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LU to Offer Summer Nonprofit Youth Leadership Conference

2/8/2008

Lindenwood University's Nonprofit Administration program will launch a new Summer Youth Leadership Conference for high school students interested in pursuing careers in the nonprofit sector. Nominations of service-minded high school juniors and seniors are being accepted from schools or parents through March 1.

The conference, called the Lion's Pride Project, will be from June 17-20. Students who have completed their sophomore or junior year in the 2007-2008 school year will reside on campus and participate in a series of intensive workshops and hands-on experiences designed to immerse the student into the workings of the nonprofit sector.

Also included in the program is a service project in which students who participate will be expected to devote a minimum of 20 volunteer hours per month from August through April 2009 at an organization agreed upon during the summer workshop.

Lindenwood faculty member Julie Turner, who is spearheading the Lion's Pride Project, said the purpose of the program is to assist high school juniors and seniors who possess an affinity for helping others and who demonstrate exceptional leadership skills to develop a deeper understanding of their roles in social change and to connect them to specific opportunities to act in service to others.

"Utilizing the faculty and resources of Lindenwood University, students will leave us with an increased appreciation for the pleasures of education, intellectual engagement, service learning and the college experience," Turner said.

Turner cites various studies that show roughly 75 percent of executive directors/CEOs of nonprofit institutions report that they plan to leave their jobs within the next five years, which has caused some alarm in the nonprofit sector as to how this leadership void will be filled.

The cost for the four-day conference is \$400, which includes workshop participation, an air-conditioned room and meals, a one-day trip to St. Louis-based nonprofit organizations, a St. Louis Cardinals game on Wednesday, participation in a volunteer opportunities fair, a T-shirt and tote bag, gift certificate to Lindenwood's Spirit Shoppe, and participation in two annual mini-retreats, as well as a year-end awards assembly for the student and his or her parents.