

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Nebraska AmeriCorps Programs Recognized Among Nation's Best

Two AmeriCorps programs providing essential services to Nebraskans are among 52 programs nationally highlighted in "Transforming Communities through Service: A Collection of 52 of the Most Innovative AmeriCorps Programs in the United States." LFS AmeriCorps and RISE AmeriCorps were cited for their excellence.

"AmeriCorps is a great way for committed individuals to address needs in their communities and for organizations to expand their capacity" says Greg Donovan, ServeNebraska Program Officer. ServeNebraska nurtures and manages AmeriCorps in Nebraska. "We know a lot of AmeriCorps programs in the state are highly successful and innovative, yet this information is not widely shared. This type of study informs practitioners, policy makers and donors. We are very proud that Nebraska is represented so strongly." Donovan continues.

The Rural Improvement for Schooling and Employment (RISE) AmeriCorps program, hosted by Nebraska State Probation, reduces recidivism through improving education and employment opportunities for adult and juvenile probationers in rural and frontier Nebraska. RISE AmeriCorps members work with individuals in the probation system, facilitate educational groups, and network with local schools and businesses to increase employment and educational opportunities. Research has shown these services increase community safety.

LFS AmeriCorps, led by Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska, uses community asset-building techniques to advance self-sufficient communities for under-served populations in urban and rural Nebraska. A principal focus is fully integrating the growing number of refugees and immigrants into the fabric of life in Nebraska. AmeriCorps members provide job skills, youth enrichment, community building, and life-skills education.

The Transforming Communities publication was crafted by America's Service Commissions (ASC) and Innovations in Civic Participation (ICP) to highlight outstanding effort in light of the recent surge of interest in national service in the US. For this publication, ASC and ICP received nominations of innovative AmeriCorps programs, convened a judging panel, and selected the 52 programs in 39 states that are featured in the publication. The report is available online at www.statecommissions.org.

Nebraska's AmeriCorps programs are currently recruiting members for the 2010-2011 program year which begins in September. To learn more about AmeriCorps and other efforts of ServeNebraska to mobilize residents of our state to strengthen their communities, go to www.serve.nebraska.gov

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