

UNC ASHEVILLE PRESENTS: Bryan Stevenson, A Man of Our Time

by Kirk Borland

An expected capacity crowd will gather at UNC Asheville's Kimmel Arena on Thursday, April 25, to hear Bryan Stevenson, a passionate advocate for the poor, the incarcerated and the unjustly condemned. A graduate of Harvard Law who established the Equal Justice Initiative (EJI) in Montgomery, Alabama, Bryan Stevenson is also author of the best seller *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption*. His appearance will mark the second in an ongoing "visionary lecture series" conceived by Lin and Dave Brown and dedicated to "impacting the policies of society that nurture a better life for large numbers of people."

Bryan Stevenson's appearance, co-sponsored by the Browns and the Van Winkle Law Firm, seeks to stimulate a community dialogue to address the injustice, inequality and discrimination pervasive in our legal system today. As a public-interest lawyer, Bryan Stevenson admits, "I have been struggling my whole life with the question of how and why people are judged unfairly." Lin Brown has described Mr. Stevenson as "a man of our time working to make a difference in our community and the world."

Coincidentally, this event will mark the first anniversary of "The National Memorial for Peace and Justice," an EJI project dedicated to addressing the practice of lynching African Americans prior to 1950. The first of its kind, this memorial opened to the public in Montgomery and features hanging steel columns to commemorate each county where lynchings took place. Identical columns to those hanging in the Memorial have been offered to representatives of each county, including Buncombe County, for permanent display.

Stevenson's lecture, led and managed by UNC Asheville, is one of the key activities surrounding the installation of Nancy Cable, UNC Asheville's 8th Chancellor.

Bryan Stevenson's appearance on Thursday, April 25, begins at 7 p.m. and the doors to Kimmel Arena will open at 6 p.m. The lecture is free to the public. No ticket is required.