



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Cindy Workman
Director of Public Relations
Creighton University
CindyWorkman@creighton.edu

CONTACT:

Deana Waintraub Stafford
Associate Director,
Center for First-generation Student Success
First-genForward@naspa.org

**Creighton University receives First-gen Forward Designation;
national honor for commitment to first-generation student success**

Omaha, NE (March 10, 2021) – The Center for First-generation Student Success, an initiative of NASPA – Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education and The Suder Foundation, recently announced the inclusion of Creighton University in its 2021-22 First-gen Forward cohort. The First-gen Forward designation recognizes institutions of higher education that have demonstrated a commitment to improving experiences and advancing outcomes of first-generation college students. Selected institutions receive professional development, community-building experiences, and a first look at the center’s research and resources.

Creighton was awarded the designation on the basis of its many programs designed to ensure the success of first-generation college students. Among these are:

- *First Gen Forward Council.* A university-wide working group singularly focused on the academic success, persistence, graduation and overall student development of all Creighton first-generation students.
- *Creighton First Program.* An initiative focused on improved recognition and awareness of first-generation students. This includes programmatic events and activities, new student orientation outreach and a marketing campaign complete with a logo and swag for students.
- *Creighton First Communities.* An opportunity for incoming first-generation students to meet both fellow incoming and current first-gen students, and be connected with first-gen faculty and staff. Each Creighton First Community consists of five to seven incoming students, a Creighton First Community peer leader, and a faculty/staff liaison.
- *Creighton First Community Leaders.* Peer Leaders who provide mentorship and plan activities for first-year first-gen students.
- *Orientation Affinity Groups.* Gatherings for first-gen students and families during Creighton’s new-student orientation programs.

“The Center is so pleased to welcome Creighton University into the 2021-22 First-gen Forward cohort. Through the application process, it was evident that Creighton is not only taking steps to serve first-generation students but is prepared to make a long-term commitment and employ strategies that foster an environment

of success for this important population,” said Sarah Whitley, PhD, assistant vice president, Center for First-generation Student Success.

“This wonderful news not only reflects upon the great heritage of our institution, but acknowledges and celebrates the continued commitments our campus makes to enhance the curricular and co-curricular experience for all students,” said Mardell Wilson, EdD, Creighton University provost. “Creighton University is devoted to the success of first-generation students, and our innovative programming has provided a welcoming and supportive environment.”

As a First-gen Forward Institution, Creighton faculty and staff will be afforded multiple opportunities to engage with peer institutions that are also creating environments that improve the experiences and outcomes of first-generation students. Cohort institutions will send representatives to the First-gen Forward Workshop slated for early-June and will participate in monthly phone calls, virtual professional development, goal setting, blog development, annual reporting and more. After two successful years in the program, Creighton will be eligible to apply for the advisory leadership designation.

“First-gen Forward is an exciting opportunity for Creighton University to join a dedicated community of professionals prepared to share evidence-based practices and resources, troubleshoot challenges, generate knowledge and continue to advance the success of first-generation students across the country. We are excited to see a groundswell of activity from the First-gen Forward cohort and know Creighton will be a significant contributor,” said Kevin Kruger, PhD, president and CEO of NASPA.

About Creighton University: Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska, enrolls 4,458 undergraduates and 4,312 graduate and professional students among nine schools and colleges. No other university its size offers students such a comprehensive academic environment with personal attention from faculty-mentors. Jesuit and Catholic, it affords incomparable interprofessional education, bridging eight health professions programs with law, business and the arts and sciences – all on one walkable campus. Creighton University ranks in the top third of U.S. News & World Report’s rankings for National Universities. Visit [Creighton.edu](https://www.creighton.edu) for more information.

About NASPA—Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education

NASPA—Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education is the leading association for the advancement, health and sustainability of the student affairs profession. Its work provides high-quality professional development, advocacy and research for 15,000 members in all 50 states, 25 countries and eight U.S. territories. Visit [naspa.org](https://www.naspa.org) for more information.

About the Center for First-generation Student Success

The Center for First-generation Student Success is the premier source of evidence-based practices, professional development and knowledge creation for the higher education community to advance the success of first-generation students. Through four strategic priority areas, the center drives higher education innovation and advocacy for first-generation student success.