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Lindenwood University is launching a new series that will bring a diverse selection of speakers to the school in 2008-2009, including authors, humanitarians, a key witness in the trial of Saddam Hussein, the director of the Missouri Botanical Garden, and a National Geographic photographer.

The Lindenwood University Speaker Series is completely free and open to the public and begins on Sept. 16 with 11 events, concluding on April 14, 2009.

"We are very excited about the inaugural year for the Lindenwood University Speaker Series," said Dr. James D. Evans, president of Lindenwood. "With a wide array of speakers and topics, this series is in keeping with our goal to establish this university as a true republic of shared ideas. We hope that the community takes advantage of the opportunity presented by these free events."

The schedule is as follows:

- Tuesday, Sept. 16, 2008, 7 p.m., Spellmann Center—Josh Shipp, motivational speaker for young people. Shipp has an international reputation as an inspiring youth speaker and author and has appeared on numerous network and cable television shows and has shared the stage with the likes of Bill Cosby. He will offer his presentation, "Don't Be Average."
- Tuesday, Sept. 30, 2008, 7 p.m., Spellmann Center—John Brown, author and Fox 2 News Anchor. Brown will talk about his new book, "Missouri Legends, Famous People from the Show-Me State," which offers amusing and informative anecdotes on the state's most famous residents.
- Tuesday, Oct. 7, 2008, 7 p.m., Spellmann Center—Dr. Peter Raven, director of the Missouri Botanical Garden. Best known locally for his role at the Botanical Garden, Raven is one of the world's leading botanists and environmentalists. He will discuss environmental issues.
- Saturday, October 18, 2008, 4 p.m., Butler Library—Kristie Wolferman, author. Wolferman has written numerous books, including "The Indomitable Mary Easton Sibley," which tells the story of Lindenwood's founder. She will discuss her book and Mary Easton Sibley.
- Tuesday, Oct. 21, 2008, 8 p.m., Lindenwood University Cultural Center—Beat Generation Poets David Meltzer and Michael Rothenberg. These two outstanding and renowned poets and authors will discuss the American cultural phenomenon known as beat poetry.
- Tuesday, Nov. 11, 2008, 7 p.m., Spellmann Center—Ross Terrill, expert on East Asia. Terrill, the author of nine books and a China specialist and research associate at Harvard's Fairbank Center for East Asian Studies, will speak on the future of China.
- Monday, Nov. 17, 2008, 7 p.m., Lindenwood Center—Dr. Michael Trimble. As an archeologist working on the mass graves project in Iraq, Trimble was the chief U.S. witness in the war crimes trial of Saddam Hussein and other members of his regime. He will talk about his experiences and the war in Iraq. His speech is co-sponsored by Lindenwood and the Greater Saint Charles Convention and Visitors Bureau.
- Thursday, Jan. 22, 2009, 4 p.m., Spellmann Center—Fran Noonan, regional director of the U.S. Peace Corps. Noonan, who works out of Washington University as a Peace Corps recruiter for the St. Louis area, will speak on helping others abroad.
- Thursday, Jan. 22, 2009, 4 p.m., Spellmann Center—Fran Noonan, regional director of the U.S. Peace Corps. Noonan, who works out of Washington University as a Peace Corps recruiter for the St. Louis area, will speak on helping others abroad.
- Wednesday, Feb. 11, 2009, 7 p.m., Sibley Hall—Dr. Regina Faden, director of the Mark Twain Home and Museum. Faden, who manages the Hannibal home of Missouri's most famous author, will speak on the controversies surrounding one of his best known books, "Huckleberry Finn."
- Wednesday, March 18, 2009, 7 p.m., Spellmann Center—Courtney Dowdall, doctoral student at Florida International University. Dowdall, who has been working to improve the standard of living for agricultural workers in Guatemala, will speak on fair trade issues and Guatemalan coffee workers.

- Tuesday, April 14, 2009, 7 p.m., Spellmann Center—Jodi Cobb, National Geographic photographer. Cobb's photographs from around the world have been seen in National Geographic and numerous books. She will speak on 21st century slavery.

For more information about any of these events, contact Paul Huffman at 636-949-4823.