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# KAYLA MEYER WINS RICHARD S. AND NELLE DABNEY MERIT AWARD

March 28, 2023

Senior Kayla Meyer joined an elite group.

A student teacher at Lindenwood, Meyer received the Richard S. and Nelle Dabney Merit Award for Missouri, which recognizes those working in special education.

"I am very appreciative of this award," said Meyer, a Wentzville native. "Teaching is my passion, and my goal is to make a lasting impact on each of my students to become outstanding citizens in society and contribute to making the world a better place."

The award was spearheaded in 1971 through the efforts of Robert S. Dabney – a past Missouri director of special education – to recognize and encourage those who will shape the future of special education. Richard's daughter, Nelle Dabney, served as the director of special education in Kansas City. The Missouri Council for Exceptional Children Board of Directors named this award in their honor.

"Our field is highly individualized and requires a repertoire of advanced techniques and technology ready to apply on the spot in unpredictable moments," [College of Education and Human Services](#) Senior Professor of Curriculum and Instruction Dr. Rebecca Panagos said.

Panagos, along with Associate Professor of Curriculum and Instruction Dr. Amanda Aldridge, special education teacher and supervisor Katie Bahm, and College of Education and Human Services Adjunct Professor Cam Newman submitted letters of nomination for Meyer.

“What shines the most through her work with students, however, is Kayla’s passion for their success whether through life skills or academic endeavors,” Panagos said.

Meyer becomes the 10th Lindenwood special education student teacher to win the award in the last 25 years. In the last four years, Lindenwood boasts three Richard S. and Nelle Dabney Merit Award winners.