

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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First Lady to Celebrate Volunteer Excellence

(Lincoln, Neb.) Sally Ganem, Nebraska's First Lady will honor individuals and groups for their excellence in volunteer service at the First Lady's Outstanding Community Service Awards Luncheon. This special luncheon will be held Thursday, April 28 at the Thompson Alumni Center on the University of Nebraska Omaha campus. A total of 14 awards will be presented at the event, which is hosted by ServeNebraska, the Nebraska Volunteer Service Commission.

This year's honorees include:

Nebraska Impact Awards

Excellence in National Service: Geraldine Stirtz, University of Nebraska Kearney, Office of Service-Learning, Kearney
Outstanding Volunteer Group of the Year: Eastern Nebraska-Western Iowa Medical Reserve Corps, Omaha
Outstanding Volunteer of the Year: Sallie Atkins, Halsey
Debra Hartman Award (Professional Staff Excellence in Promoting Volunteerism): Michael Ryan, The Gathering Place, Lincoln

First Lady's Outstanding Community Service Awards

Outstanding Service-Learning Adult Leader: Terry McMullen, Omaha
Outstanding Service-Learning Student Leader: Hannah Thompson, Omaha
Outstanding Service-Learning Program: University of Nebraska Omaha, Service-Learning Academy, Omaha
Outstanding School Volunteer Program: Stolley Park Elementary School Reading Together Tutors, Grand Island
Outstanding Community Partnership in Education: Operation SMART, College of Saint Mary and Girls, Inc., Omaha
Outstanding Business Support for Education: Omaha Yahoo! Employee Foundation, Omaha
Outstanding Student Leader: Marya Case-Ruchala, Lincoln
Outstanding Community Service in Ecology or Environmental Stewardship: Green Bellevue, Bellevue
Outstanding Community Service Project: Irving Middle School Community Outreach Challenge, Lincoln
Lifetime Achievement in Volunteer Service: Sandra Meyer, North Platte

Nebraskans consistently rank among the Top 5 nationally for volunteerism and community engagement. Each year more than half-a-million Nebraskans volunteer in excess of 65 million hours of service. Their time is valued at \$1.4 billion. A major part of why Nebraska volunteerism continues to grow is the vast network of national service members and volunteers across Nebraska who give their time and talent to serve those in need.

For more information about ServeNebraska's award categories, nomination forms, and past honorees go to www.serve.nebraska.gov or contact Kimberle Hall at 800-291-8911 or 402-471-6228.

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