Rural Futures Institute
Competitive Awards Program
2013-2016
TEACHING & ENGAGEMENT

Teaching & Engagement awards are to function in fostering the development of teaching and engagement work that establishes a tradition of student learning through civic engagement, service-learning or undergraduate and graduate community-based research projects.

Successful Teaching & Engagement proposals must develop a structure that forms partnerships between students, faculty and community agencies/programs. The awards program also encourages college student involvement in providing services to help meet the community’s needs, integrates meaningful student service experiences into curriculum and builds curriculum-based reflection activities to enhance student learning.

Engaging Nebraska, Impacting Communities, Transforming Students
Jeff Day (PI), College of Architecture, UNL along with other faculty from the College of Architecture
Contact: Jeff Day, jday@unl.edu
Developed transformational curricula with civic engagement at its core by establishing a robust service learning program embedded in the College of Architecture curricula. Transformed twelve existing courses and developed new courses and programs that engaged students in service learning projects across the state of Nebraska.

Rural Community Serviceship Program
Thomas Field (PI), Engler Agribusiness Entrepreneurship Program, UNL; Reshell Ray (co-PI), Student Involvement, UNL; partnering with the UNL Office of Student Involvement, the UNL Center for Civic Engagement, the Heartland Center for Leadership Development, the Nebraska Human Resources Institute and the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR)
Contact: Thomas Field, tfield2@unl.edu
Engler Agribusiness Entrepreneurship Program and Nebraska Human Resources Institute heavily recruits student participants interested in leadership development and entrepreneurship. Students are placed in rural communities in teams of at least two. These teams assist the community with a project specified by the community leadership. Students are expected to participate in community service activities outside of their serviceship project.

Juvenile Re-entry to Nebraska’s Rural Communities
Anne Hobbs (PI), School of Criminology and Criminal Justice, UNO; Julie Campbell (co-PI), Department of Criminology, UNK; partnering with Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services and the Geneva and Kearney Youth Rehabilitation Centers
Contact: Anne Hobbs, ahobbs@unomaha.edu
Matched college student mentors from rural towns with youth committed to the Youth Rehabilitation Centers (Kearney & Geneva). Student mentors worked with youth on educational, employment and social skills and other goals.

The Rural Public Health Undergraduate Student Research Project
Patrik Johansson (PI), College of Public Health, UNMC with Chadron State College, Peru State College, Wayne State College and UNK
Contact: Patrik Johansson, pjohnsson@unmc.edu
Supported faculty-led undergraduate student public health research projects at Nebraska’s three state colleges in Chadron, Peru, and Wayne, and the University of Nebraska Kearney, as a means for introducing undergraduate students to the transdisciplinary world of public health.
Ecotourism and Agritourism Development in Nebraska
Lisa Pennisi (PI), School of Natural Resources, UNL; Nicole Wall (co-PI), National Drought Mitigation Center, UNL; Michelle Kang (co-PI), Agricultural Leadership, Education Communication, UNL; Nebraska Department of Economic Development, GROW Nebraska, Valley County Economic Development, Engler Entrepreneurship Program and the Center for Great Plains Studies
Contact: Lisa Pennisi, lpennisi2@unl.edu
Taught ecotourism with a strong service learning and community engagement component. Students applied ecotourism principles and developed entrepreneurial, community planning, capacity building and tourism marketing skills while engaging stakeholders in rural communities.

Students Engaged in Economic Development of Rural Areas (SEEDRA)
Kaye Sorensen (co-PI), Department of Mathematics, UNK; Marc Albrecht (co-PI), Department of Biology, UNK
Contact: Kaye Sorensen, sorensenkm@unk.edu
Engaged UNK students in the creation and assembly of rural economic development ideas – both their own and those of members in their rural communities. The most promising ideas were presented to the RFI.

Addressing the Rural Shortage of Mental Health Providers Through a Virtual Mentorship Network
Howard Liu (PI), UNMC; Heidi Keeler (co-PI), College of Nursing, UNMC; partnering with the Region III Behavioral Health Services
Contact: Howard Liu, hyliu@unmc.edu
Connected rural students and members of their communities with behavioral health professionals through a virtual network. Students and behavioral health mentors discussed behavioral health topics of interest. Students benefited from the mentor-mentee relationship and learned more about behavioral health professions with the hope of creating a greater connection between behavioral health providers and rural communities.

Rural Community Engagement and Leadership Program
Gina Matkin (PI), Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communications, UNL; L.J. McElravy (co-PI) Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communications, UNL; partnering with Nebraskans for Civic Reform
Contact: L.J. McElravy, lj.mcelravy@unl.edu
Undergraduate students engaged with rural high school students to identify issues in the students’ community, leading to the creation of a service learning project to address those pre-identified issues. This project built the leadership capacity of rural high school students and increased their ability to positively impact their respective communities while also filling a community need.

The Great Question Challenge
Shane Potter (PI), UNL Extension; Tom Field (co-PI), Engler Agribusiness Entrepreneurship Program, UNL; partnering with Jordyn Lechtenberg, UNL Graduate Student and Mat Habrock, DuPont Pioneer
Contact: Tom Field, tfIELD2@unl.edu
Mobilized rural youth to take an issue of global importance, identify the affects it has on their rural community, and implement a solution. In 2014, the Great Question theme revolved around food insecurity. Student teams attended a spring workshop to learn more about the issue on a global scale, identify what food insecurity issues exist in their community, and developed a project to address this issue. This project created a culture of civic engagement led by rural youth.
Community Gardens and Farmer’s Market for Curtis, NE
Brad Ramsdale (PI), Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture (NCTA); Tee Bush (co-PI), NCTA; partnering with Barbara Scharf from UNL Extension
Contact: Brad Ramsdale, bramsdale2@unl.edu

Expanded upon an existing Farmer’s market course at NCTA, this project included a community garden being developed to enhance student service-learning by making the garden available for the community and 4-H members. Undergraduate students mentored 4-H members which strengthened the relationship between NCTA and community members and provided a model for rural communities to establish gardens that foster growth in citizen relationships and youth engagement.

Principles of Community Engagement in Public Health: Service Learning, Community-Based Participatory Research, and Civic Engagement
Kyle Ryan (PI), Peru State College; Patrik Johansson (co-PI) College of Public Health, UNMC; and the Rural Health Education Network
Contact: Kyle Ryan, kryan@peru.edu

Created an online public health curriculum and course work for undergraduate students enrolled at rural Nebraska campuses. It was offered as an option to those students who were interested in the health profession.

Justice by Geography: Issues that Inequitably Impact Rural Youth
Anne Hobbs (PI), School of Criminology and Criminal Justice, UNO; partnering with the Nebraska Juvenile Justice Association, the Nebraska State Bar Association, the Nebraska Association of County Officials, the Nebraska Juvenile Services Division and the Nebraska Commission on Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice
Contact: Anne Hobbs, ahobbs@unomaha.edu

Educated University students interested in the juvenile justice field on the unique juvenile justice and legislative issues facing rural communities. Students were placed with a rural juvenile justice professional or agency for two months to gain hands-on experience. The project created greater interest for juvenile justice professionals to actively pursue careers in a rural area.

The Nebraska Hayseed Project
Petra Wahlqvist (PI), Lied Center for Performing Arts, UNL; Mary Kay Quinlan (co-PI), College of Journalism and Mass Communications, UNL; Deepak Keshwani, College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, UNL; Becky Key Boesen, Lied Center for Performing Arts, UNL
Contact: Petra Wahlqvist, pwahlquist2@unl.edu

Celebrated our state’s rural communities through performing arts, a collection of oral histories and an exploration of Nebraska farm life. Undergraduate students conducted oral history interviews in rural communities which engaged statewide conversations about agriculture through the arts. The Nebraska Hayseed project was constructed to create a platform where farm families can openly speak about their life experiences.

Rural Interprofessional UNMC Student Rotations
Patrik Johansson (PI), 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
Contact: Patrik Johansson, pjohansson@unmc.edu

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. 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), UNL partnering with a UNL colleague and the Center for Rural Affairs
Contact: Gina Matkin, gmatkin1@unl.edu

Utilizes a service-learning approach to link UNL students 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
Mary Rittenhouse (PI), NCTA, in partnership with the Nebraska Community Foundation
Contact: Mary Rittenhouse, mrittenhouse2@unl.edu

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 projected 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
Joseph Allen (PI), UNO, Community Engagement Center with partners from Beatrice Foster Grandparent Program, Chadron Foster Grandparent Program and Omaha Foster Grandparent Program
Contact: Joseph Allen, josephallen@unomaha.edu

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.

Facilitating the Implementation of Social Media Plans for Small Businesses & Local Non-Profits through Service Learning at UNK
Sherri Harms (PI), UNK, partnering with the Economic Development Council of Buffalo County, Nebraska
Contact: Sherri Harms, harmssk@unk.edu

Many rural Nebraska small businesses and non-profit organizations do not have the expertise or resources to implement social media plans, which can limit their organizational reach. This project will implement a service learning component to an existing course, where students work with organizations to develop and implement social media plans, in partnership with the Economic Development Council of Buffalo County.
Art at Cedar Point
Karen Kunc (PI), UNL, partnering with the Ogallala Public School District, Nebraska Game and Parks, Lake McConaughy Visitor/Water Interpretive Center, Nebraska Art Teachers Association and the Petrified Wood Art Museum in Ogallala, Nebraska
Contact: Karen Kunc, kkunc1@unl.edu
Website: http://arts.unl.edu/art/art-cedar-point-biological-station
Art at Cedar Point is a transdisciplinary program which blends art and science through undergraduate field courses and artist residencies at Cedar Point Biological Station in western Nebraska. This innovative project will allow students to experience the unique ecosystems and communities of rural western Nebraska and showcase the potential for artists working in rural areas by developing the only Artist in Residence program in the region.

Minority Health Disparities Initiative (MHDI): Youth Are Rural Health Program (YouRhealth)
Kim Matthews (PI), UNL, partnering with Lexington High School, Sheldon Art Museum, UNK, UNMC College of Nursing, Lexington Regional Health Center and DHHS
Contact: Kim Matthews, kmatthews2@unl.edu
YouRhealth is a new innovative and bold initiative that creates a learning community that includes civic engagement by transforming Lexington High School’s (LHS) freshman health course into a rigorous visual literacy/critical thinking/community engagement environment. This project will implement the YouRhealth program that teaches freshman high school students to be community health educators by developing and presenting multimedia public health campaigns to their family and friends, as well as provide NU students civic engagement opportunities in a predominately minority community.

Understanding Hispanics and Sense of Community in Rural Nebraska
Athena Ramos (PI), UNMC, partnering with Platte County (Columbus) and Colfax County (Schuyler)
Contact: Athena Ramos, aramos@unmc.edu
A mixed methods research study will be conducted within two Nebraska counties to better understand the assets and the challenges associated with being Hispanic/Latino in rural Nebraska. This project addresses community concerns that were identified during the 2015 East Central District comprehensive community health needs assessment. Six focus groups (three in each county) and a survey of at least 100 Hispanic/Latino individuals from each community will be conducted. A bilingual community report will be developed with community partners that includes actionable recommendations.

CEEM Project: A New Community Engagement Education Model
Kim Wilson (PI), UNL, partnering with Nebraska Extension, the Center for Rural Entrepreneurship and various community partners including the Willa Cather Foundation, City of Red Cloud, Chamber of Commerce and others
Contact: Kim Wilson, kwilson4@unl.edu
Many semester-long service learning (SL) projects realize immediate impact on community partners and SL students, yet has not translated into long-term community impact. It is felt the short timeframe of the fifteen-week semester coupled with the partner’s limited capacity and infrastructure to act on recommendations diminishes long-term impact. This two-year process will evaluate the ability to strengthen partnerships and develop capacity for the region’s residents by going beyond the semester timeframe and including an expanded team that includes Nebraska Extension and community and professional experts and also extends the project timeframe over multiple years with participation of multiple studios of students.
RESEARCH & ENGAGEMENT

Research & Engagement awards are to function as “seed grants” which are designed to lay the foundation for larger requests to funding sources beyond the University of Nebraska.

Successful Research & Engagement proposals must explicitly address transdisciplinary and collaborative considerations both internal and external to the University. Transdisciplinary work “utilizes a broad range of views and expertise, including community-based knowledge, to address contemporary rural issues…”

True to the spirit of the Rural Futures Institute, both types of grants should create an environment in which deep and meaningful collaborative partnerships are the norm. Projects should demonstrate collaboration across campuses, departments and disciplines, as well as with external stakeholders such as other non-University campuses, communities, state and local government, trade associations, civic groups and the philanthropic community.

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**Entrepreneurship Based Economic Development**

Robert Bernier (PI), College of Business Administration, UNO; Roni Reiter-Palmon and Erin Pleggenkuhle-Miles (co-PIs), UNO; Brian Mennecke and Anthony Townsend (co-PIs), Iowa State University; Don Macke (co-PI), Center for Rural Entrepreneurship; Sarah McMillan (co-PI), Nebraska Business Development Center, UNK

**Contact:** Robert Bernier, rbernier@unomaha.edu

Piloted an entrepreneurship incubator tested predictive model with communities to identify actions communities can take to increase entrepreneurship.

**Community Marketing: Taking a New Look at Rural Communities in the Great Plains**

Cheryl Burkhart-Kriesel (PI), UNL Extension; Randy Cantrell (co-PI), UNL; David Olson (co-PI), South Dakota State University Extension; Kathy Tweeten (co-PI), North Dakota State University Extension

**Contact:** Cheryl Burkhart-Kriesel, cburkhartkriesel1@unl.edu

Website: [http://communityvitality.unl.edu/marketing-hometown-america](http://communityvitality.unl.edu/marketing-hometown-america)

Researched whether confidence, capacity building, and behavior toward marketing their community can be increased through a series of study circle based community-wide conversations.

**Communities Creating Their Own Innovation and Entrepreneurship**

Charlotte Narjes (PI), UNL Extension; along with co-PIs Connie Hancock, Phyllis Schoenholz, Nancy Eberle, and Diane Vigna; partnering with Nebraska Department of Economic Development, USDA Rural Development, Nebraska Public Power District, the Heartland Center for Leadership Development

**Contact:** Charlotte Narjes, cnarjes1@unl.edu

Attracted and retained working age populations and created entrepreneurial enviroments that lead to community vitality through Entrepreneurial Community Activation Process (ECAP). This project tested the model on eight communities.
Rural Sourcing

Shawn Kaskie (PI), Center for Rural Research and Development, UNK; Shelley Zaborowski (co-PI), Nebraska Alumni Association; Paul Eurek (co-PI), Xpanxion; collaborating with Nebraska Department of Labor and the Center for Rural Affairs

Contact: Shawn Kaskie, kaskiesc@unk.edu
Website: http://www.nebraskamanufacturing.com/2015/07/nebraska-tech-company-pioneers-rural-sourcing/
http://nebraska.edu/media-resource-center/features/1369-new-partnership-aims-to-bring-enter

The concept of “rural sourcing” relates to existing and start-up companies strategically locating operations in rural areas to reduce labor costs and increase employee reliability. This project built on a successful “cross-sourcing” model to recruit University of Nebraska alumni back to rural Nebraska in targeted professional service occupations.

Using Crowdsourcing for Leadership Development in Rural Communities

Roni Reiter-Palmon (PI), Center for Collaboration Science, UNO; along with several co-PIs from UNO and Susan Jensen (co-PI) College of Business Technology, UNK

Contact: Roni Reiter-Palmon, rreiter-palmon@unomaha.edu

Designed and implemented a virtual crowdlearning case based leadership development program for rural Nebraska civic and business leaders. Case-based programs used realistic and engaging scenarios to help develop skills in leadership, creative thinking and problem-solving.

Healthy Food, Healthy Choice

Christopher Gustafson (PI) Department of Agricultural Economics, UNL; Illene Pevec (co-PI), University of Colorado, Boulder; Suzanne Stluka (co-PI), South Dakota State University; with partners from the Rosebud Economic Development Corporation (REDCO), Sinte Gleska University and Blue Star Studio, Inc.

Contact: Christopher Gustafson, cgustafson6@unl.edu

Improved the health of Rosebud Sioux Tribe residents by changing food consumption patterns. This project used quantitative and qualitative approaches to understand the current food environment, as well as food knowledge and preferences. It introduced short- and long-term strategies to increase local residents’ acceptance of and willingness to buy healthy foods.

Bridging the Skills Gap: Workforce Development in Rural Communities in the Great Plains

Carolyn Hatch (PI), North Central Regional Center for Rural Development (NCRCRD) at Michigan State University; with co-PIs from University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension and South Dakota State University Extension

Contact: Carolyn Hatch, chatch@purdue.edu
Website: http://ruralfutures.nebraska.edu/skills-gap/

Implemented a labor market assessment model to address skills gaps in rural communities to improve local workforces and enhance long-term economic growth. Project partners worked with ten counties in Nebraska and South Dakota and community stakeholders from the private and public sectors. Providing local decision makers with tools needed to address local workforce needs leads to increased confidence and capacity building.

Nebraska Primary Care Practice-Based Research Network Project

Christopher Kratochvil (PI), University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) collaborating with several UNMC colleagues, the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services and rural Nebraska physicians

Contact: Christopher Kratochvil, ckratoch@unmc.edu

Connected health care providers to improve strategies for management of complex chronic diseases and implemented tools that improved transitions of care from hospitals into the outpatient setting. Using a community based participatory research approach, these providers, with the help of UNMC faculty, were brought together to finalize a project they felt would help them in the management of their patients. This project provided data and models that improved the health care of rural patients and prepared health profession students on rural rotations to become better health providers.
Catalyzing the Role of Micropolitan America in the Future of Rural America: Why Not Begin this New Frontier for Research and Engagement in Nebraska?

Eric Thompson (PI), Bureau of Business Research, UNL; Matthew Fannin (co-PI), Rural Policy Research Institute (RUPRI); Bob Blair and Jerome Deichert (co-PIs), Center for Public Affairs Research, UNO; Randy Cantrell (co-PI), NU Rural Futures Institute

Contact: Eric Thompson, ethompson2@unl.edu

Helped micropolitan areas identify opportunities and formulate research-driven plans for their future success in order to support rural economies. It developed a prototype in Nebraska with national applicability and actionability. As a result of this project, the University of Nebraska leads the nation in articulating the role of micropolitan areas and helping them capitalize on their unique opportunities for regional innovation and rural development.

2015

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, UNL. 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

Contact: Maria Rosario T. de Guzman, mguzman2@unl.edu

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 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 UNK collaborating with several UNK colleagues, Southwest Public Health District, Grand Canyon University, UNL faculty, UNMC faculty and HyVee.

Contact: Kate Heelan, heelanka@unk.edu

Enhance rural access to a 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 UNL collaborating with several UNL and UNK colleagues along with Nebraskans for Civic Reform and the Heartland Center for Leadership Development.

Contact: L.J. McElravy, lj.mcelravy@unl.edu

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).
Identifying the Interrelationships Between Social Determinants, Self-identity, and Public Health in Minority Rural Communities: Photovoice + Random Spatial Sampling Survey

Kirk Dombrowski (PI), Minority Health Disparities Initiative, Departments of Sociology, Nutrition & Health Sciences, Communications, Psychology and Sheldon Art Museum at UNL, partnering with DHHS and Two Rivers Public Health Department

Contact: Kirk Dombrowski, kdombrowski2@unl.edu

The HealthVoiceVision transdisciplinary team will combine participatory research with traditional random spatial sampling survey to better understand minority health disparities in rural communities. The research results will translate into interventions, tools and data that communities can use to understand and address minority health disparities.

Enhancing Nebraska’s Ecotourism Industry

Richard Edwards (PI), Center for Great Plains Studies, with UNL, UNK, UNO, College of Law, Calamus Outfitters and international connection with Namibia

Contact: Richard Edwards, redwards@unl.edu

Private-lands nature-based tourism can provide many benefits to stressed rural areas. This project will focus on international best practices in Namibia that can help Nebraska’s emerging ecotourism industry grow into world leaders in private-lands ecotourism.

Rural Prosperity Research Project

Chuck Hibberd (PI), Nebraska Extension, ALEC, NHRI and College of Architecture at UNL, partnering with UNO, Center for Rural Entrepreneurship, Heartland Center for Leadership Development, Nebraska Community Foundation and the Aspen Institute

Contact: Chuck Hibberd, hibberd@unl.edu

Will build the capacity of a cohort of rural communities to effectively create conditions for a more prosperous future by: increasing economic opportunities through business creation; building up community assets that support a high quality of life; and attracting and keeping people to achieve demographic renewal. This project applies a systems approach designed to achieve systemic change.

Raising Awareness of Health Professionals Education Among Rural Nebraska Latino Youth

Patrik Johansson (PI), UNMC College of Public Health, with UNK, Nebraska Area Health Education Center (AHEC) and partnering with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Nebraska, Central Community College, Doane College, Grand Island Latino Leadership Group, Grand Island Senior High, St. Francis Hospital and DHHS

Contact: Patrik Johansson, pjohansson@unmc.edu

Health professions shortages represent a challenge to the sustainability of rural communities. While there are insufficient rural health professionals in general, Latinos are virtually absent from this workforce. This study will develop strategies to raise awareness of health professions education among rural Nebraska Latino high school and college students, resulting in increased numbers of Latino youth who pursue health professions.

Collaborative Capacity Building in Rural Nebraska Schools via Technology

Amanda Witte (PI), and Susan Sheridan (co-PI) UNL, partnering with rural schools and educators and the Nebraska Department of Education

Contact: Amanda Witte, awitte2@unl.edu

There are long-standing barriers to services in rural communities including insufficient mental health services, cultural differences and stigma that make access to treatment options for mental and behavioral issues a challenge for students in rural areas. This project will develop and evaluate highly accessible, effective and sustainable solutions for rural schools and families to increase access to mental health supports, address rural students’ mental and behavioral health challenges and bolster academic success.