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RICKEY WHITTINGTON RECEIVES HONORARY DOCTORAL DEGREE

May 23, 2023

Lindenwood University President Dr. John Porter awarded Rickey Whittington with an honorary doctoral degree April 18 at the Lindenwood House.

The degree is a symbol of Lindenwood's gratitude for Whittington's philanthropic efforts within the community focused on uplifting underserved students and other marginalized members of society.

"It means the world to me that I can sell back into my community for an opportunity that was not affordable for me to go as a college as a young man," Whittington said.

The R. Whittington Foundation has worked to provide 145 scholarships to at-risk university students from St. Louis to Chicago. The non-profit organization's mission is to impact communities one initiative at a time. The foundation currently offers three different educational scholarship opportunities that cover tuition, room and board, and materials, according to its website.

"Thank you for your service to others and your commitment to Lindenwood University's success," Porter said at the ceremony.

Whittington also has worked in past years to coordinate Lindenwood's Black and White Ball – a partnership created with Lindenwood, the R. Whittington Foundation, and music star Nelly to send underprivileged kids to college. Whittington also facilitated a toy drive, distribution of Thanksgiving meals to the St. Charles community, securing washers and dryers for elementary schools, distributing care packages, as well as providing bicycles and textbooks to children. He also facilitated the Dress UP and Suit UP event, which distributed suits, shirts, ties, shoes, and laptops to students, Biking4Books, which helped provide textbooks and bicycles to inner-city schools. His foundation also has partnered with Walmart and Nike Inc., for other initiatives.

"I call it the labor of love, and I also call it sweat equity," Whittington added. "There's a lot of sweat equity that went into giving back for 22 years to the community... taking care of young women and men like I grew up – basically homeless – but having the opportunity to dream and to work hard with consistency and wisdom and education. Here we are, 22 years later, with over 353 kids being able to go to college."