

2015 RFI Competitive Awards

TEACHING AND ENGAGEMENT – Proposals selected to receive funding include:

- **Rural Interprofessional UNMC Student Rotations** – Patrik Johansson (PI), University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) including the College of Dentistry, College of Medicine, College of Nursing, College of Pharmacy, College of Public Health, and School of Allied Health Professions, in partnership with East Central District Health Department in Columbus, Nebraska.
The proposed bold, creative, and transdisciplinary rural rotation, grounded in public health, will allow students to work interprofessionally in teams under the supervision of a public health practitioner. During the three-week rotation students will engage in team-based service-learning (SL) based activities that align with the East Central District Health Department Community Health Improvement Plan. The rural rotation curriculum will also integrate competencies emphasized by the Rural Futures Institute, community-based participatory research (CBPR) and civic engagement (CE). By taking part in this rotation, students should become stronger and more effective leaders in advocating for the sustainability of rural Nebraska communities.
- **Rural Community Diversity Action Project** – Gina Matkin (PI), University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) partnering with a UNL colleague and the Center for Rural Affairs.
The purpose of this project is to utilize a service learning approach to link UNL students from a course, specifically Leadership and Diversity in Organizations and Communities (ALEC 466), to rural communities that are experiencing demographic shifts. The project will work in close partnership and collaboration with the Center for Rural Affairs (CFRA) to identify and facilitate productive connections with key communities and agencies and assist in working with students as they enter the field. Students will gain a deeper understanding of themselves as leaders and how their beliefs, values, perceptions and assumptions have shaped their understanding of, and approach to leadership.
- **Rural Community Career Development**– Ron Rosati (PI), University of Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture (NCTA) with NCTA colleague Krystle Friesen. Additional partners include the Nebraska Community Foundation.
This project will use established curriculum that was previously piloted and will replicate it in additional communities. The project will familiarize students with the entrepreneurial concepts to help their rural communities maintain or rebuild their economic viability. The project is intended to sustain rural communities, thereby slowing the decline of population. The partnering of students with mentors within the community exposes students to career opportunities and the potential for returning upon completing their education. The curriculum helps them discover a positive outlook on the future and explore the changes they may encounter as an owner or manager in their home community.
- **Volunteer Program Assessment: Bridging Rural and Urban Concerns of Non-Profit Organizations**– Lisa Scherer (PI), University of Nebraska Omaha, Community Engagement Center with partners from Beatrice Foster Grandparent Program, Chadron Foster Grandparent Program and Omaha Foster Grandparent Program.
This project will offer a partially internet-mediated service learning course for undergraduate students from multiple disciplines that will involve students in learning how to assess quantitatively and qualitatively the experiences and satisfaction of volunteers working for the Foster Grandparents Program in Chadron, NE and Beatrice, NE. The Foster Grandparent Program (FGP) is part of Senior Corps, a network of national service programs that provide older Americans the opportunity to put their life experiences to work for local communities.

RESEARCH AND ENGAGEMENT – Proposals selected to receive funding include:

- **A Model for “Quality of Life”: Identifying Domains and Determinants for Rural Ethnic Minorities** – Maria Rosario T. de Guzman (PI), Associate Professor and Extension Specialist in Adolescence Department of Child, Youth and Family Studies at University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Other partners include: Office of Minority Health, RMC Research and Central Regional Educational Laboratory at Marzano Research, Platte Valley Literacy Association and the Asian Cultural and Community Center along with additional University of Nebraska partners.
The proposed research and engagement project is designed to: a) examine the factors that are relevant in determining “quality of life” (QOL) among ethnic minority populations in rural communities; and b) to develop educational tools that will help community responders in integrating findings into their work to better respond to the needs of rural minorities.
- **Translating an Evidence-based, Family-based Pediatric Obesity Treatment Program for Adoption by Rural Communities** – Kate Heelan (PI), Professor/Director, Physical Activity and Wellness Lab, Kinesiology and Sport Sciences at the University of Nebraska at Kearney collaborating with several UNK colleagues, Southwest Public Health District, Grand Canyon University, University of Nebraska-Lincoln faculty, UNMC faculty and HyVee.
The objective of this project is to enhance rural access to our locally successful, evidence-based, family-based, pediatric obesity treatment program – Building Healthy Families. Program translation will utilize distance learning technologies to allow rural community members in Greater Nebraska, where currently available resources and expertise are limited, to participate in the 12-week program. Healthier communities will reduce health care costs and a healthier workforce will enhance opportunities for local economic development.
- **Measuring the Impact of Youth Leadership Development** – L.J. McElravy (PI), Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communication at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln collaborating with several UNL and UNK colleagues along with Nebraskans for Civic Reform and the Heartland Center for Leadership Development.
The purpose of this collaborative research study is to develop a psychometrically sound measure of youth leadership (including its developmental aspect) and examine its relationship to community outcomes, such as retention, civic engagement, entrepreneurial activity, and community attachment. Youth leadership development, to date, has not been examined for its predictive value in influencing community outcomes. Thus, this research study is bold and even risky, because it will require a transdisciplinary synergy of scholars and practitioners in youth leadership, community development, civic engagement, and organizational behavior and will engage youth participants in place-based civic leadership development (Rural Civic Action Program—RCAP) and strengths-based leadership mentoring (Nebraska Human Resources Institute—NHRI).

For questions contact:

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