

From: Evans, James
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PRESIDENT'S NOTEBOOK NO. 17 Spring 2013

On April 21, Lindenwood-St. Charles held its traditional **Honors Convocation** to celebrate the most extraordinary academic and intellectual achievements of students at that campus. There appeared to be between 700 and 800 people present, judging from the audience density in the Bezemes Family Theater. The citations of the award recipients were nothing short of inspirational, and there was an air of pride and jubilation throughout the proceedings. Special acknowledgment is due this year's recipients of the **Easton and Sibley Awards, Amanda Moehlenpah** and **Kyle York**, respectively. These honors are intended for the female student and male student who best represent the educational and societal ideals of Lindenwood's founders, Mary Easton Sibley and George Sibley.

On April 23, I was privileged to have the opportunity to present a few remarks at **Lindenwood University-Belleville's Honors Convocation**, just the second one held at that young campus. Already the event has grown in both size and significance. I counted more than 115 persons at

the ceremony, which was held in the **Lindenwood Auditorium**, and the number of awards increased from a handful last year to 11 this year, including six new academic-department-specific awards. The **Easton and Sibley Award choices** at LU-Belleville were **Lydia Blaha** and **Andrew Dahle**.

Congratulations to all of these talented students, and kudos goes to their professors and advisors for evoking the potential of these young leaders. These achievements remind us why Lindenwood exists and why we all love working in this matchless higher education environment.

Community Partners

One of the most noticeable changes at Lindenwood over most of the past decade has been our deliberate and systematic effort to reach out to and collaborate with various organizations in the surrounding community, particularly those that emphasize education and service to youth. The following developments illustrate this institutional commitment:

Meeting Healthcare Education Needs: As you might have noticed in the local media, Lindenwood is working in conjunction with St. Charles

Community College (SCC) to launch a joint **Center for Nursing and Allied Health Sciences**. This center will be housed in the beautiful classroom building situated along I-64 (Highway 40) in Dardenne Prairie, which has the street address of #1 Academy Place. SCC will move its entire Associate's Degree in Nursing program to the facility, along with many of its majors in the Allied Health Sciences. Lindenwood will start its program in Nursing there later this year and provide a seamless path for SCC Nursing graduates who wish to continue in school to earn their bachelor's degree. Eventually, Lindenwood will also offer the Master of Science in Nursing at the center. This comprehensive onsite LU/SCC collaboration is the first public/private program of its type in the St. Louis region, and one of the first in the country.

By working together, the two institutions expect to appreciably enhance the number of qualified health professionals in St. Charles County and adjoining areas. In recognition of the significance of this joint enterprise for both the economy and the quality of life in this community, **Partners for Progress of St. Charles County** will present the **2013 "Progress in Education"** award to LU and SCC at its May 31 annual gala.

Living Our Judeo-Christian Values: Lindenwood sponsors an active chapter of the **Fellowship of Christian Athletes**. Former St. Louis

Cardinals pitcher **Andy Benes** was this year's speaker for the FCA's recent Youth of the Year Luncheon – held in our A-B Leadership Room – and he displayed a real talent for meaningful public speaking that entertains as well as edifies. He shared how he had corrected the course of his life by basing his priorities on Christian values and family relationships, after many years of slighting those areas in favor of a relentless focus on professional achievement. That changed once he realized what is most important in the larger scheme of things. By the way, Mr. Benes' daughter is a Lindenwood student.

I also met several student-athletes at that very well attended occasion, including **the FCA Youth of the Year** himself, **Mr. Anthony Westermann**, who is graduating from Christian High School. **Former Youth of the Year Scholarship recipient** and (now) Lindenwood student **Luke Nurnberger** also addressed the crowd. The University is very fortunate to attract such bright and well socialized young citizens of Anthony's and Luke's caliber through our FCA affiliation.

Starting Our Service Early: In June, Lindenwood will host and help conduct a four-day summer camp in Journalism at the St. Charles campus. We will have up to 100 high school students delving into Web design, writing, newspaper/yearbook design, editorial skills, broadcasting, photography, and branding and promotion. This “**Digital**

Media Boot Camp” will be made possible through cooperative programming by Lindenwood and **MediaNow St. Louis**. The program provides valuable pre-college journalism experience to dozens of bright young people and gives them an opportunity to earn college credits in the process. Obviously, it also draws many exceptional prospective Journalism students to our campus. **Professor Jill Falk** developed our relationship with Media/Now St. Louis and made all arrangements to bring this outstanding program to our grounds.

Lindenwood sponsors many K-12 summer camps representing a diversity of fields, including Journalism, Nonprofit Management, Education, Fine and Performing Arts, and various sports.

Congratulations Corner

Since Lindenwood has grown so much, at any particular time we have more achievements than we have time or space to crow about. I will mention just a few from the past week.

LU Social Work Rocks: Our **Bachelor of Social Work** degree program recently was **reaffirmed as an accredited program** for eight more years by the **Council on Social Work Education**. The Lindenwood University Department of Social Work held a celebratory

dinner this spring to mark the momentous accomplishment. Social Work students spoke of their enriching educational and practical experiences in the curriculum, and community leaders in the helping professions attested to the good work of the program and its students. Several students received special recognition for exceptional performance. Professor Deborah Johnson and I provided brief historical sketches of the startup and maturation of Lindenwood's Social Work Department. Pleasant recollections are always fun to conjure up and share.

My hat goes off to Dean Carla Mueller and **Professors Deborah Johnson and Dana Klar** for running a first class operation. The CSWE accredits only the best Social Work programs.

Shotgun Sports Ends Year with Two Bangs: It would seem that this spring our superb Shotgun Sports team has garnered even more acclaim than it does in one of its "normal" years. In securing its **tenth national championship in succession**, the team caught the attention of *Gun & Garden Magazine*, which will arrive in St. Charles on April 28 to snap photographs for a special story on our world class shooting team. Kudos to **Head Coach Shawn Duloher**y, the assistant coaches, and, most of all, our dedicated student-athletes in the sport!

LU Character Impresses: Our University, including our student sports programs, occasionally receives criticism, which is to be expected given our size and human nature. For every barb hurled, however, we get dozens of the following kinds of comments (just received):

“I was attending a softball game at Missouri Western State University yesterday. After the game was over the Missouri Western Team was trying to tarp the field, but the wind was blowing out of control. The Lindenwood Softball team came on the field and helped the Missouri Western team finish tarping the field. It was a great example of sportsmanship and character. I want to thank the Coaches and Players from Lindenwood.”

and

“This morning, I received a call from some farmers down in the Black Walnut/Machens area north of St. Charles. The Mississippi River is rising rapidly and they needed some help filling sandbags. Things can get mighty lonely on a bottom farm when the river is inimical. I called Jane Baum, who put me in touch with Coach Ross. At least a dozen of your football players along with one or more coaches volunteered their time and energy. They weren't just helpful, they were STELLAR!”

Praises and a colossal thank-you are due the Lindenwood softball and football teams for being so . . . well . . . Lindenwood!

A Healthy University

Spring Semester Enrollment: I am very pleased to report that the number of students studying in our Belleville day program was at 771

this spring, an increase of 277 students over last spring, which is a 56% change year to year. The daytime head count at our St. Charles campus was up by 135, or 3%, over last spring, reaching 4699.

Revenues: Lindenwood budgeted nearly \$170 million in expected income for the present fiscal year (July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013), and we were somewhat ahead of schedule on revenue generation as of January 1. We now project that total revenue will approach \$175 million for fiscal 2013. Expenditures are also moderately ahead of the original budget, with both personnel expenses and direct Lindenwood financial aid expected to exceed \$50 million each.

Lindenwood's **endowment recently surpassed \$125 million** for the first time.

Again this year, we have been able to continue to improve our staffing, programs, and facilities without incurring debt. At the same time, we remain the most affordable independent four-year institution in the St. Louis region. That is, we have the lowest tuition and fees among the region's private universities. High quality work and dedication by all of you make these good things possible. Thank you!

Small College? Really?

Recently I was reading a Web-based column discussing prospective draftees for the NFL, and I came across the names of two of our football stars, **Denodus O’Bryant** and **Andrew Helmick**. I was taken aback by the columnist’s reference to these NFL draft candidates as representing the “small college” category, since I know – as an empirical fact – that the *Chronicle for Higher Education* and other higher-education entities place Lindenwood in the “Large University” reference category for comparison purposes. Then it occurred to me that no one refers to us as a medium-size school. We must be either a large university or a small college. Which is it?

Granting the benefit of doubt to the Web sports journalist, who probably does not have sufficient time to research the facts and features of all of the postsecondary institutions to which he refers, I must admit that one of our own student-athletes labeled Lindenwood a “smaller college” at a banquet earlier this spring. Thus, not even everyone who witnesses the masses of humanity passing by between classes or curses the administration for the chronic shortage of parking spaces here realizes how extensively our physical footprint and service range have changed over the past two decades.

Even some people who live in the St. Louis area but do not [read the newspaper or] visit our campus still speak of this institution as a small college.

There is nothing wrong with small colleges. They fill an important higher education niche, and I attended a very fine one during the Viet Nam War days; the quality of education, as well as the overall collegiate experience, was magnificent. I would not be disappointed or discouraged if Lindenwood actually were in the small college bracket.

However, reality is my juggernaut. Accordingly, I garnered some interesting data on fall-term (only) unduplicated head counts at various universities. For comparison purposes, I picked several institutions that most people think of as large universities because of general name recognition or because they have successful Division I or II NCAA sports programs.

Below are the most recent enrollment figures available for the reference schools and Lindenwood – again, for the fall only:

<u>University</u>	<u>Fall Head Count</u>
Saint Louis University	17,859
University of Notre Dame	12,004

Lindenwood University	11,903
University of Central Missouri	11,637
Pittsburg State University	7,275
Truman State University	6,101
Emporia State University	5,967
Bradley University	5,639
Drake University	5,384

Did you find some of these numbers surprising? I did. I guess the *Chronicle of Higher Education* was right. We are large. That is reality. Now let's vow never to lose the humanity, character, and grace of the small college from which we grew.

Sustainability

Sustainability is one of the few current buzzwords that have serious implications for how our present conduct will affect our lives in the distant future and the lives of those who inherit the world from us. It has been associated with the green movement and (in my youth) the environmental movement.

However, the physical-environment implications of sustainability represent just one part of the term's import. That aspect of the concept appears already to have been addressed to some extent in many parts of the developed world, primarily because basic provisions that are environmentally friendly can also save businesses and individuals considerable money over the long run. Indeed, as a result of modern-day code requirements and enlightened self-interest, the new buildings Lindenwood constructs are generally designed to be energy efficient.

We also have some recycling programs on our campuses, not because they necessarily will save the University money but because they are reasonable and valuable projects to initiate and support. That is, they benefit Mother Earth and her children.

Over the past six years, we have planted hundreds of new trees and shrubs as part of our ongoing master landscaping plan. As well, Lindenwood faculty members organize students to help carry out a spring cleanup of ecologically sensitive areas of the St. Charles campus. These kinds of projects both educate and edify our students, in addition to contributing in modest ways to a healthier physical context. They are responsible and effective efforts of which we are very proud.

The University is fortunate to have several intelligent and dedicated students in the **LU Sustainability Alliance**. The Lindenwood administration periodically meets with the group to discuss how we might work together in the long term to effect continuous improvement of the physical and social environments of our campuses.

Similarly, our **LSGA student senators** from time to time introduce a bill with sustainability interests – most recently, the successful water-bottle refill stations proposal.

In regard to good stewardship of the physical environment, Lindenwood is on its way, but we know we have “a ways to go.” We will keep working on this important part of our overall institutional improvement plan.

Mission Sustainability: Colleges and universities are facing a formidable challenge today with respect to (a) how to fulfill their historical missions in the new higher education landscape (b) how to preserve the essential elements of those missions in view of the proliferation of government and accreditor regulations and the escalating cost of operations. At this University, all strategic plans and proposed programs are evaluated within the framework of our historic mission, and we intend to persist with that approach. Fortunately, the framers of

our mission had the foresight to provide timeless conceptual wording that can be applied to and fulfilled in present and the future higher education milieus. Our task will be to intelligently mesh the rapidly evolving digital delivery methodologies with our core mission precepts. In particular, we will need to devise and instill a system of personal and collective morality within the new methodologies. Right now, that sphere is a void.

Campus Culture Sustainability: Since its founding, Lindenwood has been a personal and caring educational environment with a *bona fide* friendliness that is obvious to any visitor or newcomer. Through most of our existence, however, we were a relatively small institution, where nearly everyone came to know or at least recognize most of the other campus stakeholders. As established earlier in this *Notebook*, we have not been a little college for some time now. Although the frontier college atmosphere has survived enough to persuade some visitors that we are still a smaller institution (and, indeed, we are at our Belleville campus), the fact is that the St. Charles campus is of considerable size, and some of our students, professors, and staff members never meet one another. Yet it is very important to keep the values and character of our past as we set innovative directions and create cutting-edge programs. What are the most effective ways to blend the best of the past, present, and future? Is it possible to do so indefinitely? How can

we avoid losing sight of our distinctive heritage as we continue to grow in success and prominence?

We certainly do not have simple or final answers to these questions, but I will see that they are continually in awareness and under discussion in all sectors of our community. Through all of our institutional evolution, we can be certain of this constant: We will be here for the students first.

Fiscal Sustainability: For university presidents attending this spring's annual conference of the **American Council on Education**, the most important topic discussed was how to maintain growth and progress in higher education while keeping costs down. Although this topic has been given lip service for most of the last decade, it is now being taken very seriously because it has become a pressing matter.

College costs are at a level that many middleclass students can barely afford, and many of them must take out sizable loans to complete their degrees. At the same time, the belief that a college degree is not worth its price tag is gaining ground rapidly. Some pundits are suggesting that the economic advantages do not pay back the debt incurred. While that statement does not conform to reliable evidence, the fact is that the assertion has momentum and, if not countered soon, will materially affect the entire higher education industry.

It is a fact that college enrollments have tapered off since the start of the economic recovery, and it is becoming more difficult, if not impossible, to make up for that trend by simply increasing tuition charges each year. Yet the cost of running a university continues to rise annually at a rate that far exceeds the government's CPI and most other conventional cost-of-living indexes.

Lindenwood has the advantage of having had many economic challenges within recent memory (the 1970s and 1980s) and, consequently, learning many adaptive ways to turn economic adversity into prosperity. We will continue to remain fiscally strong if we steadfastly exercise the prudent business practices and innovative problem solving that have served us well since 1990. It will not be an easy task, but, if we all pitch in, we will be up to it. Fiscal sustainability is not a concern or a threat at this University. For us, it is an interesting challenge to be met and managed.

In Closing

As we approach the end of the University's 186th academic year, I want to personally thank you for all that you do daily to make Lindenwood

not only the most beautiful and functional university campus in the Midwest but also one of the most enjoyable.

JDE

April, 2013