

Alumni Spotlight: Linda Leon (D.Min. '14)



Current title: Director of Spiritual Formation at Malone University

Family: Two college-aged kids, Abbi and Noah

Favorite class: One in which we traveled to the Boston campus and discussed urban ministry and racial reconciliation

Favorite memory: 1) The lightbulb moment in class when I realized what my thesis project would be and how it could potentially change Malone University's spiritual formation programming, and 2) the day I moved the class clock ahead a good bit of time to see if the professors would notice (they didn't). Can I admit this now without penalty now that it's eight years later?!?

How did you come to be part of the D.Min. program at Gordon-Conwell?

I was mom to two elementary school kids and a full-time campus minister. At the time I couldn't even conceive of taking on doctoral work. Then a friend pointed out GCTS's program focused specifically on Ministry of Emerging Generations. I wanted to know more about the students I was serving and how to better minister to them. I couldn't get the idea of this D.Min. program out of my brain. I suppose that was the Holy Spirit's prompting? When I encountered only open doors—a workplace supportive of advanced studies, a church offering financial assistance, help and support available at home—I enrolled!

What have you been doing since you left Gordon-Conwell?

I've continued in my role as Director of Spiritual Formation. Shortly after I graduated from GCTS, I shifted to leading our office. We changed Malone's spiritual formation programming in light of research and learning from my GCTS cohort and subsequent thesis project.

How has God woven together your Gordon-Conwell education with other life events to bring you to where you are now?

I'm now parenting two of the "emerging adults" that we discussed in my GCTS cohort, which is simultaneously exciting and frightening.

How has your Gordon-Conwell education served you in your past and current work?

I learned to understand college students' needs through the lens of research and best practices and then make data-driven decisions in campus ministry strategy. This changed and bettered how I approach work and ministry.

What piece of advice would you give to young alumni who are just entering the working world?

“Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering” (Romans 12:1-2, MSG). He cares about the fullness of your life: you can trust him!

Do you have any publications or links you'd like to share?

This is my most recent publication: <https://www.cccu.org/magazine/spiritual-lessons-learned-quarantine/>