



## Network for Vocation in Undergraduate Education (NetVUE) Professional Development Awards

Awarded in June 2024 • Funding for 2024-2025

**Benedictine University** (IL) will provide staff and faculty members with intensive professional development to address the specific vocational exploration needs of first-generation and BIPOC students, students with disabilities, and student-athletes. The Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion will hold a two-day retreat, followed by the creation of a vocation exploration pilot program that will engage students in learning and reflection activities.

**California Lutheran University** will develop staff and faculty member capacity through engagement with their own vocational paths, enhancing student mentoring capabilities and promoting inclusivity as essential to vocational inquiry. Key outcomes include an improved understanding of vocation, enriched student experiences through mentoring, and alignment with the university's mission. Activities include a three-day retreat and a series of workshops.

**Chaminade University** (HI) will implement the Ho'ohana program (from a Hawaiian word meaning "the value of purposeful and meaningful work") to empower Chaminade staff and faculty members to embed vocational exploration into their courses and discussions with undergraduate students. Through a series of activities and experiences for staff and faculty members focused around three themes (life skills education, ethical leadership development, and the promotion of inclusive excellence), the Ho'ohana program will increase the Chaminade community's ability to provide guidance for vocational exploration toward lives of positive change in the world.

**Coe College** (IA) seeks to broaden and deepen knowledge among staff and faculty members related to the use of vocation as a pedagogical tool through a 3-day professional development seminar. Additional goals include bolstering institutional awareness of existing vocational efforts (by bringing intentional consistency to messaging) and providing new opportunities for faculty members, staff, administration, and trustees to discuss the work of vocation at Coe College.

**Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady University (LA)** plans to expand current vocational discernment support services into both academic and non-academic departments. This program intends to equip participants with the tools necessary to guide students in discovering their callings in life. The staff and faculty member cohort will receive training on a holistic approach to vocational discernment that integrates practical skills enhancement, storytelling, and self-reflective exercises to deepen students' understanding of themselves and their vocational aspirations.

**Georgian Court University (NJ)** will expand academic advising to incorporate vocational exploration. Using the rich examples of the Sisters of Mercy and their work to address issues associated with immigration, environmentalism, racism, marginalization, and violence, this program will help staff and faculty members develop the skills to help students express their vocation and how they find meaning in their work. This project has three parts: (1) a common reading, (2) a panel discussion that connects the Mercy charism to vocation, and (3) supported implementation of vocational exploration elements in advising sessions and existing courses.

In this initiative, **Greenville University (IL)** will (1) cultivate understanding of vocation and calling among a cohort of faculty members and student life staff, and (2) enlist them to lay the groundwork for integrating vocation and calling in curricular and co-curricular programming. The initiative launches with a retreat prior to fall semester, after which participants will reconvene throughout the academic year for discussions and a workshop intended to help identify key curricular and co-curricular areas to incorporate vocation and calling themes. This project culminates in a seminar that is open to all staff and faculty members, which will support a campus-wide expansion of project outcomes.

**Gustavus Adolphus College (MN)** will develop a vocational reflection and career preparation curriculum for faculty members to use as they lead cohorts of students engaged in a new requirement for graduation. All Gustavus students are now required to participate in an internship, research collaboration, or a course with a significant community-engagement component. In this grant-supported project, a working group of faculty members will develop new curricula in consultation with staff and external constituents, ensuring that all students engage in significant vocational reflection during their undergraduate education.

At **Hiram College (OH)**, staff and faculty members will participate in discussion and reflection on common readings focused on developing strategies for supporting students in vocational exploration and discernment. Following this work, participants will each develop one-credit courses across the college's four schools with the goal of increasing student engagement in vocational reflection. This initiative will also support career center staff in developing a series of discussion questions and discernment tools specifically for students who have progressed through academic study but have not yet declared a major.

**Le Moyne College (NY)** will conduct a one-week intensive program which gathers staff and faculty members who have already participated in NetVUE-supported vocation programming on campus. Drawing on their experience in developing, implementing, and facilitating specific vocational

discernment projects, participants will work collaboratively to develop customizable scaffolds for integrating vocational discernment and exploration into courses, course modules, practicum placements, and student advising programs. Once developed, these scaffolds will be available to staff and faculty members across the college.

**Lipscomb University** (TN) will develop a new course which will serve as a capstone experience for each student's vocational journey while at Lipscomb. Students will enroll in this course in their senior year with a faculty member from their major-area discipline. The project team will coordinate with faculty members to generate both common and discipline-specific segments of the new course through a multi-day intensive seminar. The goals of this project are for faculty members to develop a working and robust notion of vocation, as well as the skills and knowledge to lead and facilitate vocational exploration in their classrooms.

**Marietta College** (OH) will create a professional development workshop series for staff and faculty members to develop a shared understanding of vocation that fits within the mission and values of the institution. Each workshop will begin with a keynote presentation on a unique aspect of vocational exploration, setting the stage for a subsequent book discussion. At the conclusion of the workshop series, participants will plan a campuswide workshop with the goal of embedding vocational exploration into more student-facing curricular and co-curricular programs.

**MidAmerica Nazarene University** (KS) will enhance the capacity and expertise of staff and faculty members in supporting vocational exploration among students within a robustly Christian educational environment. Through collaborative efforts, current advising programming will be enhanced to include advising on vocation and calling. This project will include invited speakers and the development of an interactive resource repository to lay the foundation for all faculty members to incorporate vocational inquiry into their mentorship of students.

**Milligan University** (TN) aims to renew its focus on vocational exploration through a year-long professional development initiative. A core group of faculty members, staff, and administrators will examine and enhance the university's approach to vocation. This group will read relevant literature, discuss current practices, and develop a working definition of vocation. In its second phase, the initiative will expand to include additional campus members who will identify and propose new vocational opportunities for students. The program will culminate in a campus-wide event featuring a speaker on vocation; it will also produce a resource guide of vocational opportunities for students.

**Pacific Lutheran University** (PLU) will design and implement a staff-focused vocation seminar seeking to enhance participants' ability to reflect on and integrate vocational principles into their professional and personal lives, and to contribute meaningfully to student vocational development. The project will involve reflective activities, discussions about the connection between vocation and the university's mission, and the creation of individual projects that demonstrate practical applications of these concepts.

**Southwestern Adventist University (TX)** will create a monthly luncheon series for staff and faculty members to discuss and incorporate vocation into efforts of student formation as situated in their respective disciplines or work environments. This series will offer a platform for participants to gather, exchange insights, and learn from one another's experiences in mentoring students towards the unfolding of vocation. By fostering collaboration and community, the series will enhance both capacity and cohesion, ultimately improving the quality of student engagement across campus through a shared focus on vocational growth.

**St. Bonaventure University (NY)** will assemble a select group of staff and faculty members to read and discuss vocation-related texts, with the goal of curating a collection of essays for use in student development across campus. The project aims to foster a common language and encourage deeper, more meaningful conversations with students during academic advising. Instead of focusing solely on administrative tasks (such as declaring majors and meeting requirements), the initiative seeks to engage students in exploring their gifts, passions, and the global needs they perceive, thus enriching their overall educational experience.

**Transylvania University (KY)** will implement a campus-wide initiative, providing opportunities for staff and faculty members to engage, discuss, and explore vocational discernment. Utilizing the tools gleaned from two publications, Patrick Reyes's *The Purpose Gap* (2021) and Meghan Sullivan and Paul Blaschko's *The Good Life Method* (2022), employees will discuss vocation, vocational journeys, and communal vocation. This framework will emphasize diversity, equity, and inclusion as it pertains to vocation in this academic community. These workshops will assist academic advisors to move beyond discussions of curriculum only, equipping them to incorporate vocational topics into conversations with advisees.

**University of Mount Saint Vincent (NY)** will offer professional development to faculty members, academic support services, and advising staff to engage more deeply in vocational reflection with particular focus on students who are convinced that the best path for their life is the one bringing the highest financial reward. Participants will read Patrick Reyes's *The Purpose Gap* (2021) and Erin VanLaningham's *Called Beyond Our Selves* (2024), in order to strengthen support for students who have typically not been encouraged to see themselves on a journey of self-discovery, and to shape classroom discussions of difficult and divisive social issues that must be addressed for the benefit of all.

**The University of Saint Mary (KS)** will provide a retreat for eight athletic coaches and eight faculty members to cultivate a common understanding of vocation as it flows from the institution's mission. The retreat will begin by building trust and connection among participants, followed by presentations on the concept of vocation and its evolution through various resources, including guest speakers, brief readings, and videos. Participants will reflect on and discuss their own vocation; they will also use journaling to create a summary of thoughts and key takeaways. The retreat aspires to initiate campus-wide cohesion toward a unified perspective on vocation as a foundation for more effectively supporting students in their own vocational journeys.

**Viterbo University** (WI) will engage faculty members, academic advisors, and student affairs professionals in targeted programming, training, and development opportunities to come to a shared understanding of vocation. This work will be led by a committee with members from across the academic community. The fruits of this collaborative work will be incorporated into ongoing efforts toward on-campus professional development for faculty members, in order to promote new vocation-related opportunities and to disseminate findings from the committee's work.

**Westminster College** (PA) will convene a series of summer reading groups and workshops to incorporate vocation-related learning outcomes into first-year student programming. The project team will convene workshops in which faculty members will develop adaptable vocational learning modules and pilot these modules in the first-year curriculum. The project team will also convene a focus group of campus and community stakeholders to discuss the feasibility and potential outcomes of a sustained initiative towards vocation-related learning at Westminster.

**Whitworth University** (WA) will enhance professional development to support more inclusive student vocational exploration. Through workshops, discussions, and collaborations, staff and faculty members will refine existing programs and seek to integrate vocational exploration into current curricular offerings. Special emphasis will be placed on inclusivity and equity, particularly in seeking diverse faculty member participation and focusing on historically underrepresented student populations. The project aims to foster a shared understanding of vocation while improving student experience and wellness outcomes.

**William Jewell College** (MO) will convene a group of staff and faculty members to develop mission-driven and context-specific language around vocation that will then inform the design of curricular and co-curricular pedagogy and transformational experiences for students. Through a series of shared readings, discussions, and focused workshops, this project will support participants as they develop and pilot opportunities for students to engage in meaningful vocational conversations, in the context of both general education and major-specific courses.