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# LINDENWOOD DISPLAYS EXCELLENCE THROUGH MILITARY SUPPORT

March 3, 2021

**By Hazel Denother**

Lindenwood University is dedicated to actively supporting ROTC cadets and veterans throughout their college journeys; the school offers important resources like generous scholarships, access to the Student Veteran Organization, and the first-class Veterans' Affairs Center located in the Library and Academic Resources Center. As a direct result of these support efforts, the university was named a 2021-2022 Military Friendly School.

The Lindenwood ROTC (Reserve Officers' Training Corps) program prepares students to be future leaders in the U.S. Army or Air Force. Lindenwood Army ROTC cadets train as a part of the Gateway Battalion, a partnership between nine area universities. The university's Air Force ROTC program partners with Saint Louis University for cadets' Air Force instruction. As a part of their rigorous training, ROTC cadets take leadership development courses, get involved with the community, and complete physical and professional military training, all while finishing their already challenging degree requirements. Lindenwood allows these scholars the flexibility and assistance they need to thrive.

Lt. Col. Russell Montante, the Air Force ROTC Detachment 207 commander at SLU, states, "Our partnership with Lindenwood centers around its offering of a high-quality education and professional preparatory experiences to its students. The U.S. Air Force and Space Force demand well rounded leaders of tomorrow, and that foundation starts at our host Air Force ROTC universities. Lindenwood is a community-minded university with the mission of enhancing lives through quality education and professional preparatory experiences. A foundation of excellence, dedication, integrity, creativity, and teamwork are crucial layers needed in every future Air and Space Force officer, and Lindenwood is the right partner to aid us in this quest."

One student who has benefitted from the ROTC program is Trey Lowenthal, a Lindenwood sophomore and Air Force ROTC cadet. He enjoys the rigor of the program: "I want to serve, learn new things, and pay for college. [The ROTC] teaches leadership skills as well as the minutia of Air Force life. It also instills discipline and mental fortitude."

Brianna Siegrist, a Lindenwood freshman studying Business Administration, is an enthusiastic member of the Army ROTC program who was nominated a Gateway Battalion cadet of the month in February. She comments, "My favorite thing about the program is that it pushes you.... Not only does it push you in the physical aspect, but it also builds you stronger mentally. Another one of my favorite things from the program is the friends you can make. Some of the coolest people I have met and hang out with are in my platoon."

The university is committed to accommodating veterans, service members, and eligible family members. In addition to being a Military Friendly School, Lindenwood is a Yellow Ribbon School, a Military Support College of Distinction, and a VA approved university. Nia Spencer is Lindenwood's School Certifying Official, veterans specialist, and director of the Veterans' Affairs Center. She explains, "Lindenwood University recognizes the sacrifice that our military men and women and their family members have made to our country. We feel that it is our obligation to serve them in any way we can through advancing their education."

Lindenwood recognizes that veterans often have unique academic needs, and the university provides them a world-class education while helping them navigate college and the challenges of civilian life. Many Lindenwood veterans reached out to share their thoughts and experiences at the university, and this article highlights several below.

Brendan Vossmeier, a junior studying Business Administration, states, "I am currently a student at Lindenwood University and lost my right arm due to service-connected injuries. I chose Lindenwood because it's local and supports its students, particularly student veterans.... The staff is quite helpful, and the classes are a rewarding challenge."

Tim Lerch, a graduate student studying digital web design, also appreciates the school's support, guidance, and experiential learning opportunities. He comments, "Lindenwood has been extremely helpful and flexible every step of the way. I have received a lot of guidance from faculty at Lindenwood to help me meet my academic goals.... I think it is great that we get an opportunity to connect with professionals in our field of study. I work with a Committee Chair who gives me feedback and helps guide my coursework. It has been very enlightening to converse with somebody who has been in the industry for two decades. As a twenty-year military veteran who is transitioning to a very different profession from what I did on active duty, this perspective has been invaluable."

Matthew Kinsey is working towards his MBA, and he admires the school's academic excellence: "The motto of 'Real Experience. Real Success' holds true. The teachers are highly intelligent and speak from real experience. I have had vice presidents of credit unions and marketing companies teach me marketing and finance classes." Environmental science senior Joseph Devivo also values the quality classroom experience Lindenwood provides. He remarks, "I honestly love how small the classes are. It gives time for one-on-one learning and helps foster a personal relationship with mentors and professors."

Many veterans find a home in Lindenwood's wonderfully diverse community. Emma Kroeger, an undergraduate accounting major, states, "Lindenwood has a great family-like environment which makes it a great place to grow intellectually, socially, and overall as a person. I love Lindenwood because it is like having a big family; everyone here is willing to help me get to where I want to go by giving the tools and knowledge that I need to get there."

Lindenwood University is grateful for the bravery and sacrifice of our student veterans, and the school aims to make the community a place where they can grow, flourish, and achieve. Nia Spencer explains, "As a university, we are inspired daily to be that driving force for that student and ensure they are provided with professionalism and a great education."

To all veterans, Lindenwood students or otherwise:

Thank you for your service.