

Benedictine University Awarded \$2.77 Million Federal Grant to Expand Student Support and Strengthen Paths to Graduation

Five-year initiative will enhance first-year learning, tutoring, accessibility and classroom technology at Lisle and Mesa campuses.



LISLE, ILLINOIS , IL, UNITED STATES, October 1, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Benedictine University (BenU) has been awarded a federal grant through the U.S. Department of Education's Title III Strengthening Institutions Program, administered by the U.S. Department of Labor on behalf of the Department of Education. Title III is a provision of the Higher Education Act that helps eligible colleges and universities strengthen their academic programs and institutional capacity to better serve students, including students from low-income backgrounds.

The nearly \$2.8 million award will support Catalyzing Student Success at Benedictine University, a five-year initiative designed to help students build a strong foundation for college, overcome academic obstacles, and make steady progress toward graduation and meaningful careers. The project will serve approximately 2,000 undergraduate students across BenU's Lisle and Mesa campuses. It will expand access to personalized academic support, strengthen teaching in foundational courses, and improve technology that connects students with learning opportunities and timely assistance.

"At Benedictine University, student success is a responsibility we all share," said President Joseph J. Foy, PhD, OblOSB. "This grant allows us to deepen that work, strengthening support systems, teaching, and technology that help every student thrive. It is an investment not only in our students, but in the communities they will go on to serve."

A redesigned First-Year Experience course will help incoming students explore career readiness, develop effective study habits, build relationships with faculty and peer mentors, and navigate university resources. Academic and career readiness will introduce students to opportunities such as internships, undergraduate research, and graduate education, helping them connect their studies with long-term goals.

Students will also benefit from expanded peer tutoring at both campuses and extended access to library study spaces in Lisle. These improvements will make it easier to find help with

challenging coursework and learning resources. Additional academic support leadership in Mesa will strengthen services for students there.

Faculty development and course redesign will focus on foundational courses. Innovation will drive these improvements, including engaging instruction and accessible course materials supported by expanded accessibility tools and training. The initiative is designed to benefit students broadly, with particular attention to first-generation students, students with financial need, and students with disabilities.

New student-success technology will help faculty, advisors, and support staff identify academic difficulties earlier and coordinate outreach, referrals, and appointments. Classroom and wireless upgrades, along with an enhanced computer laboratory in Mesa, will support more collaborative, technology-rich learning.

"Every student who comes to Benedictine brings hopes for the future and gifts waiting to be discovered," said Acting Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs Timothy Marin, PhD, '96. "Our Benedictine mission calls us to honor the dignity of each person and build a community in which those gifts can flourish. This grant will help us put that commitment into practice—making learning more accessible, offering support when it matters most, and nurturing a sense of belonging from the first semester. Through these efforts, we seek to help students reach graduation prepared for meaningful careers and lives enriched by purpose, fulfillment, and service to others."

Through Catalyzing Student Success, Benedictine University is investing in a promise at the heart of its mission: that students are known, their potential is nurtured, and their achievements become a source of good in the world.

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About Benedictine University

Benedictine University is an inclusive academic community dedicated to teaching and learning, scholarship and service, and truth and justice, as inspired by the Catholic intellectual tradition, the social teaching of the church, and the principles of wisdom in the Rule of St. Benedict.

Karen Campana

Benedictine University

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