



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Governor to Honor Points of Light Award Winners

Lincoln, Neb. – Gov. Dave Heineman will present the Nebraska Governor's Points of Light Awards at a proclamation ceremony Wednesday, November 18 at 10:30 a.m. in the Warner Chamber at the State Capitol in Lincoln. The awards are presented quarterly in recognition of volunteers who give their time, talent and energy to help Nebraskans build stronger communities.

This quarter's winners:

Adult Category: Jerry Johnson – Wahoo, NE

Jerry Johnson is a mover and a shaker as the current Mayor of Wahoo, but he is also someone who is always willing to lend a helping hand when asked. Jerry serves many non-profit organizations, including his local church, Greater Wahoo Development Foundation, Wahoo Community Foundation, the Chamber of Commerce, Wahoo Public Buildings & Grounds Association and Lincoln Action Board.

Jerry's leadership and community spirit is best exemplified in the Priceless Pre-teen Leadership Program. Jerry knocked on doors for donations to get the program up and running, and has continued to work with it while turning it over to other community leaders. This program, in its third year, provides 4th & 5th grade students nominated by school staff with an opportunity to learn leadership skills in a camp setting for one week during the summer. Jerry has helped the Wahoo community come together on many projects by holding people accountable with his great tact, professionalism and leadership.

GROUP Category: UNO-Service Learning Academy – Omaha, NE

In 2003 Seven Days of Service began as a small effort among the University of Nebraska Omaha and several community leaders. The project provided hands-on experience for students to learn about effective collaboration and community service through a week-long effort to renovate, revive and revitalize homes and community facilities in an economically disadvantaged area in Omaha.

With the careful guidance of faculty and staff, students representing over 100 Service-Learning courses at the University of Nebraska Omaha took on different components of the program. This included volunteer recruitment, media relations, serving as construction site managers and soliciting sponsorships. Seven Days of Service was a unique opportunity for students that presented ample opportunity for professional development. It has become a popular alternative Spring Break activity as a growing number of classes, groups and individuals get involved.

By the end of 2009, the program will have engaged approximately 3,100 unduplicated volunteers and completed projects on 36 sites. While the physical improvements to the community have been obvious, the demonstrated long-term commitment volunteers possess upon completion of the program is truly inspiring.

Youth Category: Auburn High School – Auburn, NE

The youth of Auburn High School are considered a priceless asset to the communities in their school district because of their many volunteer efforts, positive attitudes and their ability to get things done. Students have served as mentors for the Head Start pre-school. They have sponsored Food Bank Friday, bringing in over 500 pounds of non-perishable food for the local food pantry. They sponsored a family in need with two small children by raising hundreds of dollars to help with groceries, clothing and toys. Their “Pennies for Patients” drive raised over \$1,000 for cancer patients. The Junior/Senior Community Service Day involved more than 280 volunteer hours toward cleaning and fixing up public areas such as parks, ball fields and. Through many small efforts, Auburn High School provides a big service to the community.

Each quarter, Commissioners from ServeNebraska review award nominations and make final recommendations to the Governor. The Points of Light awards are sponsored by Woodmen of the World.

To learn more or nominate individuals and groups who have made a difference through volunteerism for a Governor’s Points of Light Award, please visit serve.nebraska.gov, or contact 402-471-6225 or (800) 291-8911.

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