

Network for Vocation in Undergraduate Education Professional Development Awards

Awarded in June 2015 ☸ Funding for 2015–2016

Avila University (MO) will work to expand the capacity of faculty members and staff for to effectively teaching, leading, and mentoring students in vocational exploration. A one-day workshop will help first-year seminar instructors to strengthen their ability to teach vocational exploration. Executive-level retreats will establish a focus on the university's mission and commitment to vocational exploration. Following these, three overnight retreats will occur, providing space for faculty members and staff from many schools and departments to explore skills related to vocation.

Bethany College (KS) will further develop and implement programming to coincide with its peer ministry program. A series of four follow-up course modules will be created, complementing the co-curricular activities of students who have completed peer ministry training. In order to create this program, a group of faculty members and staff will meet for one half-day each month to discuss key texts which will relate to the modules. Themes will be developed for these modules which will enrich skills and foster practices that encourage self-reflection.

Bluffton University (OH) will implement professional development programming in order to establish a shared language on campus and to foster an increase in faculty/staff engagement in vocationally-focused academic advising. Reading groups will meet several times each semester to discuss a selection of vocation-related texts. The members of these groups will be invited to apply for mini-grants that will focus on research on vocation, and on making use of the findings of this research for conferences or workshops. Three training workshops will occur on a variety of subjects, including equipping faculty members and staff to serve as faith mentors and vocational resources for students, training those who are supervisors of work-study students, and overall vocational and academic advising. The year will end with a conference where reflections from all activities will be shared.

Calvin College (MI) will develop a series of integrated workshops for pre-tenure faculty members that will explore theological issues pertaining to vocation. The goals of these workshops will include identifying vocational questions, integrating the work of faculty across divisions, deepening the understanding and appreciation of theological perspectives and the process of faith development, and developing practices for future workshops that will be beneficial for other faculty members and allow them to participate more fully in student formation. Faculty participants will be drawn from different academic divisions across the institution and will meet periodically during the academic year.

Carthage College (WI) will design and implement a new advising component which incorporates personal exploration of vocation within the traditional elements of academic advising. It will also create a collaborative structure in which offices and programs involved in

both vocation and advising can work together. A leadership retreat, opening workshop, and reflective sessions will enable these goals to be reached. Peers from NetVUE institutions will be recruited in order to provide resources, describe best practices, and participate in the opening workshop. Advisors will meet in the early academic year for a two-day workshop that will develop a shared understanding of vocation, as well as language that can be used in advising sessions. After both spring and fall registration, reflective sessions will provide space for first year and faculty advisors to debrief their experiences.

Catawba College (NC) will offer a two-day event for faculty, staff, and students that will be led by a speaker who is a professional in the vocational community. Faculty members will be provided with a copy of the speaker's book prior to the retreat. Following this first conference, a second event will follow during which the same speaker will host a campus wide forum with students from the First Year Seminar course in attendance.

Columbia College (SC) will host a two-day retreat for the exploration of vocation among key faculty members and staff, with the goal of coordinating the efforts through which the college instructs, guides, and encourages the intellectual and theological exploration of vocation with students. The goals of the facilitated discussion and planning retreat will be to engage in substantive, thoughtful discussion on vocation with key members of the college's faculty and staff. The goal will be to increase knowledge and understanding of vocation, as well as to develop a coordinated, holistic plan for guiding students.

Edgewood College (WI) will work to develop a Community of Practice model to focus on mentoring and advising students' vocational development outside of the classroom. This work will extend Edgewood's vocation-focused general education curriculum (COR), which centers around three questions: (1) Who am I and who am I becoming; (2) What are the needs and opportunities of the world; and (3) What is my role in building a just and compassionate world? Participants from across campus will join together in two retreats and biweekly meetings centered on a series of readings, experiential contemplative activities, reflection, and a collaborative vocational discernment project. The overall objective is to extend the application of COR questions into advising, mentoring, and professional development for students.

Elmhurst College (IL) will charge the director of its Niebuhr Center to oversee a process of reflection and re-commitment, in order to strengthening vocational exploration by students. The director will hold sessions with faculty members and staff, as well as students and alumni for reflection and discussion. An external speaker will help provide expertise in the area of professional development, and informational materials will be provided to attendees. After the completion of the sessions, the director will propose programming development to ensure ongoing future success of strengthening vocational exploration programming.

Grand View University (IA) will construct a faculty learning community for all instructors of core seminars to meet intermittently to engage in conversations on vocational discernment on campus. A workshop/kick-off luncheon will launch the process, with attendance from about 1/3 of full-time faculty members. Then, a series of monthly meetings will focus on two vocation-focused books provided for each core instructor, which will promote conversations that will create a broader knowledge of vocational exploration. Faculty members who participate will

receive a small stipend after full participation in the learning community and after submitting a reflective paper.

Lindsey Wilson College (KY) will implement several opportunities for professional development around vocational exploration, particularly as it relates to developing the next generation of Christian leaders. Speakers on campus, luncheons, and conferences will be provided to train a greater portion of faculty members and staff to mentor students in connecting their vocational exploration efforts to community and world needs, and to the local church. A large portion of training will take place with spiritual formation directors at seminaries that students typically attend following graduation. Trainees will also be given copies of vocational texts in order to further deepen conversations and context.

Malone University (OH) will offer coordinated training for faculty members and staff related to the issues of calling and vocation, so that these issues permeate the institutional culture. The focus will be on connecting the classroom and community, and extending this focus to campus worship, residential life, student athletics, student jobs, and other facets of the college experience. A one-day workshop for up to 60 faculty and staff members will include presentation and discussions, as well as reflection on vocational texts. Then, small groups or pairs will meet over lunch to discuss further readings, as well as share best practices for student engagement in respective roles. These efforts will greatly increase the university's efforts to support vocational reflection among students.

Northwest Christian University (OR) will equip and empower faculty members across the disciplines to engage their students in meaningful theological reflection on vocation and calling in the respective disciplines. This will begin with an off-campus retreat for key faculty members and the core campus NetVUE team. Background readings and individual presentations will direct the retreat. Participants will then be given the opportunity to apply for mini-grants to implement these ideas in the classroom. The NetVUE team will also develop a vocational reflection resource center that will draw from the other activities. At the end of the academic year, an all-faculty retreat will take place in order to engage broad discussion and forward planning based on the experiences of the core faculty group and the recipients of the mini-grants.

Pacific Lutheran University (WA) will intentionally develop capacity for vocational exploration among faculty members and staff who engage with students in conversations about the future. In order to do so, a five-part seminar series will be implemented for a select group of faculty members and staff. Participants will develop a set of experiments in fostering student vocational discernment, and will implement these experiments over the course of the 2015-2016 academic year. The opening retreat will be followed by monthly meetings, in which groups report on the results of their experiments, and a set of effective strategies for vocational reflection and discernment will be developed. The outcome will be a set of clearly-articulated practices and a better overall understanding of how best to foster student vocational discernment.

Pfeiffer University (NC) will hold two Vocational Discernment Retreats, each including 12 members of the faculty and staff, who will discuss topics related to vocational discernment and will read pertinent texts. Participants will then be required to create individual mentoring and visioning statements, a list of vocational mentoring strategies, and one program idea that can be

implemented in the participant's own department. The goal is to create a core of faculty members and staff who are dedicated to the concept of vocation in their mentoring.

Saint Mary's University of Minnesota will utilize grant funding in order to support faculty member attendance to the Buttimer Institute of Lasallian Studies. This effort will help transform the campus as those who attend will be able to apply learned pedagogy to their classrooms.

Trinity Christian College (IL) will engage faculty and student life staff in cross-divisional, intellectual, and theologically meaningful professional development around vocation. Academic advising and student life staff will be the focus of the development. Key components include a reading group for student life staff, along with a four-part series for cross-divisional groups of faculty members and staff, which will include speakers from off campus.

University of Saint Francis (IN) will broaden awareness of vocational discernment through its inclusion as a key theme for Employee Development Day. A speaker will be brought to campus to reinforce to the community how the mission of the University aligns with NetVUE's purpose. Small groups will then meet for informal discussions, focusing on a campus-wide common reading on vocational discernment. The common vocabulary the book provides will lay the groundwork for casual conversations, reading group meetings, and lunch events. These events will provide campus-wide framework and conversation on understanding vocational discernment.

Warren Wilson College (SC) seeks to deepen capacity and culture for vocational exploration through a triad of programs focusing on academics, work, and service learning that engages students in a liberal arts education. A selection of a diverse cohort of campus educators will participate in a retreat in early fall, and a series of five gatherings throughout the year. During these meetings, participants will discuss a series of readings and discern ways to connect their learning back to their direct work with students.

Wartburg College (IA) will strengthen faculty and staff member skills in helping students seek and claim their callings. This goal will be achieved through numerous initiatives, including reading groups, workshops, and a two-day retreat. These programs will equip faculty members and staff with knowledge, tools, and resources for helping students intentionally explore their vocations.