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Did you know that 100 years ago, a large group of Lindenwood students attended the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco? The exposition celebrated the completion of the Panama Canal the previous year and the rebuilding of San Francisco after the 1906 earthquake. June 30, 1915, was Lindenwood Day at the Exposition.

Plunkett Selected as April Employee of the Month

John Plunkett, Assistant Chief Financial Officer, has been named the Lindenwood University Employee of the Month for April. He has served in the role since April 1, 2015, prior to which he had worked at the University as a Controller since 2013.



Some of Plunkett's primary duties include overseeing the day-to-day accounting functions of the University, ensuring financial statements are prepared on time and accurately, assisting with the year-end audit process, and creating informational reports that help shape an understanding of how the University is performing and how departments are using the resources that have been allotted to them.

The Kentucky native and current St. Peters, Mo., resident also enjoys working with and learning about computers and computer software.

"Information technology is a main hobby of mine, and I like taking that interest and translating it into finding opportunities for process improvement," Plunkett says. "If I see something cool, I think about how I could potentially share that with someone at a later time. That's one of the most satisfying things for me, showing someone how to get information out of a report that helps them. I like seeing them learn and seeing them use that knowledge to empower themselves for next time."

Plunkett's genuine disposition, positive attitude, and dedication to mentoring his colleagues earned him an Employee of the Month nomination from Candace Borrer, Human Resources Coordinator.

"From his first day, John concentrated on how he could help the Accounting Department become a more efficient function of the University and what he could do to improve our processes and procedures," Borrer wrote. "He spent time with each of us to learn exactly what we worked on and then spent time developing more efficient ways of completing work so we would have more time to concentrate on higher priority projects."

"Additionally, when I need assistance or have a question, John will stop what he is doing and give me his

full attention to provide immediate help. On the off chance that he is actually stumped by one of our inquiries, he will immediately research it so that he can be of better assistance."

"Lindenwood University is extremely lucky to have him as an employee."

Plunkett expressed shock and surprise at receiving an award for his work at Lindenwood, and credited his professional achievements to his personal perspective.

"I guess I owe the credit to my upbringing," he said. "From an early age, I was always taught to help others and not to think of only me."

Lindenwood Adjunct Mark Neels Earns PhD in History

Dr. Mark Neels, an adjunct instructor teaching U.S. history at Lindenwood University, successfully defended his dissertation at Southern Illinois University – Carbondale on March 18.



His dissertation, "Lincoln's Conservatives: Conservative Unionism and Political Tradition in the Civil War Era," examines what it meant to be a conservative unionist during the Civil War era, especially as that political ideology was exemplified in the characters of the conservative members of Abraham Lincoln's cabinet.

"I approach political ideology from an anthropological perspective, treating it as a means of tribal identification, in which persons of a particular ideological worldview coalesced with other likeminded individuals and thus formed political organizations to support their specific policy initiatives," Neels said.

And while he is happy with his success, Neels knows it will take some time for his accomplishment to settle in.

"I don't think it has completely caught up with me just yet," he said. "I imagine that that will change once I walk across the stage at commencement. However, it was very satisfying to be referred to by my new title, doctor, following the successful defense of my dissertation last month—as if all of the sacrifices made to get that degree were finally beginning to pay off."

Neels received his bachelor's degree in history from Missouri State University in 2006 and his master's degree in history from the University of Missouri–St. Louis in 2009.

He has been an adjunct instructor at Lindenwood since August 2010.

Patterson Selected for National Advising Award

Congratulations to Dr. Marilyn Patterson, Professor of Psychology and Sociology, who has been awarded the Outstanding Faculty Academic Advising Award by the National Academic Advising Association. NACADA is a national organization dedicated to the idea that academic advising is crucial to student success.

Dr. Patterson earned her EdD and MS from Memphis State University and her BA from Florida State University. She teaches principles of psychology, psychology of aging, group theory and process, senior seminar, psychology practicum, concepts of sociology, and sociology of gender. She is the faculty advisor to the Psychology Interest Club and coordinates alumni relations for the Psychology Department.

This is a “well-deserved honor,” said her colleague, Dr. Colleen Biri. Last year Biri and Patterson co-presented a session titled “Ongoing Assessment of Student Satisfaction with Faculty Advising” at the NACADA Region VI’s Gateway to Student Success: Sharing Best Advising Practices in the Midwest conference. Patterson will be honored for her advising award at the NACADA Annual Conference held in the fall.

