



Network for Vocation in Undergraduate Education (NetVUE) Grants for Reframing the Institutional Saga

Awarded in December 2023 • Funding for 2024–2026

AdventHealth University (FL) will produce a book which documents the 30-year history of the university and will organize and make available digitally relevant historical resources. With the retirement of the founding generation of administrators, staff, and faculty members, this book and archive will help identify and narrate the unique mission of the university and how this mission has evolved across its short history. The learnings from this project will be used to orient new employees and incoming students.

Benedictine University (IL) will produce a critical narrative history tracing its transformation from an abbey-sponsored, urban, residential college serving Czech-speaking Catholic men to a co-educational, multi-campus, independent Catholic university exhibiting high levels of religious diversity. The book will be used in orientation and formation programs for new members of the university and in an interdisciplinary seminar required of all undergraduate students.

Concordia University, Wisconsin will write a set of essays to serve as a foundation for developing tools that can help the institution convey the distinctiveness of a Lutheran approach to both liberal arts and professional education. These essays will help shape strategic direction as the university continues to understand its vocation, formed by a 2013 merger of two Lutheran Church Missouri Synod institutions. The university will also develop physical and electronic tools to educate various constituencies about its distinctive mission.

Georgian Court University (NJ) will examine the evolution of the institution's mission and gain insight about the ways that the past can guide its future direction. The team will produce a book (in both physical and digital formats) that links key moments from its history with its

emerging challenges and opportunities. The book will incorporate historical research, personal narratives, and communal reflections. In addition, videos and a permanent interactive exhibit will be showcased across campus and made publicly available online.

Gordon College (MA) will re-examine and refocus the college's distinctive approach to the integration of faith and learning, and of vocation and the liberal arts. Through archival research, interviews with past leaders of the college, and contributions from the community of its graduates, the college will produce an edited volume and a permanent digital exhibit. The learnings from this project will inform strategic planning efforts, orientation of new staff and faculty members, design of undergraduate curriculum, and ongoing vocational programming for Gordon College students.

Hampden-Sydney College (VA) will explore the theme of civic virtue, both at the College's founding and in its current expression on campus. This exploration will produce a significant historical record through student projects, publications, and markers on the physical landscape. Grant funding will support the creation of a series of short monographs focused on the College's founding (and founders), religious roots in the context of its founding, the complexities of the College's history, and the contributions of African American people at the College. The project will also include a partial excavation of original campus structures completed in 1776.

Harding University (AR) will reframe and retell the University's saga in three ways: a compilation of narratives from select student body presidents over the past 60 years; a collection of written reflections on curricular and co-curricular life by faculty members, administrators, and graduates of the university; and a series of guest speakers—Harding graduates representing professional and spiritual excellence and service to the common good. This community-wide retelling of the university's ongoing saga will privilege voices from underrepresented groups.

Lane College (TN) will update and reframe the college's legacy, tracing the institution's core mission from its origins to the present, with the goal of better informing current initiatives in the context of its founding ethos. To facilitate this project, the entire college community (staff and faculty members, administrators, trustees, students, and graduates) will engage in reflective dialogue to re-think the college's institutional identity in view of its current context. The project will produce a published book of essays which articulates the college's founding mission as a foundational lens through which to consider institutional planning and strategic priorities.

Macalester College (MN) will engage in historical research and campus dialogue to create a critical, truth-telling history of the college as its vocational purpose has evolved, culminating in print and digital publications. The project will closely examine early days of the college (including a close examination of the founding president's participation in settler colonialism and removal of Indigenous people). It will also update and enhance the existing timeline and history of multiculturalism, internationalism, and religious worldview at Macalester; apply and integrate learnings about institutional history and vocation to the institution's strategic plan; and create campus signage that honors Dakota land, histories, and narratives.

McDaniel College (MD) will design and implement a summer research program that immerses students in the College's history of diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice, culminating in the creation of videos that will share untold stories of underrepresented members of its community throughout history. This project will give voice to the unique challenges faced by minoritized populations throughout the institution's history, and in so doing, will help the community gain a more comprehensive understanding of the college's institutional saga.

Muhlenberg College (PA) will initiate public conversation about its Lutheran affiliation to reveal the values that have underpinned the College's development over the last fifty years. Welcoming speakers to campus to aid conversations, this project will assemble diverse learning communities made up of faculty members, staff, students, and graduates, with the goal of uncovering the college's longstanding commitment to human flourishing, social responsibility, and personal vocation. The reframed saga narrative produced through this process will be captured in a collection of essays, videos, and brochures, serving as orientation material for future faculty members, staff, students, and trustees.

Saint Vincent College (PA) will engage faculty members, staff, students, and graduates in a thoughtful examination of its history, mission, and values. The goal of this work will be to develop a collective identity and vision that will resonate with the new and diverse audiences that the college serves. Through a careful and collaborative process, an updated Mission–Vision–Values narrative will be published and used as a framework for long-term strategic planning.

Seton Hill University (PA) will create a series of essays (based on archival research, oral history, and collaborative dialogue) that will examine institutional history and the legacy of the university's founders, with the goal of exploring the contemporary relevance of its historical mission. Grant funds will support the publication of a booklet of essays (in both print and digital formats) for use by faculty members and staff in orienting students to the mission and charism of the university. The project will also engage the Seton Hill community—including faculty members, staff, students, and graduates—in a student-led oral history project.

Southwestern College (KS) will seek to examine and reframe its institutional saga through the lens of the gathered experience of its community, particularly from the perspectives of diverse constituencies. This project will re-examine the legacy of radical inclusion at Southwestern through a permanent campus installation and an online presentation, both of which will feature video content and a substantial written document. This project will reframe past views, shape future planning, and help the institution welcome its increasingly diverse student body.

St. Olaf College (MN) will explore a variety of untold stories in the College's institutional saga, such as those of the Indigenous people who preceded the institution's founders, as well as those of the women, immigrants, first-generation students, and those of other diverse identities who were not envisioned as potential constituencies at the time of the college's founding. A group of staff and faculty members will engage in archival research and experiential learning, culminating

in a commemorative volume reflecting on the significance of these stories for St. Olaf's identity, mission, and vocation.

The University of Findlay (OH) will complete a book documenting the institution's transition from Findlay College to the University of Findlay, which will also be the basis for an interactive timeline representing the institution's history. This project will utilize archival research and interviews with current and former university employees, students, and graduates to reflect critically on the university's evolution over time. The book and the timeline will invite reflection on how the university lives into its mission to equip students for meaningful lives and productive careers.