

2024

# STEP FORWARD AWARDS



October 4<sup>th</sup> 2024  
Tiburon Golf Club



# Commissioners

## Commission Chair

Kare Heilbrun  
*Consultant*

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*IBEW*

Kelly Fleming  
*Omaha Public Power District*

Lisa Hiatt  
*Girl Scouts Spirit of Nebraska*

## Community Volunteering Committee Chair

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*Svehla Law Offices, PC, LLO*

Sydney Kobza  
*Nebraska Department of Education*

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*Boys Town*

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*Hall County Commission*

Joseph Popevis  
*Nelnet*

Mikki Tighe  
*Supportworks*

# Outgoing Commissioners

**Thank you for your service**

**Rod Morris**

**Dawn Hovey**

**Jennifer Worthington**



## Community Volunteering Committee

Drew Graham  
*Chair*

Kelly Fleming

Michele Meisenbach

Joe Popevis

Michael Anderson



## ServeNebraska Staff

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Kathy McKillip  
*AmeriCorps VISTA Officer*

Rani Taborek-Potter  
*Public Information Officer*

Jessie LaCross  
*Volunteer*

# Agenda

## Welcome

Kare Heilbrun  
*Commission Chair, ServeNebraska*

## Opening Remarks

Governor Jim Pillen

## Presentation of Awards

Mary Nelson  
*KMTV 3 News Now*

## Keynote Address

DeMoine Adams  
*Chief Executive Officer, TeamMates Mentoring*

## Closing Remarks

Drew Graham  
*Community Volunteering Committee Chair, ServeNebraska*



# ServeNebraska Mission

**Mobilizing Nebraskans to strengthen their communities through volunteering, collaboration and National Service programs.**

*ServeNebraska, the Nebraska Volunteer Service Commission supports community involvement by Nebraskans that address the needs of our communities. We coordinate AmeriCorps Programming, Nebraska Volunteer Week and celebrate volunteer achievements through the annual Step Forward Awards.*

## Thank you!



### Governor Jim Pillen

for his continued support of volunteerism, national service and the Step Forward Awards.

#### A Message from the Governor

What makes Nebraska special is its people and the culture Nebraskans have of helping our neighbors through anything. I take a lot of pride in being Governor of a state where people gladly take on the responsibility of strengthening their communities, where they roll up their sleeves to get the job done. We owe it to ourselves to take some time to celebrate that part of our culture and to thank volunteers for the service they provide every day to keep our state going.

While it is always a daunting task to choose just a dozen volunteers to honor each year, it is a privilege to learn about the inspiring effort volunteers put in across the state. Thank you, volunteers, for your tireless service to Nebraska, and congratulations to the 2024 Step Forward Award honorees.



Photographer: Carmen Mainelli

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# Adult & Youth Volunteer Awards

## Adult Volunteer

An individual, 19 or over, who has demonstrated outstanding volunteer service.

**Gretchen Mack** *Omaha, NE*

Gretchen has been a member of the RESPECT Board of Directors for more than 10 years and has served as the chair for the Education Committee and

the Silent Auction Committee for their annual fundraiser for six years. RESPECT is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the prevention of bullying and teen dating violence in schools through the use of theatre and community collaboration. To complete their mission, they provide education to students, families, and schools on how to build and sustain healthy relationships. Gretchen is a retired special education teacher at Ralston Public Schools and a breast cancer survivor. Upon her retirement, she elected to put all her energy into serving the community.

As a member of the RESPECT Board, Gretchen has packed hundreds of silent auction baskets, donated hundreds of dollars, and participated in extra meetings to ensure the job was done and done right. She even personally created educational resources for the organization's child audiences.

In addition to her service with RESPECT, Gretchen is active with organizations such as Project Harmony, the Nebraska Cancer Center, the Komen Foundation, and the Christ King Church. At the cancer center, she acts as a mentor for other cancer survivors and those who are still battling the disease. Her nominator told us, "Gretchen is a person who has a strong sense of what makes the world a better and safer place for others."

## Youth Volunteer Leadership

An individual, 18 or younger, who has demonstrated outstanding volunteer service. This individual may hold leadership roles in student organizations, student councils, or student service clubs where they have demonstrated exemplary leadership skills.

**Keirah Montiel** *Papillion, NE*

Keirah is a high school senior and the president of the Papillion Mayor's Youth Leadership Council. As the president of the council, she has been instrumental in organizing several service activities completed by the group including the Hispanic Heritage Celebration, Winter

Wonderland, and multiple coat drives for those in need. The Mayor of Papillion praises Keirah's leadership of the council. He has a lot of confidence in the direction she provides for her peers. He tells us that the group takes the initiative to get things done and that Keirah is a natural mentor to younger members, is always positive, and is very respectful.

Keirah has been very active in helping with community events such as the Black History Celebration and the city's Annual Easter Egg Hunt in which over 2,000 children participate yearly. She is also a diehard advocate for all the groups of which she is a part and skillfully articulates their accomplishments to the media to help educate the public about what they do.

Keirah has consistently put herself out there and made herself a valued and helpful part of her community. Her nomination reads, "Keirah has been a shining star when it comes to being committed to the council. She has been diligent in her service and sets an example for other high school students to follow."

# National Service & Veteran Awards

## National Service

An individual or group currently serving in a National Service program in Nebraska. This individual or group demonstrates outstanding effort to increase the quality of life in one or more communities in our state. Nominees may be serving through AmeriCorps, VISTA, NCCC, or AmeriCorps Seniors (*Foster Grandparents, Senior Companions, and RSVP*).

### Mildred Moody *Gering, NE*

Mildred is an AmeriCorps Seniors volunteer who has served as a Foster Grandma for over 25 years. She has influenced the lives of hundreds of children during that time and, at 96 years old, continues to volunteer several days each week.

Mildred came to the Foster Grandparents program after her late husband was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, and she realized that she would need to look outside her home for an outlet that could bring her pride and joy. Nowadays, she credits the support of the children and staff at the school and her service with keeping her going through the grief of her husband's passing. The program even motivated her to commit to physical therapy following a stroke so she could return to the classroom and assist more children.

She brings empathy, compassion, and vulnerability to the classroom, allowing her to help kids with their unique challenges and provide one-on-one attention. She always meets or beats her deadlines and can always be relied upon to participate in service days. Her nominator tells us, "Children have shared that they love and remember Grandma Mildred fondly even after they have long since left her classrooms."

Not only is Mildred an extraordinary volunteer but she's also made it her mission to advocate for volunteerism as a key part of a healthy lifestyle. She published a book about how volunteer service and AmeriCorps improved her mental and physical health to inspire others to incorporate service into their own lives.

## Veteran Volunteer

An individual who served honorably on active duty in the armed forces of the United States and has demonstrated outstanding volunteer service during and after active duty.

### Verne Hickok *Cairo, NE*

Verne is a U.S. Army veteran who references tell us has adopted the entire town of Cairo as his family. He serves on the Cairo Senior Center governing board, for which he also

completes a laundry list of tasks to keep the place running. He's been a volunteer cook, food server, dishwasher, and anything else the center needs. He's their yes man! He even works to ensure there is always funding for the center both by advocating for donations and donating his personal funds.

At 92 years old, Verne doesn't let his age slow him down. He delivers meals to seniors who are unable to leave their homes and always takes the extra time to visit and provide much-needed company. He is an active member of his church, serving on the church council, on numerous committees, and helping out with the church youth group.

Furthermore, Verne is famous in the Cairo community not just for his positive attitude but also for his root beer floats that he provides at all community events free of charge. He is the number one supporter of the local high school's teams and makes an appearance at all their events. Whether it's sports, theatre, or academic competitions, he attends to cheer them on. The Cairo community is so grateful for Verne and all he does to light up their lives. One reference told us, "He's genuine in his actions, he doesn't expect anything in return or recognition; he's doing these acts for the people and does stuff for everybody."



# Senior & Disaster Volunteer Awards

## Senior Volunteer

Individuals, aged 65 or older, who are taking action to make their community a better place. These individuals share their many years of experience and are role models for others to serve and volunteer.

**Deb Zobel** *Ashland, NE*

Deb started the Nebraska Nurse Honor Guard (NNHG) in 2019 to ensure that nurses who dedicated their lives to the profession are recognized. The organization, made up of active and retired nurses, conducts nursing tributes at funerals or memo-

rial services of nurses across the state. The tribute includes reciting the Florence Nightingale Pledge, placing white roses on the casket or urn to symbolize the nurse's dedication, and presenting a nursing lamp to a loved one left behind.

In addition, the organization pays tribute to nurses on hospice and those above the age of 90 by providing a living tribute. Over the last five years, the organization has grown to 240 members and has been present at 525 memorial services across the state.

The organization's website features a nurses' honor wall containing the names, pictures, and bios of honored nurses. When asked about her motivation, Deb said, "I feel it is important to leave your mark on your career, and I have founded the Nebraska Nurse Honor Guard with the idea that a simple ceremony celebrating each nurse for their service to others is a terrific avenue for me to leave my mark."

## Disaster Volunteer

An individual or group that has demonstrated exceptional commitment to volunteerism by helping with a special project or ongoing activities, in preparation for or during times of disaster.

**Cyndralynn Meredith** *Seward, NE*

Cyndralynn is a student at Crete High School and has been a member of the Southeast Nebraska Medical Reserve Corps and the Southeast Nebraska Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) since 2022. As a part of her membership, she helps with CERT train-

ing, emergency radio communication, and medical response for events such as the Cornhusker State Games and the annual Pumpkin Run.

Since the start of her service, there have been no less than four instances in which Cyndralynn has taken potentially life-saving action in medical emergencies. For example, while she was serving at the medical station for the Big Red Challenge in 2022, a patient came to the station looking for treatment. After hearing the symptoms, she was able to utilize what she remembered from her CERT training to recognize the signs of heat stroke and call for immediate help. She even had the knowledge to start treating the condition until help could arrive. Not long after sending the first patient to the hospital, Cyndralynn came to the rescue again when a fellow volunteer also began showing symptoms. She acted quickly and calmly by calling for help. The volunteer was rushed to the hospital and treated for severe dehydration and possible heat stroke.

Cyndralynn demonstrates leadership as a member of the Southeast Nebraska Medical Reserve Corps by taking part in meeting planning and helping to develop medical plans used at all events the organization serves. She volunteers 30-40 hours every month, and her nominator tells us, "Cyndralynn is always taking the initiative to learn all systems and processes so she can help out wherever she is asked to help. She also mentors all the new youth volunteers, making sure they have the training they need to be successful."



# Corporate Community Volunteer Awards

## Corporate Community Volunteer

Corporations and businesses that excel in community involvement and demonstrate excellent corporate citizenship by giving back to their community in a variety of ways.

### Small Business

NebraskaLand Bank  
North Platte, NE

**NebraskaLand Bank is committed to its community and believes in the philosophy of "We are better together; be a part of something bigger than yourself." The bank actively promotes this ideology through its Culture Committee, which hosts meetings to acknowledge employees' commitment to service.**

Last year, the bank celebrated its 25th anniversary with a program called Project Blank. This initiative provided employees with the opportunity to use their skills to address community issues that matter to them. Throughout the project, employees donated money, supplies and time to support local communities. NebraskaLand also runs the Community Volunteer Program (CVP), which rewards employees for actively participating in community service. For every hour an employee volunteers, the bank awards them either one hour of vacation time or a dollar in company apparel credit. As part of these volunteer initiatives, employees are encouraged to join community boards and participate in programs facilitated by the bank.

Through the company's "Grill for Good" program, they assist nonprofit organizations with preparing and serving large meals to raise funds for their cause. Sometimes, the grill is on the road every day for several weeks, supporting over 150 events yearly.

The "My Fair Share" program allows employees of the bank to nominate a local organization for monetary donations contributed by bank employees. Since its inception in 2004, the program has donated approximately \$216,500. Their nominator tells us, "Through these dynamic programs and unwavering dedication, NebraskaLand Bank continues to make a profound impact, reinforcing its role as a cornerstone of the community."

### Large Business

Lincoln Industries  
Lincoln, NE

**Lincoln Industries has been collaborating with Junior Achievement of Lincoln for many years, providing monetary sponsorships and volunteering in classrooms across Lincoln. Their volunteer efforts focus on delivering lessons in financial literacy, career readiness and entrepreneurship.**

A quote from their nomination reads, "Lincoln Industries takes great pride in their commitment to volunteering with Junior Achievement of Lincoln. They do so by adopting two Lincoln public schools and ensuring that every Junior Achievement classroom is taught by a Lincoln Industries volunteer."

Since 2013, Lincoln Industries employees have collectively devoted over 43,000 hours to these classes, impacting over 9,000 students in 427 classrooms. Employees have also donated time to other community organizations, including the Center for People in Need, Willard Community Center, and the Food Bank Backpack Program.

To encourage giving back, Lincoln Industries provides 8 hours of paid volunteer time off for each employee annually. They also have a Community Connections Committee that leverages employee expertise at every level of the company to organize donations for local organizations.

# Volunteer Group & Mentorship Awards

## Volunteer Group

A group of volunteers who have served together on a common project that has impacted their community. The nominees strive to make communities better places to live through a variety of activities or by focusing on one issue of primary importance in their community.

### Blue River Arts Council *Crete, NE*

When the last movie theater in Saline County was closed down in 2018, the founders of the Blue River Arts Council (BRAC) saw an opportunity to utilize arts and cultural programming to strengthen the community of Crete. Previously, the community of Crete and the surrounding area was without any organized arts

programming. The Blue River Arts Council was formed late that same year to change that by resurrecting the Isis Theatre and providing fun and artistic activities for everyone in the community to enjoy.

The group truly understands how public spaces and events can keep small communities like Crete alive, and they've taken on the responsibility of making it happen. Led by a group of volunteer women, the organization has placed 23 public art sculptures, hosted outdoor film and music events, and curated an art gallery wall at the Crete Public Library. Their nominator said, "This group of volunteers has continuously put the needs of the community ahead of their own. BRAC has been a fun, central presence helping Crete to grow and thrive."

Despite economic challenges, the renovation of the Isis Theatre was completed and opened during the summer of 2024. The project cost \$2,200,000, and the building is completely redesigned with community space for parties, live music, and children's theatre. The Blue River Arts Council worked extremely hard to raise the money for the project through grants and local donations from families and businesses alike. They also engaged Doane and Crete High students as extra volunteers. The renovation of the theatre has helped to inspire further revitalization of the Crete community, and BRAC has taken the lead in sponsoring education to help other local organizations succeed.

## Mentorship

An individual who has demonstrated outstanding youth mentorship by dedicating their time, knowledge and energy to guide, nurture, and support one or more mentees. This individual must have served as a mentor for at least one full calendar year and be affiliated with an official mentoring program in Nebraska.

### Sally Harms *Wisner, NE*

Sally has been mentoring with TeamMates since 2009 and has mentored five students, following three of them on to the TeamMates+ post-secondary program. She travels over 30 miles each week to meet with a mentee who transferred districts to provide at least a small

amount of consistency for the student during their senior year of school. She meets with each of her mentees weekly and plays a critical role in helping them plan for the future of their education. She even helps them apply for scholarships to make their college dreams a reality. Since two of her mentees have stuck with the program past graduation as participants in the TeamMates+ program, she has been making five-hour round trips to support those students studying at Peru State College and Southeast Community College.

Not only is Sally a dedicated mentor to several students at once, she has been a stellar recruiter for more mentors among her family, friends, and colleagues. Because of her, many kids besides her own mentees have mentors of their own. Sally also serves on the Wisner-Pilger Chapter Board and the TeamMates+ Post-Secondary Board and puts a lot of work into connecting TeamMates with Wayne State College campus resources for college mentees. In 2022, both the TeamMates Program Coordinators elected to nominate Sally for a local community citizen award, a testament to the scale of the impact she has made.

# Jamesena Moore Award

*Jamesena "Jamie" Moore*

## Making a Difference Service Award

This award was named in honor of founding ServeNebraska Commissioner, Jamesena Moore. It was developed to honor individuals who are making significant contributions to the Mission of ServeNebraska through their time, actions, talents and dedication. The honoree selected serves as a role model for the compassion of service and strives to make the world a better place. This individual should have a passion for service to others and demonstrate this by their actions.

**Senator DiAnna Schimek**  
*Lincoln, NE*

The ServeNebraska Commission voted to present Former Nebraska State Senator, DiAnna Schimek with the Jamesena Moore Making a Difference Service Award for her ongoing support of ServeNebraska and AmeriCorps programs in Nebraska since the 1990s.

Starting in 1997, Senator Schimek sponsored the bill that classified AmeriCorps service as an exception to the Nebraska Employment Security Laws. It successfully passed later that same year.

In 1998, the Senator introduced legislation to make ServeNebraska, then called the Nebraska Volunteer Service Commission, a codified state agency. She championed the bill, reintroducing it in 1999. Though the legislation ultimately did not pass, it did build support for the organization among other legislators and stakeholders.

**ServeNebraska thanks Senator DiAnna Schimek  
for her support of Volunteerism and National  
Service in Nebraska.**



# *Lifetime Achievement Award*

The most prestigious state-level honor volunteers can receive; the people selected are those who have forever changed their community, the state, the nation, or the world with their volunteer service and action.

# Rick Wimer

*West Point, NE*

Rick is a U.S. Marine Corps Veteran and has been serving as a member of West Point Rescue for 37 years. During that tenure, he has held multiple leadership positions, including training officer and Vice-President. He currently holds the position of President, which he has held for 21 years. Composed of 10 volunteer members, the West Point Rescue Squad answers approximately 350 rescue calls each year, and Rick is known for leading by example and personally helps on over 100 calls per year.

The past few years have been very active years for Rick, starting with the catastrophic flooding that devastated many communities in Eastern Nebraska. Rick is an insurance agent by trade so both his professional and volunteer responsibilities increased exponentially. However, he didn't miss a beat. Despite the heavy workload, he managed to keep EMT personnel ready and on rotation to respond to calls whenever they came. The next year, the COVID-19 pandemic forced Rick to get creative to keep his squad safe and available for calls. Luckily, he was able to arrange having two squads at the ready so individuals could isolate when necessary and still meet the demand.

In recognition of his continuous and dedicated service, Rick has been recognized with several awards, including the West Point EMT of the Year Award in 2005, the West Point Community Service Award in 2015, and more. When he isn't answering calls, he can often be found keeping up to date on training and donating his time to various other community organizations.

Rick's list of clubs and volunteer activities is endless and includes co-chairing the Committee to complete the \$1.25 million American Veterans Park in West Point, guiding tours of the completed park, and making arrangements for and participating in military funerals as a member of Legion Post 70. He serves on the West Point Community Foundation Board, as vice-president of the St. Francis Memorial Hospital Foundation Board, is an honorary member of the Nebraska Vietnam Memorial, and is a lifetime member of the Optimist Club.

Evidence of Rick's care for his community is further shown by his everyday acts of kindness and generosity. For example, when heavy snowstorms struck West Point last winter, Rick volunteered to clear over 30 driveways to help the neighbors out. On Christmas Day, he spent 8 hours clearing driveways and refused to hear of payment. He just wanted to help because that's the kind of guy he is.

His nominator told us, "It would be a great honor for him to receive this award because he represents everything this award stands for. He puts in countless hours volunteering to make West Point and surrounding communities a great place to live."



## AmeriCorps Programs

### AmeriCorps - Serving Communities in Nebraska

#### ServeNebraska

ServeNebraska, the Nebraska Volunteer Service Commission, receives over \$2 million in federal funds from the AmeriCorps federal agency to grant out to communities across Nebraska who have identified critical issues that can be addressed by AmeriCorps members. The federal funds are matched by local funds to address the needs of Nebraska communities.

#### Commissioners

Commissioners are appointed by the Governor of Nebraska. Commissioners are private citizens who act as visionaries to set priorities in a nonpartisan manner. They are catalysts and ambassadors for service, creators of sustainable infrastructure and developers of service and volunteer resources for the state.

#### Meeting Community Needs in Nebraska

Through AmeriCorps, VISTA and AmeriCorps Seniors, more than 3,300 Americans of all ages and backgrounds helped to meet local needs, strengthen communities, and increase civic engagement through national service in Nebraska in 2023. Serving at more than 200 locations throughout the state, these citizens tutor and mentor children, support veterans and military families, provide health services and fight hunger, restore the environment, respond to disasters, increase economic opportunity, and recruit and manage volunteers.

### Nebraska State and National AmeriCorps Programs

#### College Possible

College Possible is a national nonprofit organization that makes college admission and success possible for low-income students through an intensive curriculum of coaching and support, utilizing AmeriCorps members as coaches to provide near-peer coaching to high school and college students.

#### Conservation Nebraska

Conservation Nebraska is a statewide organization that utilizes AmeriCorps members to educate citizens across the state about conservation issues facing their communities and provide them with the tools they need to improve their local environment.

#### Partnership 4 Kids

Partnership 4 Kids is a college and career AmeriCorps program that promotes student success through career and college readiness and mentoring. The program focuses on secondary students in areas of career development while promoting college retention and graduation.

#### Nebraska State Probation (RISE)

Nebraska State Probation (RISE) utilizes the skills of AmeriCorps members to address and serve youth who are at greater risk of educational failure resulting in truancy, negative behaviors and continued involvement in the juvenile justice system. The members facilitate a skills-based curriculum to adjudicate youth focusing on educational skill development.

#### YWCA Adams County

YWCA Adams County assists community partners in youth development, housing, career services, restorative justice and adult education. Through the service of AmeriCorps members, the Hastings community can offer more comprehensive assistance to its citizens.



### International Council for Refugees and Immigrants

International Council for Refugees and Immigrants AmeriCorps members provide support to refugee youth who are struggling to adjust to life in the United States. AmeriCorps members aim to improve the well-being of refugee children by serving as mentors and role models, and by helping to boost their self-confidence and self-efficacy. With the help of this AmeriCorps program, refugee children won't have to face alone the unique challenges that come from starting life in an unfamiliar country.

### Partnership for a Healthy Lincoln

Partnership for a Healthy Lincoln partners with Community Learning Centers with the aim to help children and families implement healthy nutritional habits. They facilitate education on growing and harvesting food, cooking healthy meals and managing portion control. The impact of this program extends past nutrition by creating a solid foundation of healthy habits upon which children can build.

## ServeNebraska AmeriCorps VISTA Host Sites

### Omaha Zoo Foundation

AmeriCorps VISTA members recruit, train, and oversee volunteers for the Wildlife Safari Park STEM education program. The program increases access to STEM for low-income and diverse populations.

### The Foundry

These members develop and facilitate projects tailored to help grow Foundry member nonprofit organizations.

### Willow Rising

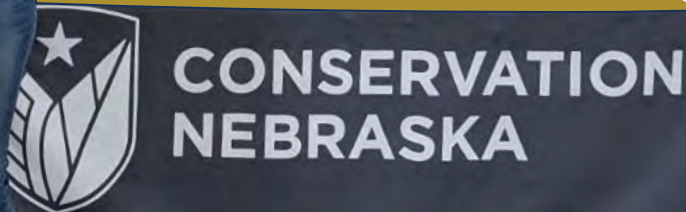
AmeriCorps members are creating a volunteer database and supporting the agency's communication efforts to reach more people in need.

### Omaha Equestrian Foundation

AmeriCorps members are building capacity for the organization by digitizing records and managing social media communications.

### United Way of the Kearney Area

This AmeriCorps VISTA member will build capacity through program development, coordinate community outreach activities, and launch plans for a new Community Resource Center.



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**NCCC**

**Nebraska  
State & National**

**VISTA**



**ServeNebraska**



# Past Honorees

## Adult Volunteer

Dave Kleopfer (2016)  
 Justin Evertson (2017)  
 Justin Evertson (2017)  
 Loren Eichelberger (2018)  
 Keryl Brady (2019)  
 Kendra Feather (2020)  
 Sandy Manfull (2021)  
 David Hogsett (2022)  
 Beverly Hansen (2023)

## Lifetime Achievement

Jeanne Cuda (2015)  
 Richard Gray (2016)  
 Ruth McKinstry (2017)  
 Tom Scott (2018)  
 Dr. Tom & Nancy Osborne (2019)  
 Rita Shipley (2020)  
 Nancy Hoch (2021)  
 Henry Potter (2022)  
 Marah Shai (2023)

## Community Media Partner

KOLN-KGIN TV (2015)  
 KETV (2016)  
 Lincoln Journal Star Neighborhood Extra (2017)

## National Service Volunteer

Rose Christiansen (2015)  
 Tina Winchell (2016)  
 Martin Macias Jr. (2017)  
 Breadbasket RSVP Volunteers (2018)  
 Chuck Scripter (2019)  
 Team RSVP: Frances Gonzalez & Sharon Bartlett (2020)  
 Nicole Metz-Andrews (2021)  
 Zoey Ballard (2022)  
 Robert & Helen Arnold (2023)

## Corporate Community Volunteer

MTPG Citizen Patrol (2015)  
 Mutual of Omaha (2016)  
 Blue Cross Blue Shield of Nebraska (2017)  
 Black Hills Energy Ambassadors (2018)  
 Omaha Public Power District (2019)  
 Wolf Auto (2019)  
 BD Construction (2020)  
 Union Bank & Trust (2020)  
 Dave's Pharmacy (2021)  
 Home Instead: Champions of Aging (2021)  
 Fusion Medical Staffing (2022)  
 Bosselman Enterprises (2022)  
 Uniti Med (2023)  
 Thrasher Foundation Repair (2023)

## Veteran Volunteer

Bryon Line (2015)  
 Gary Feldbauer (2016)  
 Jim Cada (2017)  
 Dell Moninger (2018)  
 Dietrick Frye (2019)  
 Dick Harrington (2020)  
 Jim Kuhn (2021)  
 Rhonda McClellan (2022)  
 Dennis Hynes (2023)



# Past Honorees

## Volunteer Group

Greater Nebraska Friends of Make-a-Wish (2015)  
AAA School Safety Patrol (2016)  
Union College (2017)  
Norfolk Panther JOOI (2018)  
Lincoln Northeast Sertoma Club (2019)  
Rotary 14 (2020)  
Washington County Recycling  
Association (2021)  
North Platte Buffalo Bill Kiwanis (2022)  
Wood River Vision 20/20 (2023)

## Youth Volunteer

Randa Klein (2015)  
Joseph Ptacnik (2016)  
Cooper Bates (2017)  
Jorja Boller (2018)  
Molly Kammerer (2019)  
Joseph Zhong (2020)  
Mahika Kanchanam (2021)  
Raelynn Terveer (2022)  
Mattie Kucera (2023)

## Senior Volunteer

Janyce Warneke (2018)  
Lyle McKlem (2019)  
Dr. Mike Eppel (2020)  
Larry Massie (2021)  
Kris Peterson (2022)  
Rolaine Blaser (2023)

## Disaster Volunteer

Tim Garrison (2016)  
Reynolds Davis (2017)  
MyPI Nebraska Instructors (2018)

Carol Clausen/Dale Clausen (2019)  
Alyssa Spartz (2019)  
Carl Ratcliff (2019)  
Kathy Kneifl (2019)  
Michael and Ruth Bitter (2019)  
Rick Brown (2019)  
Tri-County CERT (2019)  
Wood River Volunteer Fire Department  
and Mayor Cramer (2019)  
Southeast Nebraska Medical Reserve Corps (2019)  
Bellevue Christian Center (2019)  
India Association of Nebraska (2019)  
NE Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (2019)  
D.A. Davidson & Co. (2019)  
Catz Angels Rescue Efforts (2019)  
North Bend Eagle (2019)  
Janten Bensel (2020)  
Taylor Cumblidge (2020)  
Dakota County Voices for Food  
Council (2020)  
Green Plains (2020)  
Matthew Spaustat (2020)  
Carissa Schank (2021)  
Dodge County Amateur Radio  
Emergency Services (2022)  
Roger Peek (2023)

## Friends of ServeNebraska

State Farm (2016)  
TD Ameritrade (2017)

## Jamesena Moore Award

Senator Ben & Diane Nelson (2019)  
Senator Tony Vargas (2020)  
Former First Lady Sally Ganem (2021)  
Congressman Don Bacon (2022)  
Senator Mike McDonnell (2023)

# Notes

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# *Join us for the* **2025 Step Forward Awards**

Help us celebrate community service and Nebraska volunteers at the next Step Forward Awards Luncheon

**October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025 in Lincoln, Nebraska.**

## ***Nebraska Volunteer Week***

During this national movement, Nebraskans of all ages are asked to step forward, get involved, and give back.

**April 20<sup>th</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

