



Network for Vocation in Undergraduate Education (NetVUE) Program Development Grants

May 2015 Awards

Aurora University (IL) will strengthen vocational conversation with students and address the needs of transfer students by offering a mentoring experience that complements the third-year general education capstone course for all undergraduates. The mentoring process will include a campus-wide assessment of students' academic achievement, their sense of vocation, and their readiness to take concrete steps to realize their goals. One part of this assessment will include a written self-reflection on vocation, and the use of surveys to determine the degree to which students have begun to prepare for the transition to active vocation. Students will receive guidance in relation to their final two years of study, including ways to broaden their experiences and strengthen their skill sets. Attention will be given to the steps students should take to pursue their interests beyond college, whether in their lives, careers, or graduate study. Students also will receive one-on-one mentoring with faculty members within their academic majors. In short, students will have forward-looking conversations with a mentoring faculty member, with two years to act on these continuing conversations. Through this university-wide required mentoring process, along with the Global Justice course, all undergraduate juniors will benefit from a shared community, a common approach and a commitment to the university's core values.

Barton College (NC), through its Life Matters program, joins students with faculty and staff in reflection on vocation. Located in the Center for Religious Studies but in cooperation with the Office of Student Success and the Office of the Chaplain, the program serves Barton College's mission of "providing programs and opportunities to encourage the intellectual, spiritual, social, and cultural development of its students and to challenge them for future leadership and service to their local and global communities." Students will find opportunities for reflection through conversation and community that develop in student cohorts, engagement with faculty advisors, and classroom curriculum. Two student cohorts will be formed from already existing student groups. These students will meet regularly for dialog with each other and their faculty advisors,

for various exercises to assist and teach reflection, and for meals with guests who will share their own narratives. At the end of each of grant year students will participate in a retreat to synthesize and incorporate their developing understandings of vocation. In addition to supporting student cohorts, faculty and staff leaders will develop one-hour classes that explore various vocational issues. Available to all Barton students, these classes will provide formal content and a point of engagement with students outside the cohort program. Faculty and staff leaders will support one another through monthly conversations and three retreats throughout the grant period.

Centenary College of Louisiana will build on more than a century of affiliation with the United Methodist Church and explore more closely the meaning of "church-related" as it relates to liberal arts education in the 21st century. Over a two-year project period the college will advance and assess this exploration through a series of speakers, workshops, and colloquia; and it will develop and implement a related leadership certificate program documented through ePortfolios. The certificate will document fulfillment of outcomes related to participation in the colloquium series and in Centenary's co-curricular leadership development model, identifying the ways in which the vocational and academic emphases address three global challenges: Living a Meaningful Life, Expanding Circles of Relationship, and Living a Sustainable Life. The overall vocational effort will address the question of how liberal arts education and church-relatedness can intertwine to produce wise, caring, moral leaders for a challenged world.

Davis & Elkins College (WV) supports an initiative through which a student's talents and value commitments converge with his or her aspirations in service to others and contribution to the common good. A graduate's vocation (or purpose) becomes an end in itself, not measured solely through remuneration, but also in satisfaction that the work provides for the individual and its contributions to the welfare of others. This project provides resources for members of the campus community to work together in developing this language. Multiple faculty and staff groups will read, discuss, and explore issues of vocation both in their own lives and in the lives of students. "Graduates" of these groups will form the core team members for tackling specific initiatives, including the development of a three-day transition program for first-year students prior to the first semester that develops personal relationships, acclimates them to campus, and explores issues of vocation; the incorporation of a focus on personal beliefs and values in the College's First-Year Symposium; piloting a modified advising model to incorporate a vocational focus; and developing a series of curricular and co-curricular experiences in which students can explore vocational issues.

Eureka College (IL) will build on its continuing covenant relationship with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and its strong institutional identity with the non-sectarian liberal arts values of its founding trustees. The college will host two summer seminars for faculty and staff to build a cadre of vocational interpreters who are positioned to strengthen a community of calling across varied college divisions. Two years of follow-up academic events will more

explicitly and intentionally integrate vocational discernment into: first-year and senior seminar courses; the Reagan, Sandifer, and other student mentorship programs regarding post-college service, locally, nationally, and globally; the office of the chaplain programs; and the office for career services. The Eureka College mission emphasizes the mutual development of intellect and character so that the members of our community may lead meaningful, productive lives while succeeding in their professional and social roles. Through the project the college will explore student questions about life purposes and the reasons behind them.

Hiram College (OH) will deepen an undergraduate sense of self, meaning, and vocation through engagement of their surrounding community on diverse social issues and accompanying frameworks for student reflection. The college's office of civic engagement will aid students in applying classroom learning through service to the community, and in the process, explore who they are. Since approximately 40% of Hiram College students are first-generation and 49% are Pell-eligible, this is a particularly powerful approach to vocational exploration. To deepen and strengthen students' exploration the college will: facilitate several faculty and community-wide conversations regarding vocation; mesh vocational exploration into service-learning courses more intentionally; increase substantially the number of service-learning courses offered; and strengthen the vocational exploration component of the Hiram Service Leaders program, a federal community service work study initiative that supports students serving in small cohorts at local non-profits. This initiative will also integrate participation in XPLOR, a Disciples of Christ young-adult year of service and spiritual discernment, into Hiram's vocational exploration and community engagement programs. Through these initiatives students will explore life meaning and purpose, stretch their self-perceptions, further defining their passions, and apply classroom learning through service to the community. Simultaneously students will reflect on their strengths, skills, and personal characteristics, as well as their limitations and areas for growth while challenging and engaging the morals and values that clarify and give meaning to their lives.

King University (TN) will offer a program called Meaningful Lives, through which it will provide educational events for members of staff and faculty to bring an exploration of vocation more thoroughly into the curriculum and consciousness across the university. One goal of the Meaningful Lives initiative will be a further faculty and student-centered embrace of the university's Reformed/Presbyterian intellectual heritage concerning personal and corporate discernment about vocation. The Meaningful Lives program will sponsor two summer institutes, each of which will educate and nourish 30 faculty and staff about vocation, the university mission, and the integration of faith and learning as part of educators' vocations. Sessions on vocation will be offered to faculty during spring and fall faculty workshops attended by those from all academic disciplines. The Meaningful Lives program will directly impact students' understanding and concept of vocation through King's general education classes required of all students. Additionally for high-achieving students vocation will become a holistic part of the honors curriculum. Meaningful Lives will shape the King community's appreciation and

understanding of a Reformed view of Christian higher education and equip faculty and staff more effectively with tools for discerning their own vocation and preparing students to understand theirs.

LaGrange College (GA) will focus on its global engagement initiative to explore students' search for truth and their need for an ethical framework that fosters lives of integrity and moral courage. Consisting of "Study Away" and "Study Here" components, the initiative is expanding opportunities for study-away as well as greater attention within the study-here curriculum to issues of global concern and matters of diversity and difference. The project will integrate global engagement components into existing courses, create new globally-themed courses throughout both general and specialized curricula, and enhance global awareness on campus in extracurricular events and programs with a proposed theme of "The World Is Our Parish". Within this theme the college will heighten students' awareness and understanding of their current and future identities through a global lens instead of a bifurcated local versus world perspective. The college will become equipped to help students reflect intentionally on their life vocation, calling or purpose within the context of global engagement through: the infusion of global themes into their January term courses; faculty training and retreats that develop faculty knowledge and skill in asking the right questions; campus-wide global reflection opportunities, language learning, and global signage; and student peer mentors who are positioned as global engagement ambassadors.

Le Moyne College (NY) will develop a program to pursue the intersection of meaningful and transformative social engagement and reflection called The Undivided Life seeking to weave the *via active* and the *via contemplativa* together in considering a meaning life with meaningful work. Led by professors and staff members who utilize Le Moyne's rich Ignatian/Jesuit spirituality and tradition as resources, The Undivided Life will consist of two parts: a summer faculty development colloquium; and a program that brings faculty members, career services, and campus ministry staff into partnership for vocational exploration in advising, mentoring, and experiential learning opportunities beyond the classroom. The Undivided Life will advance and enrich vocational exploration by helping faculty, staff, and students reflect on and master the following key understandings: vocation as a life path; discovery of an abiding passion of the heart; a practice of reflective discernment; and a creation of a reflective sacred space.

North Central College (IL) will seek to inspire students to employ their knowledge, skill and passion for the common good in careers and endeavors that result in positive social impact – regardless of their field of study or chosen career path. This emphasis aligns with the college's mission, history, and identity as a United Methodist institution that seeks to develop informed, involved, principled, and productive citizens and leaders. Under the guidance of a campus-wide advisory board the college will infuse the intellectual and theological exploration of vocation into numerous existing programs, including curricular offerings in social entrepreneurship, the

Leadership, Ethics and Values program, the First-Year Experience program, student leadership programs, local and global immersion service-learning programs, and a conscious focus on student learning about social impact careers. Key campus leaders will be developed through focused training and resources. These efforts will include faculty certification in the area of small business social entrepreneurship as well as consultations with Ashoka University both of which will enhance education for social innovation.

Notre Dame College (OH) proposes the program Preparing Students for a Life of Value and Service as a central initiative to develop faculty and staff skills that more deeply and openly integrate vocational discernment and spiritual development into curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular experiences. The program will leverage existing and planned partnerships among academic affairs, athletics, and student affairs, using service-learning, community involvement, curricular innovations, and leadership opportunities. After an initial faculty and staff retreat, these leaders will continue their work through small professional learning communities that review scholarship about emerging adult development, frame vocational ideas for curricular and co-curricular initiatives, and create pilot projects. In the process the college will also enhance its relationships with local Catholic not-for-profit organizations that can provide experiential learning and reflection for students.

Ohio Northern University will identify the concepts around vocation that are commonly held across the university community, and will provide the opportunity for students, faculty, and staff to begin a deeper conversation about the bigger questions of life while preparing for careers in a wide variety of fields. Drawing on the resources of the entire university, including its five colleges for arts & sciences, business, law, engineering, and pharmacy, along with student affairs and career service offices, a white paper will be prepared outlining the common language for vocation found within the university. The white paper will then be the basis for mini-grant awards to those within the campus community who are engaging in cross-disciplinary explorations of vocation that create new resources for faculty development, student leadership development, and assessment. Mini-grant outcomes will be celebrated at a symposium that highlights the pilot projects and leads to the creation of a guidebook for use by the entire university community. The guidebook will outline the common language of vocation and its applications across the spectrum of professional programs within the university.

Regis University (CO) is developing a holistic advising program based on Ignatian principles of vocation and discernment. The Ignatian Advising Program will create a network of faculty and staff to assist students in connecting their curricular and co-curricular experiences to vocational discernment. In addition to faculty members, the network will include staff with which students are most likely to interact through offices for university ministry, service learning, diversity and inclusion, student life, career services, and academic internships. This network will collaborate regarding effective practices that enable students to connect various university learning

experiences to vocation. It will build on the Jesuit Catholic mission of Regis, the existing academic advising program, and co-curricular educational opportunities. The new program will create two learning community cohorts of faculty and staff advisors, one per year. In each year, the learning community will participate in a week-long May workshop on Ignatian principles of vocation and discernment, collaboratively develop advising practices based upon these principles, and meet monthly during the subsequent academic year to develop, share, and implement these new advising practices. Advisors throughout the program will ask students to answer three main questions: who am I, how am I called to serve, and how might I best discern answers to these questions? Students will answer these questions in video interviews and essays, and the university will create an archive of student responses through which to assess student abilities to draw connections across the range of their experiences.

Roberts Wesleyan College (NY) seeks to prepare thoughtful, spiritually mature, service-oriented people who will help transform society. Students will be welcomed to the homes of faculty and staff for discernment dinners and desserts that support a thoughtful consideration of calling to consider their talents in conjunction with society's greatest needs. To formalize and expand this discernment program faculty and staff will receive formal training and materials so that they reach students with a uniform emphasis on the importance of vocation and calling. Additionally, the college will expand the discernment program by inviting all incoming freshmen to a welcoming dessert and a discovery dinner. The college will then follow them through sophomore year which will culminate in a discovery retreat to engage students in further guidance and skill-building to find their place in the world.

Saint Peter's University (NJ) will help students engage more directly in their own personal development and educational processes by using the principles of Ignatian discernment to identify a sense of "call" or the "rightness" in their life trajectory as they identify and nurture all their gifts and talents. From their first through their fourth year, students (with their faculty members, career service advisors, personal development advisors, and campus ministry leaders) will utilize the Life Portfolio. Students will be the primary users of these portfolios which will give them a structure through which to assume responsibility for their own education, engage classes and co-curricular events, record reflections on their experiences, and store papers, projects, and other evidence of their academic and personal development. They will be taught to see the portfolio as "data" that, with the help of advisors, will aid choices for internships, graduate schools, and other career related options. The project will enable movement beyond a small pilot effort to full integration across the freshman class. The university will conduct a workshop to introduce selected faculty, advisors, and other critical personnel to the concept and process of the Life Portfolio, and lay the foundation for progressive implementation of this effort through the whole undergraduate experience.

Southern Adventist University (TN) will enrich its Christian Service Program through further initiatives for local and global student service. Beginning in 2010 each student must complete 40 hours of service learning and community service as an integral, required part of the general education program. This effort guides students to become contributing members of churches, families, groups and communities through their chosen vocations in a global society. Now there is a need to expand the scope of the program by creating an intentional, campus-wide connection between vocation and a life of service. Over a period of two years the university will develop appropriate faculty training on integrating vocation and service and incorporate the connections between service and vocation into the first year experience course for all students.

Spring Hill College (AL) will incorporate its Jesuit understanding of calling and discernment into the college's Learning, Engagement, Awareness, and Personal Growth (LEAP) lab for all first-year students, a one-credit hour course directly tied to first-year academic courses. The college will both deepen and extend current work on the vocational discernment of first-year students by supporting two linked efforts. First, the college will support faculty professional development through an intensive summer seminar on both the theoretical and practical aspects of mentoring for vocation. Second, the college will support the revision of nine academic course sections that are connected to the LEAP initiative so that these courses include vocational material as part of their ongoing content.

Stillman College (AL), in its historical affiliation with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and broad Christian perspective will develop forums, workshops, lectures, and other activities to explore the connections between religious faith and a sense of calling. These activities will present faculty, staff, and students with vocational questions such as: What do you believe is your God-given purpose? What do you believe God calls you to do for yourself and others? Does God's call require you to address all aspects of human life? As an institution serving racial-ethnic minorities in the Deep South, the college will focus specifically on the challenges that occur when a commitment to one's calling can be easily frustrated and exhausted. There will be specific summer workshops for faculty and staff as well as forums for students to clarify understandings of calling, connect them to the academic advising process, and explore the importance of social witness as an aspect of Christian calling.

Wagner College (NY) will promote students' vocational exploration by building on the college's strength in civic engagement, and adding elements of interfaith student dialogue. Students in religiously-affiliated student organizations will participate actively together in community service and engage in interfaith exchanges as they explore their sense of vocation. In addition, vocational exploration through interfaith dialogue will be incorporated into the extended first-year program in its spring semester seminars. Professional development for both faculty and administrators is a key component to strengthen institutional capacity for sustaining

these programs and use college learning from its administration of the Interfaith Diversity Experiences & Attitudes Longitudinal Survey (IDEALS).

Westmont College (CA) will complement existing programs that explore vocational success with more focused attention on questions about how best to use student knowledge and skills for the good of the world and create more systematic programming for that focus. While the initiative will engage all students there is particular concern for female students who show signs of diminished confidence in their abilities to pursue post-college callings. This effort will support particular speakers in the chapel program who can provide female models of intentional pursuit of vocation; to expand vocational exploration for all students through workshops and symposia sponsored by the career counseling office and the honors program; and provide more systematic and vocation-based support for students pursuing post-baccalaureate fellowships. These initiatives will coordinate and enhance existing programs that address vocational questions while strengthening the partnerships between the campus pastor, career advising, and the academic program.

Wheaton College (IL) will support two elaborations of efforts pioneered through Opus: The Art of Work, a new college institute. First, vocational discernment groups will be developed in two unique experiential learning environments: Wheaton in Chicago (WiC)/Center for Urban Engagement and the Outdoor Center for Leadership Development at a college-owned wilderness facility. In the WiC program leaders will further incorporate questions and reflection on an interdisciplinary approach to vocational discernment in an urban context through the use of the StrengthsFinders inventory and the MyPath portfolio. At the wilderness site professional staff will be trained to work with students in vocational discernment related to personal values, leadership development, and problem solving among eight specified competencies. Staff will also be trained so they can teach students to use a smartphone application that tracks personal development. What is learned through these two efforts will inform the creation of additional elements for experiential learning and vocational development on the main college campus.

Wittenberg University (OH) will infuse intentional and purposeful vocational exploration into the culture of the University through vocation-themed programming for all students in their first-year seminars and subsequent conversations with their faculty academic advisors and other campus mentors throughout their college careers. The goal is to have a substantial proportion of the campus community in dialogue about purposeful work, ethical leadership, and effective advising. The Calling Plan will rely on a series of carefully designed retreats, speakers, and mini-grants to develop a campus culture of calling. Through the retreats, small groups of staff and faculty stakeholders will create materials and programs for their colleagues as resources that can influence the whole campus community. The program will also bring speakers to campus who can challenge the community on the theme of vocation, and provides seminar-style interactions, cross-unit collaboration, and significant informal discussions throughout the year. Additionally,

campus leaders can apply for mini-grants to establish professional learning communities for reading and discussion of vocational concepts or host a life story seminar focused on a particular person of faith and social influence. Finally, mini-grants will fund cross-divisional partnerships for student community service and reflection.