

**BRYAN
STEVENSON**

***JUILLIARD'S
11TH ANNUAL***

**REV. DR.
MARTIN
LUTHER
KING JR.**

SPEAKER SERIES

The Juilliard School
presents

The 11th Annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Speaker Series

Bryan Stevenson
Founder of the Equal Justice Initiative

Thursday, January 18, 2024, 6pm
Paul Hall

Bryan Stevenson is the founder and executive director of the Equal Justice Initiative, a human rights organization committed to protecting basic human rights.

Pre-Show Performance

Joel Wenhardt (BM '19; MM '23), Jazz Piano

Jayla Chee (BM '23), Jazz Bass

Adam Wacks (BM '23), Jazz Drums

Welcome

Renée Baron, Chair of the Liberal Arts Department and Faculty Advisor for EDIB Initiatives

Introduction

Damian Woetzel, President of the Juilliard School

Special Performance

"Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child"

Traditional spiritual arranged by H.T. Burleigh

Spoken text by **Martin Luther King Jr.**

Jawuan Hill (BFA '25), Speaker

Gillian Margot (MM '24), Vocalist

William Kjeer (MM '24), Pianist

The Juilliard School's Martin Luther King Jr. Week is made possible by the generosity of the late Irene Diamond.

Juilliard's creative enterprise programming, including the Creative Associates program, is generously supported by Jody and John Arnhold and the Arnhold Foundation.

This evening's program is supported by the Office of EDIB with generous funding from Debbie Simon.

Speaker

Bryan Stevenson

Bryan Stevenson is the founder and executive director of the Equal Justice Initiative (EJI), a human rights organization in Montgomery, Alabama. Under his leadership, EJI has won major legal challenges eliminating excessive and unfair sentencing, exonerating innocent death row prisoners, confronting abuse of the incarcerated and the mentally ill, and aiding children prosecuted as adults.



PHOTO: Rog and Bee Walker for EJI

Stevenson has argued and won multiple cases at the U.S. Supreme Court, including a 2019 ruling protecting condemned prisoners who suffer from dementia and a landmark 2012 ruling that banned mandatory life-imprisonment-without-parole sentences for all children 17 or younger. Stevenson and his staff have won reversals, relief, or release from prison for more than 140 wrongly condemned prisoners on death row and won relief for hundreds of others wrongly convicted or unfairly sentenced.

Stevenson has initiated new anti-poverty and anti-discrimination efforts that challenge inequality in America. He led the creation of two cultural sites that opened in 2018: the Legacy Museum and the National Memorial for Peace and Justice. These new national landmark institutions chronicle the legacy of slavery, lynching, and racial segregation as well as the connection to mass incarceration and contemporary issues of racial bias.

Stevenson has received more than 50 honorary doctoral degrees, including degrees from Harvard, Yale, Princeton, the University of Pennsylvania, and Oxford University. He is the author of the *New York Times* bestseller *Just Mercy*, which was one of *Time* magazine's 10 best nonfiction books in 2014. He has been awarded honors including the American Library Association's Carnegie Medal for best nonfiction book of 2015 and a 2015 NAACP Image Award. *Just Mercy* was adapted as a major motion picture, which won the American Bar Association's 2020 Silver Gavel Award as well as four NAACP Image Awards. Stevenson is also the subject of the Emmy-winning HBO documentary *True Justice*. He is a graduate of the Harvard Law School and the Harvard School of Government.

Bloomberg Philanthropies

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