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Dr. Michelle Whitacre Receives 2023 Dewey Award

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November 30, 2023

Lindenwood University Associate Professor of Curriculum and Instruction Dr. Michelle Whitacre received a \$70,000 Developing an Educator Workforce that Expands Yearly (DEWEY) award in October from the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

The DEWEY awards aim to enhance teacher recruitment and retention within Missouri.

“I’m thrilled to receive this award because I’m passionate about closing the opportunity gap for children in our community,” Whitacre said. “Currently, the percentage of non-white teachers in the state of Missouri is only around 8%, so there is a significant gap in representation within our schools. The DEWEY Award will allow us to develop a supportive community for future teachers of color and, therefore, work toward rectifying this discrepancy in representation.”

Whitacre is utilizing the award to develop Lindenwood’s Academy for Students of Color as Classroom Educators. The academy is designed to foster a supportive community that aids in student success and retention of individuals from underrepresented backgrounds.

Members of the Academy for Students of Color as Classroom Educators will receive financial awards and will participate in various professional development opportunities, community outings, and service projects to enrich their experiential learning. Experienced educators from local school districts will serve as Academy Fellows and mentor academy members.

With this DEWEY award, Whitacre will be able to help grow a community of future educators, who will then take those experiences and incorporate them into the classroom.