

KC CHILDREN'S AUTHOR SPEAKS TO MVC COMMUNITY

Marshall, Mo. (January 19, 2010)—Kansas City, Mo. Author Derrick Barnes visited Missouri Valley College on Thursday, January 14. Barnes is a children's author dedicated to creating images in which children can delight.

The author spoke in Murrell Library's Coffee By the Book. The event was attended by faculty, staff, students and community members. Barnes spent time sharing stories from his adolescence, and challenging situations he overcame while chasing after his dream. He was the first African-American male writer to be employed by Hallmark. It was in that moment, working at Hallmark, he knew he wanted to write children's books.

Mr. Barnes spoke with Missouri Valley students about the importance of setting goals, maintaining a vision, and following your dream. He was very candid while speaking of the good and difficult times he has experienced along his journey. The students seemed to connect with Barnes and his passion for what he does. Murrell Library sold copies of his series *Ruby and the Booker Boys*. Derrick autographed every copy, and the books sold out!

Barnes said, "It's about doing something positive that will outlive you." He then offered these words of wisdom: "Don't get caught up in doing something for the money alone. Have a passion for what you do."

Derrick really enjoyed himself and his time at Missouri Valley College. Upon arrival, he asked a student where the library was located, and much to his surprise, the student directed him to Murrell Library in a *New York accent*. He was pleasantly surprised by the diversity on campus.

According to Barnes, he is busy being a husband, father of three, and children's author—in that order.

Barnes is currently in discussions with Disney about his character, *Ruby*.

"I create characters that either don't exist, or are not being properly represented in children's literature," Barnes said. "In particular, African American images of positive, functional family life, African American boys that are intellectuals—sensitive as well as strong and charming."

ABOUT MISSOURI VALLEY COLLEGE

Missouri Valley College is a liberal arts college that provides educational, social and cultural experiences in a decidedly Christian environment. Established in 1889, MVC offers over 30 majors and 7 pre-professional programs, and 15 sports. The most popular majors include education and business, and the newest majors are nursing, graphic design, dance, and hospitality/tourism management, which will begin in Fall 2009. The liberal arts heritage focuses on

scholarship, critical thinking and academic excellence to prepare students to become members of a responsible citizenry. For more information, call (660) 831-4000 or visit www.moval.edu.