

COMMUNIQUE

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UNIVERSITY EMPLOYEES

Mike Smythe Named Employee of the Year

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Mike Smythe, Public Safety and Security Officer, was named the 2012 Employee of the Year during Lindenwood



University's Christmas party Dec. 1 at the Columns Banquet Center in St. Charles.

Smythe has worked at Lindenwood for six years, patrolling campus and overseeing any issues that require his assistance. He's also responsible for security during athletic and special events hosted on campus.

"I answer calls, everything from students being locked out to auto accidents to pest control problems," he said. "I also enforce the rules and regulations of the University, and I try to be proactive about it."

Smythe was named the University's Employee of the Month in April. His nominator Terry Russell, Dean of Students, described Smythe as the consummate professional.

"Mike always goes above and beyond to make sure each and every task is accomplished, and he continues to set the standard that we want all our staff to emulate," Russell wrote. "I have never seen a situation he couldn't handle, and his level-headed approach to his job is unparalleled."

Russell also highlighted in his nomination an incident that took place last summer in which Smythe was able to diffuse a potentially volatile situation. A student possessed a weapon in his car, and Smythe was able to control the situation by notifying the police and handling the matter as a routine investigation.

"If you go into a situation and you are really excited and worked up, then that makes the situation worse," he said. "The best thing is always to stay calm."

Did You Know?

Did you know that during the Civil War, Lindenwood's southern-sympathizing President, Thomas Barbour, organized Lindenwood's first Spanish language classes? The thought was that if the South lost the war, southern sympathizers would have to emigrate to South America. Several local people from the region attended the classes along with the students.

Smythe said he was surprised at being named Lindenwood's Employee of the Year and expressed gratitude for his receipt of the award.

"I didn't expect it and I was kind of shocked, but it was very nice to receive it," he said. "All the other people I was standing next to up there at the party were just as qualified for the honor as I was. I'd like to send out a special thanks to Terry and Lynn Russell and say that I plan to continue doing my job building up the security department and offering solid customer service just as I was doing before."

Walsh Published in *Stage Directions*

Donnell Walsh, Professor of Theatre and Academic Production Manager, has been published for the third time in the national theatre journal *Stage Directions*. The December issue features Walsh's description of his scene design process for Lindenwood's production of the acclaimed musical *Urinetown* in March 2011.



The satirical production made its Broadway debut in September 2001 and has won Tony Awards in the musical theatre categories of Best Book, Best Score, and Best Direction.

"*Urinetown's* version of the class struggle between the elite versus the working class kept pointing me toward that short-lived but powerful period in theatre history, Russian Constructivism," Walsh wrote. "In my image search, among all those curiously animated old black and white photographs of actors struggling up and down wooden scaffolds with their great wheels and cogs, ramps and trusses, one seemed to stand out: the drawing and later model made for the 1922 Russian production of Meyerhold's *Magnanimous Cuckold* by constructivist artist Luibov Popova."

Walsh explains in the rest of the article how he resurrected a mechanical sculptural work by Popova for the University's *Urinetown* set at the Scheidegger Center. He noted that it "allowed student performers to explore a unique example of post-revolutionary 'anti-theatre' space and well suited the musical's theme of the triumph of the human spirit over a repressive regime."

The full article is available online at www.stage-directions.com.
