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## **Nebraska in Top 5 Nationally in Rate of Volunteering Volunteering Up Nationally Despite Economic Challenges**

**Lincoln, Neb -** For the fifth consecutive year, Nebraskans rank among the Top 5 states nationally in their rate of volunteering according to Volunteering in America, a comprehensive national study just released by the Corporation for National & Community Service.

“I’m not too surprised by these results. From Auburn to Chadron, our tradition of lending a hand to neighbors is strong,” states Barbara Wilson Thomas, Executive Director of ServeNebraska – the Nebraska Volunteer Service Commission which is charged with promoting community involvement in Nebraska.

In the 2010 study, Nebraska ranks 4<sup>th</sup> in volunteer rates among all fifty states and Washington, D.C with 37.4% of adult Nebraskans volunteering. 509,500 Nebraskans volunteered contributing a total of 65.2 million hours of service with a financial value of \$1.4 billion. Among all of the different age group clusters, Nebraska ranked in the Top 10 nationally:

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>National Rank</b>	<b>Rate of Volunteerism</b>
Older Adults (age 65 <sup>+</sup> )	6 <sup>th</sup>	36.9%
Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964)	4 <sup>th</sup>	42.3%
Young Adults (ages 16-24)	6 <sup>th</sup>	29.9%
Teenagers (ages 16-19)	9 <sup>th</sup>	36.1%
Millennials (born in/after 1982)	3 <sup>rd</sup>	36.1%

Additionally, Omaha ranks 19<sup>th</sup> out of 75 mid-city cities studied with 33.8% of its residents volunteering.

The type of organizations Nebraskans most often assisted are religious (39.0%), educational (22.9%), and social and community service (12.2%). The type of volunteer work done includes general labor (32.3%), fundraising (28.9%), collecting and distributing food (26.1%) and professional/management (20.2%).

“There might be a thought that in challenging economic times, volunteering would drop. That does not seem to be the case, in Nebraska or in the country as a whole,” Thomas continues. “Even as millions continue to struggle through the deepest recession in decades, Americans are turning toward problems and serving their communities, demonstrating resilient spirit of America.” In 2009, 63.4 million Americans (age 16 and older) volunteered, an increase of almost 1.6 million since 2008 and the largest one year jump since 2003. The 8.1 billion hours of volunteer service provided in 2009 in the U.S. has an estimated value of nearly \$169 billion.

This generosity of spirit is seen in individuals such as Chuck Scripter of North Platte who was honored with a First Lady’s Community Service Lifetime Achievement Award. Scripter has volunteered more than 16,000 hours to help a wide array of youth, faith, veterans, community preparedness, and other groups. The enthusiasm of youth volunteers is exemplified by Shelby Seier of Omaha who was recognized with a Governor’s Point of Light Award in June 2010 and devotes her energies to volunteering with youth theater, assisting those with autism, and international aid.

The Volunteering in America report was created by the Corporation for National and Community Service– the federal agency responsible for supporting volunteering and national service through programs like AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and Learn and Serve America – in partnership with the U.S. Census and the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The report is the most comprehensive set of data on volunteering in the U.S., tracking volunteer trends in all 50 states and nearly 200 cities. Learn more at

[www.volunteeringinamerica.gov](http://www.volunteeringinamerica.gov) .

ServeNebraska mobilizes Nebraskans to strengthen their communities through volunteering, collaboration, and national service programs. Learn more about programming and opportunities at [www.serve.nebraska.gov](http://www.serve.nebraska.gov)