tennis Teams

By Dana Hicks

The Mount Vernon Nazarene University tennis program recently wrapped up the 2020 season. It was a historic season, not only because of the impact that COVID-19 had, but also because both the men's and the women's teams saw placement in the Crossroads League Tournament for the first time ever on Sept. 22. The women were awarded the seventh seed, and the men were placed in the eighth seed.

This achievement comes four years after the tennis program got a restart as a club sport under the helm of coach Daniel Doan in 2016. The

sport moved into varsity status for the 2017 season where the men went 2-18 on the season and the women went 5-14. Coach Alvin Cheng stepped into the head coaching role under interim status in 2019 after being the assistant coach during the 2018 campaign. The teams saw jumps in their records in 2019, as the women went 7-10 and the men went 3-10. Coach Cheng remained in 2020 as the year proved more difficult for the program among Covid restrictions and protocols, as the teams went a combined 5-13 and saw a limited number of matches.

Cheng looks to turn the



Coach Alvin Cheng

records around in 2021 and boasts quite the tennis background to get the job done. He

served as an assistant coach at Eastern Kentucky for six months before accepting the head coach position at Coker University, where he coached from 2005 until 2010, leading the women to a 31-47 record and the men a record of 13-59. His Coker teams shined in 2006 when the women won 11 games and the men won eight. Prior to his joining of MVNU in 2018 he was an assistant at Kenyon College for six seasons.

If all goes according to plan and the season does not see a postponement due to Covid, the tennis program will return to action in March 2021.

Season Wraps Up For Esports Teams

By Grant Stelzer

At Mount Vernon Nazarene University, sports have a major impact on the lives of students and players all around. In years past, basketball and volleyball, as well as soccer, were the big contenders for most popular sports. Although it might not be the most popular sport that you've heard of, or not heard of, Esports is looking to change the game.

MVNU's Esports program is in its second year here on campus. The first year was filled with challenges and logistics that were a learning curve for coach Justin Nowiki and then coach Tony Stemen. This year, current coaches Nowiki and his brother, Josh Nowiki, are looking to make esports a bigger part of the everyday lives of students here on campus.

With the season nearly over,

the many different games involved in the program are looking to extend their season with wins in the end of the season tournament. The two games that are looking to go far into the tournament are the teams of Rocket League and Overwatch. Rocket League, a game where players control cars to play a version of competitive soccer, has only lost one game so far this season and is looking to perform very well in the upcoming Oct. 31 tournament day. Luke Wilfong, sophomore captain of the Rocket League team, shared high hopes for the team saying, "I'm pretty confident in our guys. They have been playing really well, and we expect to put up a good fight and beat out the competition in the next couple weeks."

Overwatch, the first-person
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Members of the MVNU Esports team are shown in recent Rocket League competition. Photo by Liz Pound

Women's Soccer Seniors: Leaving a Legacy

By Matt Harden

The pandemic-abbreviated 2020 MVNU women's soccer season is quickly coming to an end, along with the careers of the six lady senior team members. MeLanie Critzer, Adison Preston, Alexa Skal, Natalie Saal, Paige Renz and Missy Emery all have played important roles throughout their careers.

As the final buzzer quickly approaches, Preston, Critzer and Skal reflected on their time playing soccer here at MVNU. "To be part of this team for the last three years has truly changed my life," said Critzer, who transferred to MVNU prior to her sophomore year from Roberts Wesleyan College. "Making the decision to transfer in was very scary for me and a big risk to come to a campus where I knew two people and starting completely over. It took some time, but I ended up finding my best friends who will be in my life for years to come."

Critzer added, "This team has taught me so many life skills (burpee lap for example), how to serve my teammates and how to love others better. It has taught me to work hard when things don't go my way and to make the choice to show up at practice and give my best even when I might not feel like it," said Critzer. "This team has taught me that the best thing we can do for others who are struggling is to choose to struggle along with them, (especially when it comes to running until you see stars)."

Preston shares Critzer's view on finding lifelong friends.



Senior members of the MVNU women's soccer team are, from left, MeLanie Critzer, Missy Emery, Alexa Skal, Paige Renze, Madison Preston and Natalie Saal.

"Being part of the women's soccer team at MVNU has given me a second family. My teammates have become friends that will last a lifetime," said Preston, who has started 67 out of 68 career games.

Preston continued, "My college soccer career has also taught me many life lessons that I will take with me to serve myself in other aspects of my life. I've learned the importance of teamwork, dedication and determination; I wouldn't trade my time on this team for anything."

Soccer has played a role in Skal's life since she was a child. "It's played such a big part of my life since then, and to have played a sport that I love in college has been an amazing experience," said Skal, who is

in the top six for both career points and goals at MVNU.

Skal continued, "It has provided me with a family and close friendships that I'll take with me once I graduate. The soccer team gives me a sense of accountability, plus gives me something to look forward to each day that I've gotten to practice or play in a game."

In college and in life, we make memories that last us a lifetime, and the seniors shared their favorites both on the field and off the field, which centered around a trip to the national tournament last year.

"Winning a bid to the 2019 national tournament and competing in California will be my favorite memory and getting the chance to play with

my best friends while we were there," said Critzer. "As a kid who barely made the recreation team as a young child, playing in California was such a surreal experience and one I'm very grateful for." Preston agreed saying, "We worked so hard all season to get there, and it was a once-in-a-lifetime experience, and I couldn't imagine doing it with a better group of girls."

"Going to California last year and competing at nationals was my most favorite memory. That trip was a great time and showed us as a team we are capable of anything we set our minds to," added Skal.

As for off-the-field favorite memories, "During preseason, we do team-bonding activities

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Esports Teams End Season With Title

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shooter ability game, however, has had a few bumps over the road. Showing optimism, Darren Moon, sophomore captain of the Overwatch team, said, "We have some work to get done; but overall, we are looking pretty good. I have confidence that we can do this and make it far in the tournament."

Players are excited and emotional about their upcoming tournament performances. The Esports season will continue with a spring schedule

as well as their fall schedule. The spring schedule is less strenuous in terms of time commitment and treated as an "off season" for the players and coaches involved.

All games are live streamed on the livestreaming platform Twitch at [twitch.tv/mvnuesports](https://www.twitch.tv/mvnuesports).

After defeating their opponent, Manchester, by a wide margin of 3-0 in the seminals, team Captain Luke Wilfong and the rest of the Rocket League team set their eyes

on the championship title. Their opponent, Mount Union College, has been the only team to defeat them so far this season. Redemption was on the minds of the players and coaches as they were looking to defeat Mount Union in the finals Nov. 7. Wilfong stated just a few days before the game, "Yeah, we are feeling very good for this Friday. It is very nerve racking to be in the finals for the first time, and we look to take home the trophy for MVNU. They

[Mount Union] are the only team that has beat us in the regular season so far, but we are definitely looking for a different outcome in the finals this Saturday. We are a healthy amount of nervous going into this match this weekend, but we are confident we can bring home the win."

Nov. 7's final was extremely intense and was played best out of seven. MVNU ended up winning in game seven following a back-and-forth contest. No details were available.

Women's Soccer Seniors: Leaving a Legacy

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which will be playing games, watching The Bachelor and playing yard games together," said Skal. Critzer added hers as, "I'm grateful to be playing one last year of soccer with my younger sister Maddie, (who's a freshman); and whether it was microwaving pasta with a hairdryer in our hotel room last year, team Bachelor nights, joking with each other at practice, or late-night food runs, I will treasure these memories as I look back on my time with this team."

With so many seniors graduating this coming spring, the younger players will need to step into leadership roles next year, and all three wanted to share some advice. "I would encourage them to keep a bigger perspective," said Critzer.

Critzer continued, "It's so easy to get caught up in the competitive nature of everything. At the end of the day, their worth and value can never be found with minutes played, goals scored, or re-

cords broken, but who they are in Christ. Remembering this will help them lead better and to love those around them better."

Critzer added, "I would also encourage them to truly invest in their teammates and seek to love them well and serve them, for good leaders are those who simply love everyone around them well." Skal doesn't want the younger players to take anything for granted.

"Good or bad, just make the best of your time playing soccer. Before you know it, it could be your last season, game, and last time putting on your jersey; always appreciate the game throughout the highs and lows that you go through," she said.

For Preston, effort is key to leadership. "Give your best effort and push yourself to be better every single day," said Preston. "Always give your best to the girl next to you, and don't be afraid to push your teammates to always give their best effort as well. The

best leaders are people that lead by example; always hold yourself and the team to the highest standard."

MVNU has had a motto that says "Life-Changing;" and for all three, that's the impact MVNU has left for them. "MVNU has allowed me to grow as a person in a Christ-like environment. This university has provided me with an atmosphere that has positively impacted both my soccer abilities and my nursing career," said Skal. "MVNU has also impacted me by allowing me to play soccer in a place where I have felt like was a good fit for me. Between both the nursing program and the soccer program, I have been able to follow my career path in an encouraging environment."

The faculty, the community and the atmosphere play important roles in a college student's life, and Preston agrees. "The community here is unlike any other," said Preston. "The faculty and staff care about you and want you to do your best. I couldn't imagine

going to a school with a better atmosphere than MVNU."

For Critzer, her life has changed greatly in her three years at MVNU. "It has done so much for me, and I will forever be so thankful for this place," said Critzer. "It's where I truly found Jesus and learned to let His love change me. His love has changed everything about my life, and this place will always hold a special place in my heart."

Critzer concluded, "It's where I met my best friends, learned to see differences as strengths, learned how to love others better, stayed up very late hanging out with friends, started random snowball fights, spent countless hours conversing with people in the cafeteria and ultimately started the journey of becoming the person I want to be when I grow up. It's such a bitter-sweet thing to reflect upon my upcoming graduation, because I am so excited to see for the future, but I'm also sad to be saying goodbye to a place I love so much."