

Edwardsville's Wesley Jones earns Van Lunen Fellow honor for 2018-2019

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
August 2 2018 5:59 AM



GRAND RAPIDS, Michigan — Wesley Jones, principal at Trinity Lutheran School in Edwardsville has an opportunity for the upcoming school year that will greatly add to his resources and opportunities for the institution.

Jones has been selected by the Van Lunen Center for Executive Management in Christian Schools at Calvin College for a 2018-2019 fellowship.

The Van Lunen Center's 2018-2019 cohort of fellows includes educators from 20 schools across the United States and Canada, and one from Japan.

The Fellows program, now in its 12th year, is designed for school heads who seek professional development in their work as administrators of faith-based schools. The majority of participant expenses are covered by the Van Lunen Center, including the cost of instruction, lodging, meals, coaching and access to topic experts.

Jones said he believed the opportunity to be a Van Lunen Fellow was a tremendous honor and opportunity.

"I will continue to learn as well as develop my own leadership skills and how to apply them to my work at Trinity," he said. "I am extremely excited about the entire thing. There will be a lot of leadership training and networking. It will allow me to set long-term goals for the school and helps give me all the tools by being in fellowship with 23 other Christian School leaders. It will give me extra resources as I achieve my goals and I get to help them achieve their goals."

The Van Lunen Center was established at Calvin in January 2007 with a \$2.5 million endowment gift to the college from the Richard D. Van Lunen Foundation. Subsequent gifts from several foundations, individual gifts and Christian school associations support the center. Its purpose is to provide executive management education for senior leaders of schools based on the historic Christian faith.

"The sessions are focused on content with experts in their field, and include collaborative, active-learning workshops and presentations," according to Yvonne Ferwerda, director of the Van Lunen Center.

"In areas essential to today's heads of school such as marketing and enrollment, strategic planning, conflict transformation, board governance, sustainability and development," she said, "participants will deepen their own leadership, develop skills, and create deep relationships with peers and leaders. They will become more prepared to craft and implement a sustainable Christian educational mission with parents, teachers and other supporting communities."

The program begins with five residential days in July 2018, continues again in January 2019 for five days, and ends with three days in July 2019. Between sessions, faculty coaching and consultant support are available via phone, through online tools and in person to assist fellows with their applied school project.

The Van Lunen Center was established to serve faith-based schools large and small across the U.S. and Canada with a big-tent philosophy, reaching out to schools from a wide range of faith traditions, including Baptist, Catholic, evangelical Protestant, Episcopal, independent Christian, Lutheran, Mennonite and Reformed Christian day schools.