

2026 Presidents Institute

A Deeper Purpose



January 4–7, 2026 ■ Signia by Hilton Orlando Bonnet Creek ■ Orlando, FL



The Council of Independent Colleges

Concurrent Session

How To Present Your Institution as a Strong Strategic Partner

Presenters

- *David Livingstone, President, Lewis University (IL)*
- *Krista Newkirk, President, University of Redlands (CA)*
- *Rachel Pauletti, Director, Forvis Mazars*
- *Kevin Ross, President, Lynn University (FL)*



David Livingstone
Lewis University



Krista Newkirk
University of Redlands



Kevin Ross
Lynn University



Rachel Pauletti
Forvis Mazars

LEWIS UNIVERSITY

Lewis University is a private, non-profit Catholic and Lasallian university located in Romeoville, Illinois about 35 miles southwest of Chicago with campus locations in Aurora, IL, Chicago, IL, Oak Brook, IL, Romeoville, IL and Albuquerque, NM. The university serves over 7,000 students utilizing multiple modalities and offers over 80 undergraduate programs and 35 graduate programs, including accelerated pathways for adult learners.

Key Highlights of Lewis University

- 7th largest non-profit university in Illinois
- 14:1 student to faculty ratio
- NCAA DII Athletics
- 10% growth in net tuition revenue year over year
- FY2024 Audited Financials Highlights
 - \$115M net tuition revenue
 - \$145M total revenue
 - \$144M total expenditures
 - Full funding of depreciation
 - Total Endowment \$119.3M



Strategic Partnerships

St. Augustine College Merger

Oak Point University Teach-Out Partner

Christian Brothers University Partnership

Community College Partnership and Pathways

Establish Indivisa System (2026)

Academic program partnerships



Lewis
UNIVERSITY



Case Focus: St. Augustine College Merger

Strategies Identified

- Expanded reach in fast growing demographic with growth opportunities
- Bilingual Offerings/Capabilities
- Hyflex faculty teaching model
- Workforce education market access

Hurdle Considerations

- Accreditation and other agency approvals
- Culture and mission integration
- Department of Education OPEID merge
- ERP system transition
- Workforce and operational expense transition



UNIVERSITY OF REDLANDS

- Founded in 1907
- Located 70 miles east of LA
- 3,000 students
- 4 campuses
- \$132M annual budget
- \$273M endowment
- HSI designation
- Blend of Liberal Arts, Professional, Johnston's alternative education degree
- Top Fulbright producer
- NCAA Div III – 21 athletic teams
- 55,000 alumni

UNIVERSITY OF REDLANDS

MERGERS & ACQUISITIONS

- San Francisco Theological Seminary in 2019
 - Marin County
 - 13-acres
 - 1871
- Presidio Graduate School – Change in Control in June 2023



UNIVERSITY OF REDLANDS



Woodbury University

- Founded in 1884
- Burbank/ Los Angeles – 22 acres
- 1884
- 850 students
- Architecture; Interior, Fashion, Graphic, Game Design; Filmmaking; Business
- Change in Control: June 2024
- Awaiting ED approval



UNIVERSITY OF REDLANDS

WOODBURY UNIVERSITY

- **Strategies:**

- Strong student-focused mission alignment
- Campus in LA area to grow and enhance reputation
- Strong program additions responsive to market
- Scale creates operational efficiencies
- Greater access to desirable industries for students

- **Hurdles:**

- Faculty buy-in and program integration (handbook, tenure, salary plan)
- ED merger process, delays, and data integration challenges
- Bond debt and bank negotiations
- Bandwidth and team focus during merger
- Cultural and operational integration
- Brand integration

About Lynn

Independent college based in Boca Raton, Florida

- 3,550 students from more than 100 countries
- 6 colleges, 50 undergraduate majors, 55 graduate majors and specializations
- Custom core curriculum, the Dialogues
- Flexible block schedule with semesters divided into four, four-week sessions
- Nationally recognized Institute for Achievement and Learning empowers students with learning differences.
- Conservatory of Music attracts acclaimed faculty and talented students from around the globe.





Distinguished
School

Recognized since 2014
for continuous innovation
in learning, teaching and
campus environment.



Most Innovative Universities
Best Regional Universities—
South
Most International Students
Best Online Programs
Best Value
Best for Veterans
Top Performer Social
Mobility



Honor Roll in 10 categories:
Collaborative governance
Compensation and benefits
Confidence in senior leadership
Facilities, workspace and security
Job satisfaction and support
Professional/career development
Respect and appreciation
Supervisor/department chair
relationship
Teaching environment
Work/life balance



Baseball ('09)
Men's Golf ('96, '18, '19)
Men's Soccer
('87, '91, '03, '12, '14, '24)
Men's Tennis ('07)
Women's Golf ('95, '96, '97,
'13, '14)
Women's Soccer
('92, '94, '95, '98)
Women's Tennis
('93, '95, '96, '97, '98, '01)
Women's Volleyball ('24)



Christine E. Lynn University
Student **Center Innovative
Project of the Year**
Perper Residence Hall **Most
Outstanding Residential
Award**

1962



Marymount College, a two-year women's liberal arts college, breaks ground in Boca Raton.

1971



Dr. Donald E. Ross visits to purchase library books for Wilmington College. He and the sisters of Marymount create a plan to continue as the College of Boca Raton.

1991



College of Boca Raton is renamed Lynn University after benefactors Eugene M. and Christine E. Lynn.

1998



Lynn University takes over the adjacent HARID Conservatory's music program, establishing the Lynn University Conservatory of Music.

2017



Lynn acquires Digital Media Arts College and integrates it into the College of Communication and Design.

Attendee Question

What are you hoping to learn
from today's session?

What are the most attractive features in a potential partner institution?

How can presidents best
communication the value of a
partnership to different
stakeholder groups (e.g.,
Board, donors, etc.)?

What does a fully integrated,
successful merger look like?

Q&A



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**Thank you for participating in
this session!**

**Session resources are available in
Guidebook**