



Colleges of Distinction Member Onboarding Guide



### Congratulations on being recognized as a College of Distinction!

Now that you can point to this valuable third-party recognition when engaging your various audiences, it's important to make sure you get the absolute most out of it. And this means making sure that all relevant stakeholders across campus are aware of this distinction and have access to your CoD membership packet so they can meet their specific goals as well. In order to help get you started, we have detailed some action items based on your institution's target audiences so that you can take advantage of your CoD membership. Before you do anything, though, make sure to knock out this first step:

Share Your Badges Internally With All Relevant Campus Stakeholders While this is not an exhaustive list, here are some of the stakeholders with whom you should share your CoD membership packet: admissions, marketing, communications and PR services, military services, student diversity office, career services, alumni relations, university advancement, academic departments and schools (business, nursing, arts and sciences, etc.), human resources, the president's office, and executive administrators.

Also, make sure to share this guide with them so that they, too, can identify what action steps to take. Once you've done that, you're ready to begin! Simply turn to the section in this guide that matches your target audience and follow the suggested action items. We've also included some checklists at the end of this guide to summarize the relevant action items for each target audience.

Here is a breakdown of the four general audiences whose action items we have identified:

### **Target Audience** Prospective Students

**Target Audience** Alumni and Donors

**Target Audience** Press and the Wider Community



**Target Audience** Current and Prospective Faculty and Staff

## Target Audience: Prospective Students

**Relevant Campus Stakeholders:** Marketing, undergraduate and graduate admissions, career services, military services, student diversity office, academic departments and schools, etc.

## The badges are intentionally designed to draw the attention of online visitors,

so it's important to use them throughout the areas prospective students will engage throughout their buyer journey. This means admissions, college, and department webpages; microsites; landing pages; and online publications. You may also want to add descriptive copy to accompany the badges depending on where you highlight them.

#### If you have a Google AdWords account,

take the opportunity to feature your recognition by including your badges in the design of your display ads. You could also simply write a sentence or two about your distinction for Google search ads.

## If applicable, write an article that details your distinction for your university's

**prospective student blog.** Feel free to utilize the twopage handout and/or press release template included in your CoD membership packet to help guide your content.

## Add your CoD badges to your admissions emails

along with copy that details the importance of this distinction.

#### Enhance Current Email Campaigns

Include the badges in the emails you are already sending to prospective students.

#### Develop a New Campaign Promoting

**CoD Membership** - Draft a single email blast with news about your CoD membership, including information about each badge you have received and why they are important. Or, better yet, draft a multiemail campaign featuring an overview of your school's distinction along with subsequent emails that feature each of your badges separately. Make sure to include appropriate calls to action in these emails as well to prompt prospective student engagement along the buyer journey.

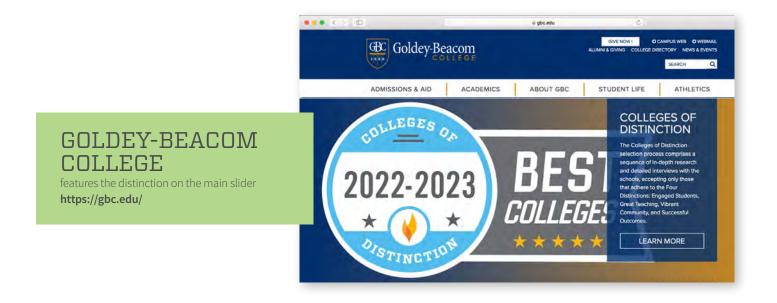
Highlight Your CoD Badges **Online** and Through **Email** 

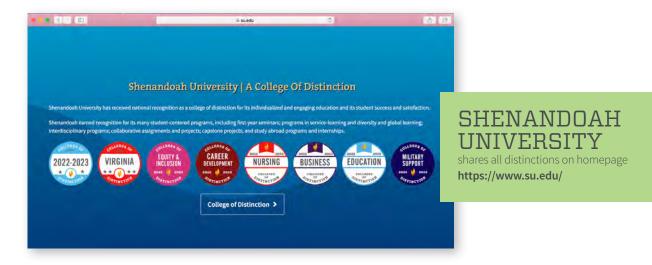




#### ST. THOMAS AQUINAS COLLEGE places badges on the admissions homepage

https://www.stac.edu/admissions





### Target Audience: Prospective Students

**Relevant Campus Stakeholders:** Marketing, undergraduate and graduate admissions, career services, military services, student diversity office, academic departments and schools, etc.



Highlight Your CoD Badges on **Social Media** 

#### Promote your CoD badges and CoD-crafted video

on all of your social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, etc.). It's worth highlighting these as soon as you receive them as well as regularly throughout the year (especially in the fall, when students are applying, and in the spring, when admitted students have decided to enroll). In addition to your badge and CoD-crafted video, make sure to add a link to your profile page on the CoD website so students can learn more about why your school is distinguished.

#### If you have paid social media accounts,

then consider crafting a paid ad campaign featuring your various CoD badges and CoD-crafted video with links to your profile on the CoD website.



Vermont State @VermontStateU

Excited to see @CastletonEdu Named 2022-2023 College of Distinction by @CoDSchoolSearch for the 4th consecutive year! castleton.edu/news-media/art...

#### #vt #vermont #highered



Castleton Named 2022-2023 College of Distinction castleton.edu

### VERMONT STATE

uses **Twitter** to promote the annual distinction for Castleton University



Southern Utah University | Cele... 🤣 --@SUUtbirds

### SOUTHERN UTAH UNIVERSITY

shares recognition press release on **Twitter** 



University of Hartford @UofHartford

The University of Hartford has been named a 2022-2023 College of Distinction and is also being highlighted in the areas of business, education, engineering, nursing, career development and equity and inclusion. (@CoDSchoolSearch) Read more: bit.ly/3ITuRte



SUU has again received national recognition as one of the Colleges of Distinction! We've received additional recognition for business, education, engineering, nursing, career development, and military support.

suu.edu/news/2022/07/c... #TBirdNation @**CoDSchoolSearch** 



suu.edu SUU Named 2022-2023 College of Distinction | SUU

### UNIVERSITY OF HARTFORD

highlights individual recognitions on **Twitter** 

### Target Audience: Prospective Students

**Relevant Campus Stakeholders:** Marketing, undergraduate and graduate admissions, career services, military services, student diversity office, academic departments and schools, etc.



## Highlight your badges in all appropriate print material,

including flyers, mailers, brochures, viewbooks, and other printed marketing and admissions materials for prospective students.

## Consider displaying your CoD badges in larger and more public formats,

including banners and displays at college fairs or places on campus for visiting prospective students. You can also pull them into your outdoor advertising efforts, such as those on billboards, park benches, buses, digital signages, and more.

## Include your badges in paid print advertisements

in magazines and/or newspapers.

## Add your CoD badges to your admissions emails

along with copy that details the importance of this distinction.

#### Enhance Current Email Campaigns

Include the badges in the emails you are already sending to prospective students.

#### Add the two-page handout from your CoD membership packet

to your print marketing material. You can bring it to career and college fairs, have it available for visitors in your admissions office, mail it to prospective students, and more.

#### Print Examples



NURSING

to offer compassionate care to a hurting world. Belhaven Mississippi RN-BSN Scholarship Program helps you qualify to attend the RN-BSN program or the RN-BSN Prep Track.

Your cost for ALL CLASSES required will only be \$296 per credit hour!

BELHAVEN UNIVERSITY

TEXAS

CHRISTIAN

+ JOH +

ILINE COLLEGES

features its **Nursing badge** on a print advertisement to highlight third-party validation

## **A WORLDHEALTHVIEW**

The RN to BSN program will equip you with advanced knowledge of nursing concepts including management and

leadership, community health and research. Additionally, the program will provide you with a pathway to graduate study in nursing.



(601) 968-8881 | @BELHAVENU | WWW.BELHAVEN.EDU ONLINEADMISSION@BELHAVEN.EDU

# Schreiner University



UNIQUELY TEXAN

Nestled in the beautiful Texas Hill Country just 50 miles from San Antonio, Schreiner University is a small school that offers academics, varsity programs, and learning communities as big as Texas. Inspired by the trailblazing pioneers who came before them, Schreiner students chart new paths as they explore their futures with grit and resilience.

> Kerrville Texas www.schreiner.edu 800.343.4919



### Target Audience: Prospective Students

**Relevant Campus Stakeholders:** Marketing, undergraduate and graduate admissions, career services, military services, student diversity office, academic departments and schools, etc.

Highlight Your Badges Around **Campus** 

#### Get the word out to students, faculty, staff,

and prospective students visiting your campus by highlighting your CoD badges around campus. You can include them on posters, lamppost displays, and in hallways.

#### Hang your CoD certificates

for each badge awarded in a place where prospective students will see it, such as in the admissions building or in your admissions counselors' offices.

## Be strategic with where you display certain badges.

While you want to feature all of your badges in places where visiting prospective students will see them, make sure the appropriate areas of your campus are highlighting their relevant badges (your career services office should feature the Career Services badge, your business school should feature the Business badge, etc.) Contact the CoD team about window stickers, banners, printed flyers, and more.

Campus **Examples** 

### ELIZABETHTOWN COLLEGE

gets the word out on campus about its **Business badge** through well-designed signage:



### Target Audience: Prospective Students

**Relevant Campus Stakeholders:** Marketing, undergraduate and graduate admissions, career services, military services, student diversity office, academic departments and schools, etc.

Take Advantage of the Colleges of Distinction **Blog** 

#### Identify a student ambassador at

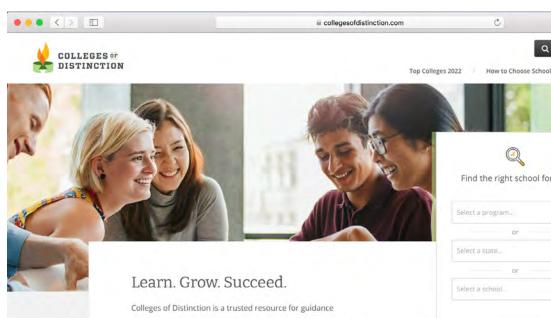
**Your school,** one who can write an article about the quality of your school's student experience, to be featured on the Colleges of Distinction blog. The blog reaches thousands of prospective students, granting your school wider exposure as an institution committed to teaching, student outcomes, and a quality education. Plus, you can republish the article on your own blog or website to aid with your content marketing efforts.

#### Find a staff or faculty member

who can write an article on a topic that is helpful for prospective students to be published on the CoD blog. The article will include a link back to your school, providing another avenue through which to draw new prospective students to your institution.

FIND SCHOOLS





#### Colleges of Distinction is a trusted resource for guidance counselors, parents, students, and hundreds of colleges and universities across the U.S. We help students find the right college using our four distinctions.

#### Explore the 2022-2023 Colleges of Distinction list >>

CHECKLIST **Prospective Students** 

Relevant Campus Stakeholders: Marketing, undergraduate and graduate admissions, career services, military services, student diversity office, academic departments and schools, etc.

### Highlight Your CoD Badges **Online** and Through **Email**

- Highlight your badges online on admissions, college, and department webpages; microsites; landing pages; and online publications.
- Feature your CoD recognition in your Google AdWords advertising.
- Write an article about your school's distinction for the university blog.
- Add your CoD badges to your current emails to prospective students.
- Draft a specific email to highlight to prospective students your membership involvement with CoD.
- Develop a multi-email campaign to promote each of your badges separately and in greater detail.

### Highlight Your Badges on Social Media

- Promote your CoD badges and CoD-crafted video on all of your social media platforms with links to your school profile on the CoD website. And make sure to do this regularly throughout the year!
- Create a paid ad campaign to feature your badges, CoD-crafted video, and the link to your school's CoD profile to help get more exposure throughout social media.

### Take Advantage of the Colleges of Distinction **Blog**

- Identify a student ambassador who can write an article about the quality of your school's student experience for the Colleges of Distinction blog.
- Find a staff or faculty member to write a blog article on a topic that is helpful for prospective students to be published on the CoD blog.

### Highlight Your Badges in **Print**

- Highlight your badges in your flyers, mailers, brochures, viewbooks, and other printed marketing and admissions material for prospective students.
- Consider displaying badges in larger and more public formats (banners and displays at college fairs, signage on campus, billboards, park benches, etc.).
- Include your badges in paid print advertisements in magazines and newspapers.
- Incorporate the two-page handout in your CoD membership packet into your print marketing material for prospective students.

### **Highlight Your Badges** Around **Campus**

- - Include your badges on posters, lamppost displays, and in hallways around campus.
- Hang your CoD certificates for each badge awarded in a place where prospective students will see it, such as in the admissions department or individual counselors' offices.
- Make sure the appropriate areas of your campus are highlighting their relevant badges (your career services office should feature the Career Services badge, your business school should feature the Business badge, etc.)

### Target Audience: Alumni and Donors

Relevant Campus Stakeholders: Alumni relations, university advancement, alumni-associated groups, the president's office, executive administrators, etc.

Highlight Your CoD Badges **Online** and Through **Email** 

## Display your badges with accompanying copy where alumni and donors will see them,

such as on college and department webpages and in various online publications. Your recognition signals to this audience your school's continued promise to provide a superb education, helping alumni feel a sense of pride and donors feel affirmed in their giving.

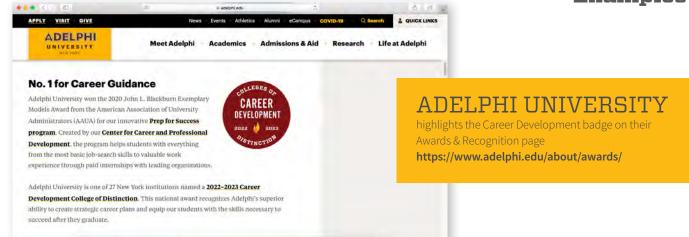
#### Write an article for your university blog or alumni magazine to announce your school's distinction.

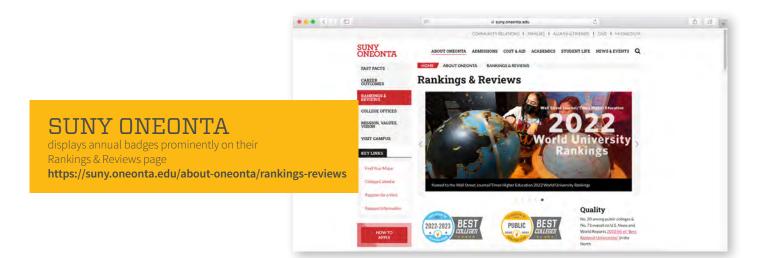
You can use your membership packet's two-page handout and/or press release template to get started, or you could add your badges to your online magazine/blog in the form of a pullout (similar to a display ad).

#### Include your badges, along with copy

that details the importance of your recognition, in your alumni and donor newsletters.

- Enhance Current Email Campaigns Add your CoD badges to the emails that you already send to alumni and donors.
- Develop a New Campaign Promoting CoD Membership Draft a single email blast with news about becoming a CoD member, including information about the individual badges you have received and why they are important. Or, better yet, draft a multiemail campaign with one email featuring an overview of your distinction along with subsequent emails that feature each of your badges separately. Make sure to include appropriate calls to action that prompt alumni to engage and donors to give.







### Target Audience: Alumni and Donors

**Relevant Campus Stakeholders:** Alumni relations, university advancement, alumni-associated groups, the president's office, executive administrators, etc.

Highlight Your CoD Badges on **Social Media** 

#### Highlight your badges and CoD-crafted video

on your general social media accounts, which will also engage audiences beyond that of alumni and donors. If you also have specific social media accounts for your alumni, then make sure to post these materials and a link to your Colleges of Distinction profile on those as well.



Elizabethtown College S Jun 13 · 🕲

Elizabethtown College has been recognized for its commitment to helping students learn, grow, and succeed by Colleges of Distinction!

Etown was named a 2022-2023 College of Distinction, Pennsylvania College of Distinction, and has earned additional recognition in the areas of Business, Education, Engineering, and Career Development for demonstrating the following programs and experiences:

- Engaged Students
- Great Teaching
- Vibrant Community
- Successful Outcomes

#### Learn more: https://bit.ly/3MENr8G.



Lindenwood University 🥏

For the third consecutive year, Lindenwood ranks on the Colleges of Distinction list! The University also received special recognition in several categories - Business, Education, Career Development, Equity & Inclusion, and Military Support.

n



lindenwood.edu Lindenwood Named a 2022-2023 College of Distinction | News

## Social Media **Examples**

#### ELIZABETHTOWN COLLEGE

uses **Facebook** to highlight the CoD recognitions and what they stand for



Hood College 🥝

Hood College, along with our nursing, education and business programs, has been named a 2022 College of Distinction by Colleges of Distinction!

"Every student has individual needs and their own environment in which they're most likely to thrive. We want to extend our praise to the schools that prioritize and cater to students' goals."

#### hood.ws/HoodCoD22



HOOD COLLEGE creates and shares an image on **Facebook** to announce badges, along with a quote from the CoD team

### LINDENWOOD UNIVERSITY

shares their third year of CoD recognitions on **Facebook** with their website news press release

### Target Audience: Alumni and Donors

**Relevant Campus Stakeholders:** Alumni relations, university advancement, alumni-associated groups, the president's office, executive administrators, etc.



Highlight Your CoD Badges in **Print** 

## Write an article in your alumni or university print magazine

about how your school has been selected as a distinguished school, the copy of which can be based off of the press release template and two-page flyer included in your membership packet. You can also include the badges and your membership announcement as a half- or full-page pullout, like you would with an ad, in your university or alumni print magazine.

#### Add your badges to any print material

given to alumni and donors, such as mailers, flyers, brochures, and more.

#### Mail your two-page CoD handout

to your donors and alumni and have them available at events where they will be in attendance (Homecoming, alumni and donor events, etc.).





### Target Audience: Alumni and Donors

**Relevant Campus Stakeholders:** Alumni relations, university advancement, alumni-associated groups, the president's office, executive administrators, etc.





## At donor and alumni events, mention your recognition in your speeches,

and include your badges in any of your visual presentations. Below are some points to mention when speaking about your membership:

- Your school has received this national recognition because it offers an individualized and engaging education.
- Unlike other ranking systems, the award demonstrates excellence exhibited in the classroom and through other high-impact practices.
- The selection process consists of an in-depth interview process and detailed research.
- Schools are selected when they show that they adhere to the Four Distinctions: Engaged Students, Great Teaching, Vibrant Community, and Successful Outcomes.



Alumni and Donors Relevant Campus Stakeholders: Alumni relations, university advancement, alumni-associated groups, the president's office, executive administrators, etc.

### Highlight Your CoD Badges **Online** and Through **Email**

CHECKLIST

02

- Write an article about your CoD membership for your alumni blog/digital magazine.
- Add your badges to an ad-like pullout somewhere within your online magazine/blog.
- Add your CoD badges to your current alumni newsletters.
- Draft a single email to notify alumni and donors about your
  CoD membership.
- Develop a multi-email campaign for alumni and donors to promote your badges separately and in greater detail.

## Highlight Your Badges on **Social Media**

 $\checkmark$ 

Highlight your badges and CoD-crafted video on both your general and alumni-specific social media accounts.

## Highlight Your Badges in **Print**

Write an article in your alumni or university print magazine about how your school has been selected as a College of Distinction.

Include the badges and your membership announcement as a half- or full-page pullout, like you would with an ad, in your university or alumni print magazine.

- Add your badges to any print material given to alumni and donors, such as mailers, flyers, brochures, and more.
- Mail your two-page CoD handout to your donors and alumni, and have them available at events where they will be in attendance (Homecoming, alumni and donor events, etc.).

## Speak Publicly About Being a **Distinguished School**

Share news about your recognition in speeches and presentations at alumni and donor events.





### Target Audience: Press and the Wider Community

**Relevant Campus Stakeholders:** PR and communications, the president's office, department/school leaders, chairs, deans, executive administrators, etc.

Highlight Your Badges and CoD Membership in a **Press Release** 

## Create a press release to share with your various media contacts

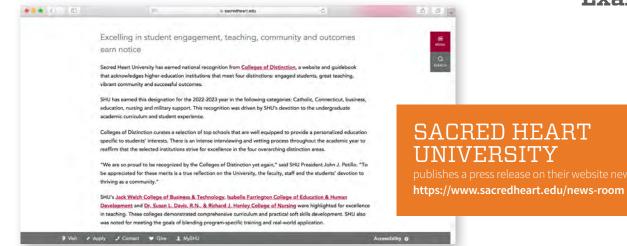
and publish in the "news" section of your website. Your CoD membership packet includes a press release template to help you get started. This is a great way to enhance your reputation while sharing what your school is up to with various community, government, and business leaders.





Press Release

**Examples** 





### UNIVERSITY OF EVANSVILLE

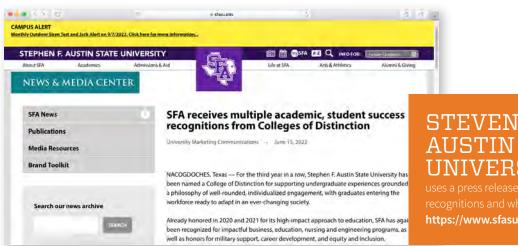
https://www.evansville.edu/news

The University of Evensville has been recognized for its commitment to helping undergraduate students learn, grow, and succeed by Colleges of Distinction, a unque guide for college-bound students. UE has been named a 2022-2023 College of Distinction and an indiana College of Distinction, and it also received recognition for a multitude of academic programs and campus departments.

UE Named a 2022-2023 College of Distinction

Colleges of Distinction uses a selection process not only of in depth research but also detailed interviews with the schools, accepting only those that adhere to the "Four Distinctions". This includes criteria of engaged students, great teaching, vibrant community, and successful outcomes. Combined, these principles ensure that students have a fulfilling and individualized college experience both inside and outside the classroom.

At our university, we are deeply committed to providing a well-rounded, transformative education that has a lasting impact on our students for years to come," said Christopher M. Pietruszkiewicz, president of UE. "This recognition from Colleges of Distinction speaks to our mission and the individual experiences of each of our students



Posted: Wednesday, June 29, 2022

### STEVEN F. AUSTIN STATE UNIVERSITY'S

https://www.sfasu.edu/about-sfa/newsroom

## Press and the Wider Community

**Relevant Campus Stakeholders:** PR and communications, the president's office, department/school leaders, chairs, deans, executive administrators, etc.



Highlight Your CoD Badges on **Social Media** 

## Highlight your badges and CoD-crafted video on social media.

This is not only a great way to get the word out to your followers who aren't otherwise affiliated with your school, but it also gives alumni, faculty, staff, and students the chance to re-share the link and expose your institution to an even wider network of people.

#### FRIENDS UNIVERSITY

uses **Instagram** to celebrate the annual badges earned from CoD

### $\bigcirc \bigcirc \bigcirc \land$

CHRISTIAN

Friends

80 likes

**friendsu** Friends University named a 2022-2023 College of Distinction, Kansas College of Distinction and Christian College of Distinction.

2022-2023



KANSAS

\* () \*

 $\square$ 

#### 211 likes

montevallo The University of Montevallo has been named to the elite 2022-2023 Colleges of Distinction list for the 11th year in a row.

In addition to again earning the overall Colleges of Distinction designation, UM received programspecific recognition for the Michael E. Stephens College of Business and the University of Montevallo College of Education and Human Development. Montevallo was also awarded for its efforts to prepare students for their careers after graduation and for supporting its military-related students and employees.

#### KEUKA COLLEGE

thanks faculty, staff, and alumni on **Instagram** for support in earning recognition



274 likes

**keukacollege** We are beyond thankful for our latest national achievement: Being named a 2022-23 College of Distinction!

A huge shoutout to all of our fantastic faculty, staff and alumni for your support and dedication for what you do to ensure the success of our students. We couldn't do it without you!

#### UNIVERSITY OF MONTEVALLO

highlights the 11th year of CoD recognition on Instagram

## Press and the Wider Community

**Relevant Campus Stakeholders:** PR and communications, the president's office, department/school leaders, chairs, deans, executive administrators, etc.

Speak Publicly About Being a **Distinguished** School



## Whether your university president speaks at an event with local business leaders,

a dean of your college speaks to other academic administrators at a conference, or an executive speaks at some other community event, remind your advocates to show off your distinction! Your membership can be mentioned in a speech and/or highlighted with a visual display of your badges. Below are some points to mention when speaking to a wider audience:

- Your school has received this national recognition because it offers an individualized and engaging education.
- Unlike other ranking systems, the award demonstrates excellence exhibited in the classroom as well as through other high-impact practices.
- The selection process consists of an in-depth interview process and detailed research.
- Schools are selected that adhere to the Four Distinctions: Engaged Students, Great Teaching, Vibrant Community, and Successful Outcomes.



**CHECKLIST** Press and the Wider Community

**Relevant Campus Stakeholders:** PR and communications, the president's office, department/school leaders, chairs, deans, executive administrators, etc.

### Highlight Your Badges and CoD Membership in a **Press Release**

Share a press release with your various media contacts and publish it somewhere on your website. You may reference the PR template included in your CoD membership packet as a guide.

## Highlight Your Badges on **Social Media**



Highlight your badges and CoD-crafted video on social media.

## Speak Publicly About Being a **Distinguished School**

 $\checkmark$ 

03

Whether your university president speaks at an event with local business leaders, a dean of your college speaks to other academic administrators at a conference, or an executive speaks at some other community event, remind your advocates to show off your distinction! Your membership can be mentioned in a speech and/or highlighted with a visual display of your badges.





### Target Audience: Current and Prospective Faculty and Staff

**Relevant Campus Stakeholders:** Human resources, department/school leaders, chairs, deans, executive administrators, faculty/staff hiring committees, etc.



#### Display your badges prominently

wherever prospective staff and faculty will be looking, such as on the human resources area of your website. Also mention your recognition in the descriptions of your job postings to raise their appeal.

#### Email your job candidates with your badges

and/or more information about your school's accolades, perhaps after their interview or while they are deciding to take the position you offer them.

#### With respect to current faculty and staff, send an internal email

with your badges and an explanation of your institution's accomplishment. Showing and reminding your employees of your school's success is a crucial way to foster morale.

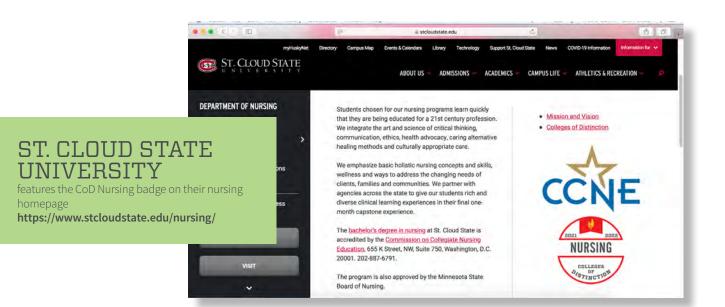


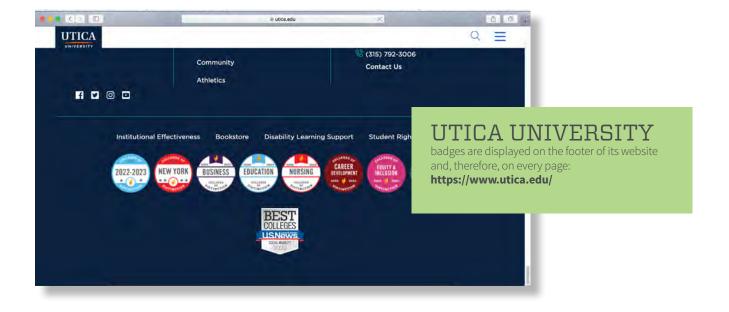




### UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA ASHEVILLE

includes the CoD badge on their homepage alongside other recognitions https://www.unca.edu/





## Current and Prospective Faculty and Staff

**Relevant Campus Stakeholders:** Human resources, department/school leaders, chairs, deans, executive administrators, faculty/staff hiring committees, etc.



### Speak Publicly About Being a **Distinguished School**



## Make a point to mention your institution's recognition

at the next all-staff or -faculty meeting. This is a great time to explain each of your badges and how this third-party validation is a point of pride for everyone who makes your school so great. Below are some points to mention when speaking about Colleges of Distinction to internal audiences:

- Your school has received this national recognition because it offers an individualized and engaging education.
- Unlike other ranking systems, the award demonstrates excellence exhibited in the classroom and through various high-impact practices.
- The selection process consists of an in-depth interview process and detailed research.
- Schools are selected that adhere to the Four Distinctions: Engaged Students, Great Teaching, Vibrant Community, and Successful Outcomes.

## Encourage directors, deans, department chairs, and other leaders

and managers on campus to share this news with their direct reports and immediate team. You can notify them however you'd like, be that in a staff or faculty meeting, through an internal email, or with posters and flyers that include your badges on department office walls. CHECKLIST Current and Prospective Faculty and Staff

**Relevant Campus Stakeholders:** Human resources, department/school leaders, chairs, deans, executive administrators, faculty/staff hiring committees, etc.

### Highlight Your CoD Badges **Online** and Through **Email**

04

- Display your badges prominently wherever prospective staff and faculty will be engaging, such as the human resources area of your website.
- Mention your recognition in the descriptions of your job postings to raise their appeal.
- Email your job candidates with your badges and/or more information about your school's accolades, perhaps after their interview or while they are deciding to take the position you offer them.
- Send current faculty and staff an internal email with your badges and an explanation of your institution's accomplishment.

## Share It Publicly With **Staff and Faculty**

- Mention your institution's recognition at the next all-staff or faculty meeting.
- Encourage directors, deans, department chairs, and other leaders and managers on campus to share this news with their direct reports and immediate team.



