

Lindenwood University

Digital Commons@Lindenwood University

---

Archived Lindenwood Press Releases

Public Relations

---

7-23-2024

## Colleges of Distinction Praises Lindenwood for Robust Equity & Inclusion Initiatives

Lindenwood University

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.lindenwood.edu/press\\_releases](https://digitalcommons.lindenwood.edu/press_releases)



Part of the [Business and Corporate Communications Commons](#)

---

## Colleges of Distinction Praises Lindenwood for Robust Equity & Inclusion Initiatives

July 23, 2024



Lindenwood University has earned the esteemed [Equity & Inclusion](#) award from Colleges of Distinction, an advocate for schools who excel in the areas of student engagement, great teaching, vibrant communities, and successful outcomes.

As an Equity & Inclusion College of Distinction, Lindenwood offers resources and programs that provide additional support to students, faculty, and staff. Driving the efforts for Lindenwood is the [Center for Diversity and Inclusion](#) (CDI).

"The CDI is dedicated to prioritizing the social and emotional needs of our student body, striving to enrich and validate the diverse intersectional of all students from various backgrounds and unique groups they may belong to or identify with," Director of CDI Keela Ross said. "And these groups create an environment where these same students develop as leaders, embrace diversity and equity, and become, as well as become life-long friends of inclusivity!"

The Equity & Inclusion award was granted after a thorough review many best practices, such as:

- **Campus Activities and Community Education** -; Recognizing that inclusion is as essential as diversity, Lindenwood's Center for Diversity and Inclusion creates an environment where every student feels valued and welcomed. The center hosts a range of programs, including workshops, guest speakers, courageous conversations, and training opportunities.
- **Pell Grants and Financial Aid** -Lindenwood is committed to ensuring financial accessibility and offers scholarships, along with comprehensive financial guidance, to support low-income and first-generation students. The college's transparent and user-friendly financial aid resources empower staff to guide students toward the full range of available support.

- **Academic Inclusion** - Lindenwood integrates area, ethnic, and cultural studies into its core curriculum through the [RISE project](#) placing emphasis on the importance of understanding and appreciating diverse perspectives, lifestyles, and needs.
- **Food Security** - Acknowledging the financial challenges faced by some students in securing basic needs, Lindenwood provides the [Little Free Pantry](#), which offers basic food and toiletry items to anyone who needs to utilize the service, at no cost. An annual drive to stock the pantry is led by the Staff and Faculty Councils.

In addition to the work for the CDI, a joint faculty, staff, and student-led task force consisting of representatives from across campus works to develop strategies and best practices for the campus community.

"It is such an honor to have made the 2024-25 Colleges of Distinction list for Equity and Inclusion! The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Task Force has worked extremely hard to ensure everyone feels seen, heard, and valued, and this recognition is proof of our success," DEI Task Force Faculty Co-Chair Dr. Chajuana Trawick Ferguson said.

"Everyone deserves the chance to pursue a worthwhile education in a welcoming environment," said Tyson Schritter, Chief Operating Officer at Colleges of Distinction. "We understand that systemic barriers have impeded many populations from pursuing a degree, both past and present. Lindenwood, too, is constantly working to create a more just environment, from the policy level down to the everyday student experience. We are excited to see how Lindenwood will continue to learn and grow alongside the needs of underrepresented communities."