

You probably noticed that our inside cover is different this time. We're taking space to announce that *The Confluence* won the Missouri Humanities Council's Distinguished Achievement in Literature Award. We are, of course, most honored to receive such recognition.

Most of all, it is recognition of all those who are behind *The Confluence*. It's really the work of many hands—those who write for the journal and share their scholarship; those who edit and proofread and design it; and most of all, those at Lindenwood University who have been its greatest advocates—our Provost Jann Rudd Weitzel and our President James Evans.



Ultimately, the role of the humanities and publications like *The Confluence* is to enhance the quality of our lives by informing the conversations about them. That's what gives us the perspectives of time (and change across the great span of the human experience), the power of ideas, the roles of people great and small in shaping the course of human events. It is what allows us to make sense of the world—and the nation, and our community—around us. Our authors seek to answer such questions as, “Why are things the way they are?” and “How did they get that way?” When all is said and done, the humanities are about starting, nurturing, and perpetuating a collective conversation.

Like all conversations that can wander and cover a wide range of topics, so too it is with *The Confluence*. We are, we have said only half-jokingly, eclectic by design. With the publication of *The Confluence*, we at Lindenwood want to help facilitate those conversations that are essential to building a sense of community and understanding of places in it, eclectic as they might be. We have intentionally steered clear of the old and tired topics, and sought articles that give fresh perspectives of our community. Our job as a university is not just to educate young minds, but to play a role in our community as well. It is efforts like *The Confluence* that connect all of us, and the humanities that connect institutions like mine with communities like ours.

We're proud to receive such an award, but we're especially proud to play some small part in the great regional conversation about who we are and why we're that way. With every issue, we reiterate Linda Richmond's comment on *Saturday Night Live*'s “Coffee Talk” — “talk amongst yourselves.”