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- ◆ Quarterly Governor's Points of Light Awards
- ◆ First Lady's Outstanding Community Service Awards

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ServeNebraska Mobilizes Nebraskans to Strengthen Their Communities Through Volunteering, Collaboration and National Service Programs.



2012 First Lady's Outstanding Community Service Awards Luncheon

Celebrating Nebraska's Volunteer Spirit



**Nebraska First Lady
Sally Ganem**

Presented at the
Governor's Conference on Rural Development
Holiday Inn Express
300 Holiday Frontage Rd.
North Platte, Nebraska
April 18, 2012

**2012 FIRST LADY'S OUTSTANDING
COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS**

PROGRAM CEREMONY

WELCOME

JAMESENA MOORE
COMMISSION CHAIR, SERVENEBRASKA

GREETINGS

FIRST LADY SALLY GANEM
HONORARY CHAIR, SERVENEBRASKA

MASTER OF CEREMONIES

JAMESENA MOORE

PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

FIRST LADY SALLY GANEM
GERRY OSBORN, SERVENEBRASKA AWARDS CHAIR

* * * * *

CONGRATULATIONS!

To All Honorees & Nominees



ServeNebraska Is Supported By:



2012 FIRST LADY'S OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD HONOREES

NATIONAL SERVICE AWARD:

ROSELAIN SHORES, WYMORE

OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER GROUP OF THE YEAR:

HEARTLAND COUNCIL OF PIONEERS, OMAHA

OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR:

PATRICK BOESHART, SOUTH SIOUX CITY

DEBRA HARTMANN AWARD:

PAT O'HANLON, OMAHA

OUTSTANDING SERVICE-LEARNING PROGRAM:

**HASTINGS COLLEGE TEACHER EDUCATION,
"EXTRA MILE WALK"**

OUTSTANDING STUDENT LEADER:

HOPE EDWARDS, LINCOLN

OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP IN EDUCATION:

FOOD FOR THOUGHT PROJECT PARTNERS, OMAHA

OUTSTANDING SCHOOL VOLUNTEER PROGRAM:

**UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA KEARNEY,
STUDENTS IN FREE ENTERPRISE**

OUTSTANDING BUSINESS SUPPORT FOR EDUCATION:

**WALMART LOGISTICS DISTRIBUTION CENTER-
7018 ASSOCIATES, NORTH PLATTE**

OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT:

KEARNEY TACKLES CANCER CAMPAIGN

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT IN VOLUNTEER SERVICE:

ALLEN J. BEERMAN, LINCOLN

PRESENTING

NEBRASKA FIRST LADY SALLY GANEM

Nebraska First Lady Sally Ganem is the Honorary Chair of Serve Nebraska – the Nebraska Volunteer Service Commission, a member of its Executive committee and an inspiring leader for community service and service learning in Nebraska. She is an enthusiastic ambassador for the Commission.

The First Lady is the former principal of Howard Elementary School in Fremont, Nebraska. She was born and raised in Omaha and graduated from Omaha South High School. She later received both her bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Nebraska Omaha.

Sally is active in the Fremont community as a member of the Low Income Ministry Board and the Social Sciences Advisory Board of Metropolitan Community College. She is a past president of both the Fremont Area United Way and Big Brothers Big Sisters. She has been an American Heart Association volunteer and a John C. Fremont Days volunteer, where she started the children's activities portion of the celebration.

Sally is involved in several educational organizations, including serving as an officer and on committees in the Nebraska Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the Nebraska Council of School Administrators (NCSA). She also participates as a member of the Read Aloud Nebraska Board of Directors, and regularly spends time traveling around the state to read aloud to school groups.

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FIRST LADY'S COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD JUDGES

GERRY OSBORN, AWARDS CHAIR, AINSWORTH

DEB EGGLESTON, SCRIBNER

DALE FORNANDER, CHAPPELL

PAT HOEHNER, KEARNEY

SHARON JOSEPHSON, SEWARD

JO LOWE, LINCOLN

KORLA KELLER, BASSETT

JOEY KRAMER, LINCOLN

KYLE MCGOWAN, CRETE

AMY SHANE, O'NEILL

DWAYNE STRASHEIM, HASTINGS

MARJORIE WILKINS, AINSWORTH

SERVE NEBRASKA –

THE NEBRASKA VOLUNTEER SERVICE COMMISSION

COMMISSIONERS

FIRST LADY SALLY GANEM

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TANYA HANSEN, GRAND ISLAND

APRIL KELLY, GRETNA

DENISE KOLLATH, COLUMBUS

BARRY KRIHA, OMAHA

JULIE NASH, HASTINGS

GERRY OSBORN, AINSWORTH

DONLYNN RICE, LINCOLN

SUSAN SCHNASE, OMAHA

RON SEDLACEK, LINCOLN

CAROL SPEICHER, COLUMBUS

ANGELA VOLOVICH, LINCOLN

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CATHLEEN PLAGER

AMERICORPS/DISABILITY PROGRAM

OFFICER

2012 OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER NOMINEES

NICKI AHLSCHEDE	LINCOLN YOUTH VOLUNTEERS
ANNIE JEFFREY VOLUNTEERS	FORREST LINN
MICHELLE AREHART	PHOEBE LOCKHART
ASSISTANCE LEAGUE OMAHA	KAILIN ANN MCCLUNG
SANDRA BARRERA	KATE MEISINGER
ALLEN J. BEERMAN	MARGARET MILLIGAN
ELIZABETH BOHAC	STEPHANIE MOORBERG
BEATRICE HIGH SCHOOL SCIENCE CLUB	NEAR NORTH OMAHA SENIOR CENTER
BLACKBURN ALTERNATIVE PROGRAM	NEBRASKA STATE HISTORICAL
PAT BOESHART	SOCIETY DOCENTS
MARK CARTA	ALYSHIA NELSON
CHADRON HIGH SCHOOL-IDK DAY	NORTH BEND LIBRARY FOUNDATION
DR. JOAN CHRISTEN	PATRICK O'HANLON
CROFTON COMMUNITY CLUB	PINE RIDGE JOB CORPS
JASON DAFFER	O'NEILL PUBLIC SCHOOLS'
JONAH DEPP	RESPECT GROUP
KASEY DIETZ	KIRSTEN PARKER
HOPE EDWARDS	PERU STATE COLLEGE, STUDENT
AUSTIN FILLEY	ATHLETIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MIKAYLA SAVELL FLOTT	DAWN PETERSEN
FOOD FOR THOUGHT	JUDY REECE
BRUCE FROENDT	DR. MITZI RITZMAN
JUDY GRACE	SANDHILLS JOURNEY SCENIC BYWAY
JACOB HANSELING	ORGANIZATION
CHERYL HARRIS	SEWING FOR BABIES
HASTINGS COLLEGE MENTORS	ZACH SCHULTZ
"GIRLS IN ACTION"	SHELDON STATEWIDE VOLUNTEERS
HASTINGS COLLEGE TEACHER	ROSIE SHORES
EDUCATION "EXTRA MILE WALK"	SUNRISE MIDDLE SCHOOL KEARNEY
HEARTLAND COUNCIL OF PIONEERS	COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTER
HEAT'S ON	MARY RUTH STEFFENS
REBECCA HEISER	THE CHANCE INITIATIVE
KEN HELMICK	AMANDA THEE
CHARD HIRSCH	UNITED STATES COAST GUARD
HYVEE (SHADOW LAKE & 96TH & Q)	AUXILLARY
GILLIAN HOGELAND	UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA KEARNEY
LAURA HOPP	STUDENT'S IN FREE ENTERPRISE
JACQUETTE JENKINS	UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA OMAHA
KEARNEY TACKLES CANCER CAMPAIGN	DELLA VEST
PEG KIRBY	SHERRY VOIGT
MIRANDA KLUTHE	WALMART LOGISTICS DISTRIBUTION
LIFE-LINK NEBRASKA AT WESTERN	CENTER - 7018 ASSOCIATES
NEBRASKA COMMUNITY COLLEGE	WASHINGTON COUNTY RECYCLING

NATIONAL SERVICE AWARD

ROSELAIN "ROSIE" SHORES, WYMORE

NOMINATED BY: SONJA RAHE CHAVEZ, BEATRICE



Rosie Shores is a Foster Grandparent Volunteer with the Pioneer Foster Grandparent Program, sponsored by Blue Valley Community Action Partnership based out of Beatrice Nebraska. Rosie has been a volunteer with the program since 1984 and in August of 2011, celebrated her 90th birthday.

As a Foster Grandparent, Rosie has been assigned to the Beatrice State Developmental Center; worked with a Beatrice elementary school; and, since 1999, has been with Wymore Southern Elementary. "Hi Grandma Rosie!" is sung all over the school each morning by young students. Grandma Rosie has been part of the school for so long, she is truly a "Grandma" to so many kids and staff members. Rosie assists wherever she is needed. Her primary classroom is now the 3rd grade. Rosie has said it took her 12 years to pass the 2nd grade and move to 3rd which happened at the beginning of 2011-12 school year. She volunteers each day school is in session, 8:30-3:30, and has witnessed many changes over the years. In an interview with her hometown newspaper, Arbor State, Rosie's advice to teachers is, "When the children arrive at school, make some time for the kids to share their stories. It might be about the weather, what happened on the way to school or their animals. It's important to listen to them."

Rosie is a model volunteer, and gives credit to the Foster Grandparent Program, and values the opportunity to serve her community. She is helping children in the classroom and most of all, building relationships and bonding with students who need a "grandmotherly figure." On volunteering, Rosie says, "it gives me something to do and think about and it's also good exercise!"

OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER GROUP OF THE YEAR
HEARTLAND COUNCIL OF PIONEERS, OMAHA
NOMINATED BY: JERALD GOLMANAVICH, OMAHA



The Heartland Council of Pioneers is a non-profit volunteer organization, comprised of retirees from the telecommunications industry. There is no paid staff or income stream for this group that is supported through an endowment fund. For the last 10 years, the group has supported many community projects throughout the Omaha Metropolitan area, across Nebraska

and the United States with a focus on education and goodwill. The Council's combined expenditures for 2011 were more than \$15,000 and the group provided a cumulative total of 43,332 volunteer hours.

Some of the many community programs and projects they assist and support include:

- Over 1,300 free Hug-a-Bears were delivered to police, fire departments and local hospitals to meet the needs of endangered children.
- The Hooks and Needles committee of 16 volunteers completed 7,401 volunteer hours to create 594 hand-crafted items such as quilts, afghans, lap robes, pet blankets, scarves, hats, ear warmers and gloves.
- The Project Connect committee serves schools throughout Nebraska, Iowa and Arizona. The Heartland Council has one of the largest Project Connect communities throughout the Pioneering network, which numbers about 100 organizations. The internet product teaches telecommunications to students by playing games using the internet.
- Provided 146 bikes and over 21,000 pounds of clothes to Romania in collaboration with a local church. There were 33 volunteers from all organizations involved providing 1,142 volunteer hours.
- Collaborated with Salvation Army to provide volunteers and assist with Turkeyfest serving 1,400 dinners. Participated in Adopt-a-Family and Bell-Ringing.
- Provided monthly drivers for the blind
- Awarded a \$1000 Scholarship to the University of Nebraska Omaha
- Participated in the 2011 Brush-Up Nebraska Paint-a-Thon

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT IN VOLUNTEER SERVICE
ALLEN J. BEERMAN, LINCOLN
NOMINATED BY: L. LYNN REX, LINCOLN



Allen Beerman's vision is inspiring whether he is addressing a youth group, senior citizens, public officials or dignitaries from other countries. Allen is the longest serving member of the NEBRASKAland Foundation, serving more than 40 years.

Allen's service to the community is nothing short of extraordinary. He has been actively involved with Cornhusker Girls State for over 28 years. He also has served as the Director of Elections for Cornhusker Boys State for over 30 years.

Allen served as camp director for the National Boy Scouts Jamboree held in Idaho in 1973, and has consistently worked in some capacity with the Boy Scouts for decades. Allen was a national camp inspector for Boy Scout camps around the United States making sure that these camps were safe for children.

For over 23 years, Allen has inspired youth and encouraged them to respect law enforcement in graduation addresses at the State Patrol Junior Law Cadet Program. In addition to Allen's exemplary involvement with youth, he is one of the most dedicated members of Rotary. However, he also commits an incredible amount of time and effort to speak when asked by Kiwanis, Lions, Chambers of Commerce and other civic organizations throughout the United States.

Allen's knowledge, enthusiasm and passion for public service and community involvement are second to none. He inspires others to excel by underscoring the importance of dedicating one's self to community service for the common good.

OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT

KEARNEY TACKLES CANCER CAMPAIGN

NOMINATED BY: CAROL O'NEILL, KEARNEY



In 2009, a nurse from the Good Samaritan Cancer Center introduced four Kearney High School (KHS) students to a service project idea: organize a fundraiser to alleviate the financial burden of local cancer patients. Influenced by the cancer experience of a KHS teacher, they assembled a team and the Tackle Cancer campaign was born.

The student-led and adult-sponsored group secured the generous support of a local print shop, established a \$10,000 goal, and proceeded to market and sell Tackle Cancer t-shirts. A home high school football game showcased their accomplishments – a stadium blanketed in Tackle Cancer shirts and a donation of \$17,000 to the Cancer Center's Patient Assistance Fund.

In 2010, a larger group dove in with renewed vigor, eager to surpass the inaugural accomplishment. Tackle Cancer expanded to Kearney Catholic High School and the University of Nebraska at Kearney. Students sold t-shirts and organized a community barbecue, car wash, variety show and dance. \$28,000 was raised.

With a continued unity of purpose, KHS and KCHS students stepped up to the plate in 2011, sold the now-coveted Tackle Cancer shirts and implemented fresh ideas. \$30,000 was raised.

Through Tackle Cancer, students have moved ideas from inception to implementation, bridged an across-town rivalry, influenced younger peers to join and eventually led the cause, and engaged an entire community. To date, they've donated \$75,000 to the Patient Assistance Fund, which helps with immediate needs like transportation or prescription co-payments. Patients are truly benefiting from these donations, and the students are learning invaluable lessons about caring, compassion and the importance of giving back.

OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

PATRICK "PAT" BOESHART, SOUTH SIOUX CITY

NOMINATED BY: MAYOR WILLIAM MCLARTY,
SOUTH SIOUX CITY



In the wake of record water releases from dams along the Missouri River, hundreds of area businesses and residents in the Siouxland area were faced with fighting 160,000 cubic feet of water per second during the summer of 2011. Maps provided by the Army Corp of Engineers indicated the city would be inundated by 1' to 8' of water within weeks. The city was faced with a potentially devastating natural disaster.

In the wake of this crisis, LiteForm Technologies President, Patrick Boeshart, immediately began working with local city officials on a flood control plan to help defend local businesses and residents. Pat designed a buttress type wall made of Styrofoam and concrete that was approved and coined the name "Z-Wall" because of its design. This wall would serve as a secondary line of defense for an older dirt levee that was built in 1952.

Pat was instrumental in getting local area business owners, residents and farmers to volunteer to assemble the wall. LiteForm employees directed volunteers in replicating the multiple wall sections 24' long x 4' tall. Volunteers pre-assembled, delivered, set, poured concrete and fully constructed the Z-wall barrier in less than 5 hours!

Because of Pat's quick reaction to the crisis, most businesses and local residents were spared heavy damage from the flood waters; and hundreds of thousands of dollars were saved.

Pat donated several thousand volunteer hours and several thousand dollars of materials to protect South Sioux City from the Missouri River and the Flood of 2011. The residents of South Sioux City nominated him for the Volunteer of the Year Award for all that he did to preserve their way of life in the wake of this natural disaster.

**PROFESSIONAL COMMITMENT TO SERVICE—
DEBRA HARTMANN AWARD**

PAT O'HANLON, OMAHA

NOMINATED BY: ANDREA SKOLKIN, OMAHA

Pat O'Hanlon stands out as an excellent Nebraskan by addressing healthcare needs of the underserved populations in South Omaha and beyond. For nine years, Pat has worked as an Outreach Nurse at One-World Community Health Centers, Inc., the largest federally qualified health center in Nebraska. OneWorld, in partnership with the community, provides culturally respectful, quality health care with special attention to the underserved.

Pat's compassion for people is evident. Whether working with the Latino populations, new refugees, or fellow staff at the clinic, he consistently goes above and beyond. With patients, Pat navigates a confusing system making sure that all of their healthcare needs are met, even offering patients rides to their appointments or scheduling translators.

His compassion includes service to the homeless and child care facilities throughout the community. He regularly can be seen working at the Stephen Center (a homeless shelter in South Omaha) providing flu and hepatitis shots, as well as STD tests and treatment. At local daycares he provides immunizations to ensure workers are protected from spreading deadly diseases to the young children in their care. In 2011 alone, Pat was able to see and treat 2,500+ patients.

As past president of South Omaha Business Association, Pat worked to make sure that businesses understood the healthcare needs of the population in their community. He is a member on the South Omaha Neighborhood Association, South Omaha Environmental Task Force, the South Omaha Community Care Council, and the Nebraska HIV Care Prevention Consortium Co-Infection Committee. He also uses his musical talents to provide for those who are in need. His band, the Pat O Show, plays for free at various fundraisers and is just another way Pat gives back to his community.

**OUTSTANDING BUSINESS SUPPORT FOR EDUCATION
WALMART LOGISTICS DISTRIBUTION CENTER—
7018 ASSOCIATES, NORTH PLATTE**

NOMINATED BY: DAVID ORTON, NORTH PLATTE



Since 2010, Walmart's North Platte Distribution Center 7018 associates, have volunteered their time each week in support of the Backpack Program that provides nutritious fresh food to children of families in need. Walmart DC 7018 partnered with the Food Bank of the Heartland, North Platte Salvation

Army, and Project SEARCH to provide food and manpower to deliver, on average, 180 food backpacks to schools within the North Platte community. Since the beginning of the Backpack Program through the end of 2011, associates have handed out 6,661 meals to students in the North Platte Public School (NPPS) District. For the 2011-2012 school year there have been 3,680 meals distributed.

For the 2011-2012 school year, eight interns from Project SEARCH have been a part of Walmart DC 7018 volunteer efforts with the Backpack Program. Project SEARCH is a one year, high school transition program that provides employment skills training and on-the-job work experience for young adults age 18-21 with disabilities. Walmart DC 7018 is participating in Project SEARCH as an employer in partnership with the NPPS District, Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation Services, as well as other disability agencies. Students attend the program during the entire last year of high school. Walmart DC 7018 provides access to an onsite classroom for up to 10 students. The classroom is staffed by a teacher provided by NPPS and a job coach provided by Vocational Rehabilitation. Walmart DC 7018 also provides various internship areas for on-the-job training and the mentorship needed within those areas. The students rotate through three 10-week work internships. Each school day, students report to DC 7018, learn employability skills in the classroom on topics such as self-esteem, communication, career exploration/job search, interviewing skills, job retention, money management, and independent living.

OUTSTANDING SCHOOL VOLUNTEER PROGRAM UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA KEARNEY, STUDENTS IN FREE ENTERPRISE

NOMINATED BY: **SHAWN KASKIE, KEARNEY**



The University of Nebraska Kearney (UNK) Students in Free Enterprise, or SIFE Team, have a strong passion for outreach related to youth entrepreneurship, education and community development. Their mission is "Head for Business, Heart for the World." Annual projects include the New Venture Adventure Day in which more than 120 high school students from 14 area schools develop leadership and entrepreneurial skills by working in

teams to present business proposals to local business professionals. Post project evaluations show very positive feedback from everyone involved: students, teachers, and business professionals. One teacher stated, "the day was well organized and encouraged students to develop planning skills, to brainstorm entrepreneurship opportunities, and to develop skills in communication and leadership."

Another project included helping the Sandhills community of Cody, Nebraska launch a new grocery store. The team helped high school students and village leaders develop a business plan to improve chances for success and return a key service back to a town where residents had previously had to drive over 40 miles to buy food.

All majors and ages are welcome on the UNK SIFE Team and current president, Zach Shultz says, "SIFE has allowed me the opportunity to expand on the business concepts learned in the classroom through activities created by the team. I have enhanced my teamwork and leadership skills to become better prepared to enter the workforce." The returning team leaders listed below have each spent 100 to 500 volunteer hours implementing the projects mentioned above. This time commitment is exceptional considering most UNK team members have two college majors and paid jobs. They are also starting the first ever student-run business on campus. This business, a coffee shop will provide SIFE Team members with real business experience. Profits will be used to fund expenses for larger community development projects.

SIFE Team Leaders: Zach Shultz, Grand Island; Alyshia Nelson, Newman Grove; Miranda Kluthe, North Platte; Amanda Thee, Kearney; Kasey Dietz, Morrill; Stephanie Moorberg, Kansas

OUTSTANDING SERVICE-LEARNING PROGRAM HASTINGS COLLEGE TEACHER EDUCATION "EXTRA MILE WALK"

NOMINATED BY: **DR. JEAN HERIOT, HASTINGS**



Hastings College teacher education students, Elizabeth Bohac, Jason Daffer, Jacob Hanseling, Gillian Hoggeland, Jacquette Jenkins, Kate Meisinger and Dawn Petersen were involved with the "Food 4 Thought" backpack program in their education courses and wanted to do more. Food 4 Thought provides food-filled backpacks to students who qualify

for free and reduced lunches, providing meals for their families over the weekend. Hastings Food for Thought serves 53 families at four different elementary schools at a cost of \$150 per student for a school year. When Food 4 Thought expressed a need to add students from additional elementary and middle schools, these college students stepped in to assist with growth and sustainability of the program.

The students created the "Extra Mile Walk" to raise community awareness and provide ongoing funding for the backpack program. They contacted community members from local schools, churches, civic organizations, businesses as well as families and friends. They asked that participants form teams to participate in the Extra Mile Walk which was held at the Hastings YMCA. Each team established a goal for the number of Hastings children they wished to sponsor for the school year. Approximately 250 people participated in the walk which was televised and covered by the local newspaper. A grocer donated water and apples for participants. Businesses assisted with donations of paper, printing, merchandise for a raffle, and t-shirts to build awareness. The result was \$3,000 raised; \$2,500 of which went to Food 4 Thought and \$500 which is in reserve for next year's Extra Mile Walk. Local people have volunteered to sustain this project and are planning for its annual occurrence in September.

The students dedicated approximately 300+ hours during the 2011 fall semester to create this service-learning program.

OUTSTANDING STUDENT LEADER

HOPE EDWARDS, LINCOLN

NOMINATED BY: DR. PATRICK HUNTER-PIRTLE, LINCOLN



Lincoln Southeast High School senior, Hope Edwards, was the founder and executive director of “LPStudentServe.” This was Hope’s idea in her junior year. Hope wanted to create a culture of volunteerism in the Lincoln Public Schools by providing an opportunity for every student to participate in community service. Hope met with the superintendent of Lincoln Public Schools (LPS), the mayor of the city of Lincoln, and all 51 LPS principals to get their support. Hope recruited a management committee of students. This committee made and posted several professionally made promotional videos, went on our local television and radio stations, and produced a website.

Hope knew how challenging it would be to get the word out and to motivate students from ages 5-18 to volunteer their time. Opportunities for volunteering would need to be identified and listed. LPS staff would need to be involved, without a budget to support any of these efforts. Hope sacrificed her job, her summer, and a fall sport to prepare for the October 1, 2011 LPStudentServe. Undaunted, Hope proceeded to pull off the most incredible and meaningful student project LPS has ever seen.

LPStudentServe was an incredible success. Over 9,000 students, staff, and parents participated. The remarks make it clear that students and adults of all ages believed in Hope’s vision. Hope continues to work feverishly to establish sustainability for LPStudentServe. The foundation is in place to make LPStudentServe an annual event.

OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP IN EDUCATION

FOOD FOR THOUGHT PROJECT PARTNERS, OMAHA

NOMINATED BY: JULIE DIERBERGER, OMAHA



“Food for Thought” is an outstanding example of a community partnership in education. This idea started as a response to the closing of the Near North Omaha Senior Center, a community center that served primarily African-American older adults. Because of budget cuts, these seniors no longer had a place to congregate as a community, lost their daily meal program, and no longer had a social or recreational outlet. When the Adams Park Community Center was identified as a place where this group of seniors could come together, University of Nebraska Omaha (UNO) gerontology students that had long been learning and serving with this group also came to the new site. The Adams Park Community Center became the new home for these seniors; however, they still didn’t have access to a meal program.

Blackburn Alternative Program is an alternative education site that has a specialized Culinary Academy where students learn about food preparation, safety, and service. The inclusion of the K-12 partner classroom completed the triangle: UNO Gerontology students, Blackburn Alternative Program, and Adams Park Community Center all came together to serve the needs of this group of seniors. Each Wednesday a meal was served, bingo was played, and intergenerational conversations took place. Consistently more seniors came to the weekly sessions. Since the beginning of the project in 2010, UNO and Blackburn students have served 1,300 hours providing approximately 1,350 healthy meals. This partnership has met the community need for this group of senior citizens. As a result of the success of “Food for Thought”, a daily meal plan and professional staff support will be provided in the fall of 2012 by the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging (ENOA), because the seniors are participating in the lunch program at such high rates. The project and partnership will continue indefinitely!