

## Network for Vocation in Undergraduate Education Professional Development Awards

Awarded in June 2017 ☸ Funding for 2017–2018

**Aurora University (IL)** will work to provide ongoing professional development around vocation for faculty members and staff, and to ensure that they are provided with cross-divisional opportunities which support meaningful and continuous training and conversation on vocation. This work will play a role in the implementation of a new First-Year Experience Program, as well as a focus on student life and off-campus community service. A NetVUE speaker will be invited to present at a retreat for the student life staff on vocational exploration, as well as opportunities for cross-unit and unit-specific discussions. Three other faculty/staff-member workshops will take place, as will faculty/staff cross-divisional reading groups. To conclude, vocational leaders will offer presentations and guided reading discussion to an additional group, focusing on effective programming, strategy, and implementation.

**Azusa Pacific University (CA)** will deepen the understanding of vocational exploration by developing a training curriculum for new faculty members, training those directly involved in academic advising, as well as sending key staff to a retreat. Those attending the retreat will participate in reading texts that focus on vocational exploration. After a training course has been developed, 50 faculty and staff members will be invited to participate in vocational exploration and discernment training. By implementing these programs, the university hopes to raise graduation rates through better counseling, as well as improving value of college experience.

**Bay Path University (MA)** will add a vocational discernment component to its WELL (Women as Empowered Learners and Leaders) program, through which women at the university explore, question, and develop independent thought as they discover how to advocate for themselves and others. A two-day workshop for faculty members and staff will be facilitated by an expert in the field. Monthly gatherings will be held to discuss reading materials, to review best practices, and to strengthen other areas of student support. The university will also establish a coaching program, through which alumnae can mentor students in vocation exploration. Trained alumnae will visit WELL classes and provide personal mentoring for those students who wish to explore purpose and vocation further.

**Bennett College (NC)** will implement book discussions, facilitated workshops, and presentations at on-campus faculty/staff institutes. These programs will work to meet the goals of: re-designing advising and mentoring to reflect vocational calling concepts across the disciplines, ensuring that faculty members have professional development necessary to best equip them regarding student vocational discernment, and to expose the faculty/staff to best practices in area of vocation and calling.

**Concordia University St. Paul (MN)** will invite faculty members and staff to participate in readings and discussions, as well as two workshops with expert leaders. The intent of these programs is for faculty and staff members to develop and strengthen their capacities in the

pedagogy of vocation, thereby becoming better mentors of students. The programming will be developed in order to provide relevance for the student population and will address issues faced by students of different religions, cultures, and ages. This program will support students working in both online and face-to-face modalities.

**Eckerd College (FL)** will help faculty members develop a sense of their own vocational orientation, as well as helping them to reflect on vocation more intentionally. The college will identify members of a small learning community from across the college's divisional structure, who will then commit to engage in a year-long process. Four day-long workshops will take place over the course of a year, each one focused on different aspects of vocational orientation, reflection, and articulation. This group will explore various vocational texts through reading and writing assignments. During four "coffee hour" sessions, the group will engage in midpoint conversations and discuss short vocational readings. After the conclusion of all activities, a final assessment will determine the best ways for the college to integrate vocation into its infrastructure.

**Franciscan University of Steubenville (OH)** will expand its current vocation task force, forming a study group of 25 to 30 people who will meet over the course of the year to discuss additional common readings related to personal vocation. These two groups will collaborate to create up to ten "white papers" in order to develop a common language and understanding of personal vocation in relation to the university's mission. These papers will provide a launching point for future initiatives on campus focused on integration of vocation into the core curriculum. At the end of the year, a campus event will be hosted for all faculty and staff members to share the learning and recommendations of the study group and to build additional internal support for future initiatives related to personal vocation.

**Gordon College (MA)** will develop and implement a framework for a cohesive program for discerning and understanding vocation. In order to do so, two half-day workshops will allow faculty members and staff to explore a theological framework, articulate the integration of vocation into their work, and strategize about ways to deepen students' engagement of topics through curricular and co-curricular experiences. With a common language and deeper understanding of vocation, faculty and staff can educate their departments and consider how the topic might be addressed in seminars, courses, and other educational programs. These workshops will take place over fall break, with a guest speaker presenting a theological framework for vocation as well as facilitating opportunities for participants to reflect on the issues. After these sessions, each department will develop a set of training goals to be used in the future.

**Goshen College (IN)** will implement the program of *Deepening Our Vocational Exploration (DOVE)*. The goals of this program are to support more faculty members and staff in their efforts to help students consider their vocational endeavors in a religiously and interculturally changing campus and world, and to equip key administrators and faculty who are helping to guide institutional change. Workshops with key faculty and staff members will be led by an off-campus facilitator. Other groups will read specific selections on vocation, then participate in a daylong retreat. Four other groups will gather over a meal in the dining hall to read vocational texts and to reflect on how they can support students in their vocational quests.

**Hastings College (NE)** will develop a framework for deliberate mentoring that aligns with the mission of the college. A working group of faculty, staff, and administrators will explore and discuss best practices in mentoring and vocational advising. Several workshops and meetings will take place, with participants reading academic works on vocation and discussing and developing ways for vocational exploration to make an impact across the college.

**Heritage University (WA)** will host several workshops and sessions in order for faculty and staff members to develop and implement vocational programming into the framework of the university. Two presenters who are experts in the field of vocation will speak at either an all-day workshop for faculty or fall faculty day. Each presenter will focus on vocational exploration on campus. Over the course of the workshops or sessions, a select group of faculty will develop new syllabi to incorporate vocational exploration in ten courses across a number of majors.

**Le Moyne College (NY)** will continue its work developing the Manresa Program, which connects vocational discernment and career preparation to the critical understanding, values, and purpose fostered by a Jesuit liberal arts education. This grant will provide faculty and staff the opportunity to participate in a year-long series of workshops, reading group meetings, and public events. Seminar participants in these seminars will assist with the development of student learning outcomes for the junior and senior year seminars of the Manresa program. This program works to integrate academic course work, personal and spiritual development, and vocational discernment and career preparation.

**Maryville College (MO)** will provide a faculty retreat as well as faculty and staff member conversations through book groups. The faculty retreat will host a keynote speaker who will introduce thinking about vocation across various disciplines as well as on an institutional level. The book groups will read and discuss a common text, touching on the intersection of vocation with the liberal arts. These groups will then host a welcome reception for new staff and faculty members, enabling the concept of vocational discernment to be shared across campus.

**Marywood University (PA)** will provide faculty development workshops for Core Curriculum revision in order to develop and integrate vocational discernment into coursework. Another set of workshops will enable interdisciplinary learning experiences to be piloted and implemented in the future. Faculty members will develop strategies within the pilot experiences to help begin to make explicit connections within the knowledge, skills, and values of liberal education.

**Mount St. Mary's University (MD)** will reflect on vocation through two programs: a new faculty orientation and a seminar in the Catholic intellectual tradition. Each orientation group will hold eight meetings over the course of the academic year. All new faculty members will be assigned mentors who will observe their teaching and attend orientation meetings with them. For the year-long seminar in the Catholic intellectual tradition, up to 12 junior and senior faculty members will meet weekly throughout the academic year. They will be granted a course release in order to do so, as well as a stipend to enable them to implement vocational exploration into their courses.

**Muskingum University (OH)** will implement several programs throughout the year to strengthen the campus conversation on vocation. During the annual staff retreat and orientation,

a new 30-minute presentation on vocational discernment will be offered, drawing on academic vocational texts. Other conversations on vocation will also be held during faculty development hour. Seven times throughout the year, invited faculty and staff will meet over meals to explore their own meaning and purpose and how vocation might be fully integrated into the life of the university. In the spring, a retreat will solidify conversations and plan the next four years of vocational programming.

**Our Lady of the Lake University (TX)** will achieve its goal of enhancing vocational awareness as it applies to the classroom and role modeling for both staff and faculty members. It will do so by a series of workshops and focus groups for faculty members and staff that will explore various themes and practice new ways to approach courses, finding better ways of addressing student successes and failures. Three thematic workshops per semester will include reading and conversation over a meal, and will examine themes presented by a guest speaker from either the OLLU campus or the surrounding area.

**Saint Mary's College (IN)** will incorporate a variety of academic resources on the topic of vocation into a series of dinner discussions with faculty members and staff. Each dinner discussion will help participants to consider the theological exploration of vocation in context of Holy Cross spirituality. For the faculty and staff members who participate in the series, mini-grants will be available to assist them in carrying out their own programming or curriculum development related to vocation.

**Southern Adventist University (TN)** will continue to embed an intentional campus-wide connection between vocation and service that will permeate every facet of students' undertakings—from academic studies to paid employment to extracurricular activities. A training program consisting of monthly meetings of a group of faculty and staff members from across campus will be created. During these meetings, the group will discuss chapters from vocation-related readings, as well as their own efforts to incorporate the University's Calling, Career, & Vocation initiative into their work with students. Training materials such as books, seminars, and webinars will all be focused on the academic elements of vocational exploration.

**St. Thomas University (FL)** will host a two-day faculty/staff retreat led by an expert in the field of vocation, along with two luncheon meetings to serve as a follow-up. Through these programs, participants will be provided with suggestions for implementing vocational reflection into the classroom and the community. They will also develop a sense of the benefits, for faculty members and staff, of connecting or re-connecting with their own personal vocation. The ultimate goal is to develop a better overall understanding of common goals among faculty members and staff with respect to fostering vocational exploration among students.

**Susquehanna University (PA)** will develop a first-year mentorship program. Twenty faculty and staff members will receive training on advising first-year students and will be connected to appropriate resources. Through a series of summer training sessions, returning instructors will share resources with new mentors, enabling them to engage with a variety of students across campus. A reading list, personality assessments, and information from campus partners will provide assistance and guidance to mentors and students alike. The program will incorporate bi-annual meetings, in which specific faculty members can report back on the implementation and

evaluation of classroom practices for vocational discernment that they design during the summer training series.

**Thiel College (PA)** will create Reading Circles that will meet five times over the course of the fall semester to discuss selected literature on vocation, as well as articles on the concept of Lutheran higher education. The President's cabinet will constitute an additional eighth Reading Circle. In December, the President will host an event in recognition of faculty members' investment. In January a summit will facilitate broader conversation of themes out of the Reading Circles and would include two keynote presentations by thought leaders or authors engaged in vocational exploration. Student discussion groups will also be organized, in order to introduce students to the themes of vocation. The college will also begin a ThielVUE Public Lecture series, with speakers drawn from the NetVUE network. In May, a two-day on-campus retreat for the faculty members and staff who complete the year-long program will focus on ways for Thiel to strengthen existing programs and create new opportunities for students to understand the role of their beliefs and values in vocational reflection.

**Transylvania University (KY)** aims to create a campus ethos that utilizes a shared common language to encourage students to understand their future vocational possibilities in light of their liberal arts education. The university will host two faculty/staff workshops, one each semester, with a conference mid-year. A facilitator will lead the conference and academic vocational texts will be provided to those who attend. Monthly small group discussions will follow, led by members of the core group. Then, an advisory group will be convened to formulate a year-long plan of integrated opportunities and activities that will begin with orientation and continue into the classroom, working with the university to renew its General Education curriculum while implementing elements of vocational exploration.

**University of Mount Union (OH)** will invite faculty members to participate in a year-long discussion about vocation/purpose/calling by enabling members to meet once per month for focused conversation with an academic text as the basis. Participants will receive a stipend and will be gathered through a combination of voluntary interest and strategic selection in order to ensure inclusion of diverse academic fields. In order to receive the second part of the stipend, participants will be asked to amplify the impact of their study of vocation by developing an assignment or activity in at least one of their courses to be offered during the upcoming academic year.

**Ursuline College (OH)** will establish book discussions for faculty members and staff, in order to develop common language on vocational reflection and discernment. It will also complete a vocational audit across campus in order to create a cohesive vocation culture across campus. Staff and faculty members who meet in extended book dialogues will seek to articulate the meaning of vocation for themselves, and to discover ways to enable the college's students to do the same. A newly revised core curriculum will be introduced, focusing on vocational discernment and an understanding of the writings of St. Angela Merici.

**Viterbo University (WI)** will incorporate vocational principles across the campus and curriculum by way of summer, fall, and spring one-day retreats for the Committee on Vocation members. These retreats will provide an intensive and productive format for vocational

exploration that will incorporate knowledge acquisition and reflection to enhance faculty and staff engagement. Following these retreats, committee members will host reading and discussion groups and reflect on ways vocation and purpose can be incorporated into their lives, fueled by ideas stemming from vocational texts and articles. A speaker will then present information on purpose exploration in higher education at a scheduled retreat. Lastly, the co-directors will host a Lunch n' Learn for faculty and staff members to facilitate vocational development together with mission integration.

**Wesleyan College (GA)** will form five Learning Circles of staff and faculty members, each of which will read a text and discuss it in monthly meetings. At the end of the semester, each circle will make a presentation to the members of all the other groups, sharing insights and discussing how these might be applied to the Wesleyan student experience, focusing on life purpose and vocational discernment. The same process will be repeated in the spring semester, using a different text. Topics for the Learning Circles will be: service learning, social justice/activism, diversity and inclusion, leadership development, and academic and career advising. These groups will serve to develop new language and approaches which can be shared more broadly across the curricular and co-curricular experience, thereby providing lasting benefits for students.