



Network for Vocation in Undergraduate Education (NetVUE) Grants for Reframing the Institutional Saga

Awarded in November 2022 • Funding for 2023–2025

Alma College (MI) will develop a book, a short documentary, and searchable archives that will seek to articulate the college’s mission and identity. The project will involve interviewing 25 graduates to gain a better understanding of the legacy of Alma College for future generations and the impact of its graduates as responsible stewards of the world. The products of this project will be shared through several events conducted on campus and summarized in a report written to the president of the college.

Alvernia University (PA) will curate a new text, virtual spaces, banners, and physical kiosks to continue and reframe our Mission Moment tradition. Faculty and students began the tradition of sharing a Mission Moment at the start of classes, meetings, and other important gatherings, aligning the school’s practices with the Franciscan core value of contemplation. For the university’s 65th anniversary in 2023, we will publish a new compendium of these Mission Moments, curate an expanded virtual Mission Moments space, and install kiosks at our welcome centers for easy access to materials from this Mission Moments project.

Bard College at Simon’s Rock (MA) will produce a new book detailing both institutional history and current programs. In addition to tracing the thread of its core mission to the present day, this will allow the college to provide detailed expositions of several current initiatives in the context of its founding mission. To facilitate this project, students, alumni, staff, and faculty members will discuss and clarify the identity of the institution in light of each current initiative. Bard College will use the new institutional history to inform both student orientation activities and college-wide strategic planning.

Chestnut Hill College (PA) seeks to update its institutional saga and to capture the relevance and vitality of the college’s mission, as the student population changes and the direct involvement of the college’s founding congregation (Sisters of St. Joseph) declines. In addition to expanding an existing publication that captures the rich history of the college through 1999,

The college will gather contemporary stories of students, alumni, faculty, and staff over the last 25 years for use on our college website.

Concordia University Texas will develop a book and companion digital resources that both recount and interrogate the history of the institution. Two key research questions will guide our project. First, what does it mean for a university to be deeply committed to a Lutheran Christian ethos, and a place that values accessibility, belonging, inclusion, diversity, and equity? Second, are we, as an institution, who we say we are? The book and digital resources produced through this project will be used in faculty and staff orientation, as well as with our first-year students.

Friends University (KS) will reexamine its historical narrative through the production of an expanded issue of the university's magazine, the production of a historical documentary, and the construction of a timeline wall display. While a collection of diverse stories from 1898 to the present day will be woven into each enduring product, our project will give special attention to the last 25 years. This project will re-engage the entire academic community in the university's mission and further inspire future students to live according to their God-given callings.

Georgetown College (KY) will undertake a research project examining significant institutional changes over the last 30 years. These include a re-alignment with the Baptist tradition, significant financial and enrollment challenges, success in increasing racial diversity on campus, and changes in presidential leadership. The product of this project will include a book of historical and evaluative essays, a short-form and long-form video of interviews, and a commissioned art installation. By recognizing the strengths and values that have perdured in the college during this time, the institution will be able to continue as a Christian college in the Baptist tradition dedicated to academic quality and holistic student success.

Greenville University (IL) will create a collection of vignettes in written and video format for publication on its website and distribution to its various constituencies. These stories will highlight the 130-year history of the institution as it was lived by female leaders. This project will engage a wide range of institutional stakeholders, including board members, faculty members, staff, graduates, and current students. This project will also connect ongoing recruitment and scholarship opportunities with the institution's roots in the Free Methodist Church and its ongoing commitment to women in leadership.

King's College (PA) will produce a series of articles and videos highlighting groups and individuals whose stories best exemplify the institution's historical mission, especially the stories of those for whom it was challenging to gain access to resources and opportunities. The articles and videos will be embedded in the historical timeline on the college's website. The project will culminate in a symposium in which both the subjects of the video interviews and articles, as well as the writers and researchers of the pieces, can come together to present their work to the college community.

Marywood University (PA) will examine its longstanding commitment to justice and explore its current context in order to identify both historical and emerging stories that will be woven into the future saga of the university. Faculty members will train students to do archival research and gather interviews to illuminate the past, summarizing those findings for key campus

stakeholders. Members of our campus community will then write essays that frame a powerful vision of the future while demonstrating how the vision has its roots in the past. The archive will be updated at periodic anniversary check-ins at which times new material will be solicited, so that this project will become an evolving resource guiding the university in the years to come.

As **Nazareth College** (NY) prepares to celebrate its centennial in 2024, the community has experienced a newfound appreciation of the story of its founding by five Sisters of St. Joseph. Numerous parallels have been discovered between the challenges and struggles of 1924 and those of today (including healing from the aftermath of a global pandemic). This project funds several educational opportunities, including the publication of a *Centennial Compendium of Nazareth's History* and the installation of a permanent and interactive display of Nazareth's first 100 years.

Nebraska Wesleyan University will add a new volume of history to a previously published institutional narrative in order to renew conversations about the university's mission and identity. The new volume will cover an era that sought to connect students to the wider world and will address limitations of existing written histories—including their accessibility, format, diversity of identities represented, and writing style. Project activities will engage students, employees, and graduates in situating that narrative in ways that connect the institution's founding purpose to its current programs and identity. Activities include creating two new courses on the university's history and identity, as well as hosting a symposium for NetVUE member institutions to discuss the discoveries made as each institution rethinks its saga.

Notre Dame College (OH) will convene a group of faculty members, students, administrators and staff in a learning and writing community. This group will investigate the college's institutional saga, beginning with its cornerstone principle that an education grounded in Catholic identity and in service to the world is attainable and valuable for students. The project will situate this principle within the current context in order to discern how the college's saga can and should relate to its strategic plan and the fulfillment of its mission. The work will lead to a published essay collection to be released in a public symposium.

Our Lady of the Lake University (TX) will develop and perform a theatrical play to link the university's history, mission, and heritage with Mexican-American culture and the university's service to its predominantly low-income, first-generation students. Grant funds will also support the video recording of the play and publication of the script as a means to engage members of the entire OLLU community in a variety of events and learning opportunities. Feedback gathered from pre-and post-surveys and *pláticas* (informal Q&A sessions), held after each production, will be used to refine the play over time.

Pacific Lutheran University (WA) will examine the relationship between its historical saga — rooted in Nordic Lutheran education—and its contemporary commitment to serve diverse cultural, socio-economic, gender, racial, and religious identities. The project will enable the university to articulate the relationship between the values of Lutheran higher education and Pacific Lutheran's educational mission—the matrix in which vocations of service and advocacy can be nurtured in a rapidly changing region of the country. The project will include a video that

introduces the distinctive marks of Lutheran higher education, a book of essays on the six marks of the university's educational mission, and historical exhibits that narrate changes in the institution's saga as it has responded increasing diversity.

Philander Smith College (AR), a Historically Black Christian College, will embark on a two-year project to collect written and oral narratives, histories, and artifacts in order to tell the story of the institution more effectively, with particular focus on the long-term values of faith and justice. The project's eventual goal is to utilize the written, digital, and film components in order to offer a more robust witness to the college's identity as a social justice institution, and to do so in a way that can inform its curriculum, strategic planning, and relationship with the United Methodist Church. Further, these products will serve as teaching tools for students as they discover the mission with which they are charged.

Texas Lutheran University will create a documentary film and companion eBook to chronicle and understand the university's identity as a Hispanic Serving Institution. This project will help give voice to the historically excluded Latinx community while creating an open and honest narrative that will guide the institution beyond its current state to become a *Hispanic-Thriving* Institution. The documentary film and eBook will be available as a multidisciplinary instructional resource for the university and as an open access resource for other institutions.

Wofford College (SC) will convene graduates, college personnel, and students to complete both an oral history and several writing projects commemorating the sixtieth anniversary of its 1964 desegregation. These projects will lift up the narratives of minority students' historic and contemporary experiences—told from their own perspectives—as a contribution to the college's ongoing dialogue about race, community, and inclusion. This project will result in an oral history of Black Wofford to be published in Fall 2024 and will inform the College's 175th anniversary history to be published in 2029.