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CONTACT: Sandy Scott
sscott@cns.gov (202) 606-6724

NEW STUDY HIGHLIGHTS NEBRASKA'S LEADERSHIP IN VOLUNTEERING

State Ranks 4th in Nation for Volunteer Rate

Washington, D.C. – Nebraskans continue to prove their commitment to the community in a variety of critical ways, once again earning their state the #4 ranking in the nation in rate of volunteerism, with a volunteer rate of 37.4 percent. Volunteers across generations feel their experiences have had a positive impact on their lives. Boomers in Nebraska rank #2 in the nation, with a volunteer rate of 42.6 percent. In total, Nebraska volunteers served nearly 64 million hours annually between 2008 and 2010, time that is valued at almost \$1.4 billion total.

This new research was released today in the annual 2011 *Volunteering in America* report by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), the most comprehensive national study conducted on volunteerism. The report is a tool to help elected officials and nonprofit leaders to develop strategies to mobilize more Americans in service to address local needs and problems. The complete report can be accessed at VolunteeringInAmerica.gov. Nationally, 62.8 million volunteers served nearly 8.1 billion hours in their communities last year – service valued at nearly \$173 billion.

As volunteers fill critical voids in their communities, state and local leaders are taking note. **Nebraska First Lady, and Honorary Chair of ServeNebraska, Sally Ganem** remarks, “As a former principal and someone dedicated to community service, I am very proud - but not surprised - that Nebraskans rank highly in this report and devote themselves to supporting each other in schools and other settings. The strength of our communities and state is based upon neighbor helping neighbor. Volunteerism adds to the quality of our lives. I can’t even begin to imagine a community without volunteers.”

ServeNebraska is the volunteer service commission in Nebraska, mobilizing residents to strengthen their communities through volunteering, collaboration and national service programs. Its efforts advance the priorities of **Governor Dave Heineman** in promoting education and jobs for all Nebraskans.

“As organizations are struggling to provide more services with fewer resources, volunteers of all ages are stepping up to help fill in the gaps,” said Robert Velasco II, acting CEO of CNCS. “The commitment, time, and talent of Nebraska’s volunteers is admirable, further proving that everyone has a role in making America great.”

Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska is among the many groups that has had great impact in the areas of family services, immigration, and military services. “We are so proud to have played a role in making Nebraska a better place for its residents,” said Bev Carlson, Director of Public Relations for Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska. “Our work in helping families in need is continuing to strengthen our community. Without the time and talent of volunteers, we could not reach and serve as many as we do.”

Volunteers can contribute as little or as much as their time allows—their ideas and talents are important to strengthening our communities and the nation. To learn how you can volunteer in your community, visit Serve.gov.

About the Volunteering In America Report:

The Volunteering in America research is produced by CNCS as part of its efforts to expand the reach and impact of America’s volunteers. The research includes a volunteer data profile for all states, including the District of Columbia, and hundreds of cities, including data on volunteer rates, rankings, area-specific trends, and analysis. The *Volunteering In America* report is a partnership between the Corporation for National and Community Service, the U.S. Census Bureau, and the Bureau for Labor Statistics to collect volunteering data annually through the Current Population Survey’s (CPS) Supplement on Volunteering. The CPS is a monthly survey of about 60,000 households (approximately 100,000 adults), conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau for the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Volunteers are defined as individuals ages 16 and over who perform unpaid volunteer activities for or through an organization. The report includes information for all 50 states, Washington, D.C., and 198 cities, including 51 large cities, 75 mid-size cities, and 72 additional cities, based on Metropolitan Statistical Areas. For more information, visit VolunteeringInAmerica.gov

About the Corporation for National and Community Service:

The Corporation for National and Community Service is a federal agency that engages more than five million Americans in service through its Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve America programs, and leads President Obama’s national call to service initiative, United We Serve. For more information, visit NationalService.gov.

About ServeNebraska

ServeNebraska is the volunteer service commission in Nebraska, mobilizing residents to strengthen their communities through volunteering, collaboration and national service programs. Key initiatives include developing and nurturing AmeriCorps, providing training & professional development, facilitating the inclusion of those with disability in community service, coordinating volunteer recognition awards, and growing the capacity of nonprofit organizations. For more information, visit www.serve.nebraska.gov .

About Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska:

Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska is a statewide, community-based organization which impacts over 35,000 individuals annually, from 31 offices in 18 cities in the areas of behavioral health, children services and community services. More at www.lfsneb.org.

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