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## **Foster grandparent honored for national service**

(Lincoln, Neb.) Ardith M. Morse, Foster Grandparent received the 2014 First Lady's National Service Award. This award is presented to an individual who is currently serving in a national service program in Nebraska – including AmeriCorps, VISTA, Learn & Serve, SeniorCorps or Foster Grandparents.

Nebraska's First Lady Sally Ganem presented Ardith with her award on April 11, 2014 during the annual First Lady's Outstanding Community Service Awards luncheon at The Thompson Center on the University of Nebraska Omaha campus.

Ardith Morse travels 22 miles every day to be a Foster Grandparent at the Pine Ridge Job Corps. She volunteers in the Education Language Learning Program teaching English to youth from Burma, Thailand, Sudan and other countries so they may have a bright future here in the U.S. Many of these students have lived in refugee camps most of their young lives and have witnessed the destruction of their villages and the slaughter of family members. Principal Brian Kizer believes Ardith is the perfect fit. Her quiet, gentle manner is reassuring to these students who have lost so much. To the kids, she's just "Grandma." When asked if he could use another Foster Grandparent, Brian said, "Yes, if you could find me another Ardith!"

Ardith is also a loyal RSVP (Retired and Senior Volunteer Program) volunteer. In her "spare time", she donates many hours to the Dawes County Historical Museum, greeting visitors and taking them on tours. She is knowledgeable about the history and excited to show what's new. Ardith is also a doer behind the scenes, taking care of daily museum duties and promoting it on local radio stations. She even got the museum highlighted in the magazine "Journey", much to the delight of the museum's board members.

Ardith's service doesn't stop there. She enjoys people and has a wonderful sense of community. She volunteers at the Chadron Art Center, is active with the Dawes County Fair, volunteers at Northwest Community Action Partnership, helps out at the senior center, and gives time to her church. Since raising her family, Ardith has devoted the last 19 years to community service. Though Ardith admits she sometimes forgets to record her hours, records that go back 13 ½ of her 19 years show her volunteer hours total at over 8,050. Ardith is 74 and despite health issues, she continues to make a pivotal impact in her community.

For more information about the First Lady's Outstanding Community Service Awards, visit ServeNebraska at, [www.serve.nebraska.gov](http://www.serve.nebraska.gov).

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