



## Learn about 5 new universities at Mesa college expo

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By Michelle Reese, Tribune |

In the next year, five new universities will start welcoming students to campuses in Mesa.

Next Friday, the community can come to learn about the five schools – Upper Iowa University became the newest on Thursday – and what they will bring to the city.

Mesa's Higher Education Conference and Expo will be the first time all five schools will be together in a public setting.

"The purpose of the conference and expo is to bring the community together to learn about the incredible educational assets we have currently existing in Mesa – from ASU Polytechnic to MCC and A.T. Still University -- and to really talk about and introduce the expanding colleges here," said Jaye O'Donnell, Mesa's economic development deputy director.

In addition to Upper Iowa University, which was just announced last week, Benedictine University, Westminster College, Albright College and Wilkes University are opening campuses in Mesa.

All the schools will complement each other, city officials have said, with a partnership planned between Mesa Community College to offer a seamless transition for students who want to take their first two years at a community college.

During the conference, families and students can learn about the different opportunities and majors that will be offered, as well as hear about the partnership.

All are liberal arts schools, which city officials said there is a need for in the community.

"We have legacy institutions that have such rich traditions and values coming into this market. They're quality liberal arts colleges. We're excited to embrace them into the fabric of Mesa," O'Donnell said.

While Upper Iowa University is seeking permanent space in west Mesa, the other four schools will be downtown. Three of them – Westminster College, Albright College and Wilkes University -- will locate in the newly created Mesa Center for Higher Education, 245 W. Second St. Benedictine will build a new campus at 225 E. Main St., formerly the Tri-City Community Service Center.

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