

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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2012 Global Youth Service Day Mini-Grant Awards Distributed

(Lincoln, Neb.) The mini-grant project goal is to engage Nebraska youths in service to their local communities in conjunction with Global Youth Service Day (GYSD), April 20-22, 2012; the largest service event in the world celebrating the contributions youth make to their communities 365 days of the year. A successfully funded project is to be a one-day or continuous service project with a service-learning component. A total of \$3,675 in 2012 Global Youth Service Day Mini-Grant funding was awarded to applicants by ServeNebraska in two project areas – Youth Service (\$2,200) and Disability Youth Service (\$1,475). ServeNebraska received grant funds from the State Farm Foundation to be a Lead Agency for Global Youth Service Day in Nebraska as designated by Youth Service America and grant funds from the Corporation for National & Community Service for disability and inclusion services.

Facilitated by ServeNebraska, the ServeNebraska InterCorps Council (ICC), a leadership council of AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps*VISTAs in service throughout Nebraska, took the lead in coordinating the Mini-Grant Process. Members assisted in the creation of the application; rallied their communities to participate in Global Youth Service Day and apply Mini-Grants; and conducted a thorough and deliberative consensus-based grant review process. Leading these efforts for the ICC was Katie Brokaw, an AmeriCorps member in service with College Possible in Omaha. Some of the organizations funded shared what they will be doing for Global Youth Service Day in their communities.

Youth Service Mini-Grant Awards:

- North Central Development Center (Ainsworth, Friday, April 20) - Youth of all ages implement the community plan to upgrade the soccer fields and increase the opportunities for the youth to play, coach and referee.
- Asian Community & Cultural Center Youth Program (Lincoln, Saturday, April 21) - Youth supported by volunteers from the First Baptist Church, University of Nebraska Lincoln and Nebraska Wesleyan University service learning classes assist with the planning and coordination of a drive to collect school supplies to send to schools in the Mae La refugee camp in Thailand.
- Beatrice Humane Society (Beatrice, Friday, April 20) - A week long camp focuses on volunteering, the needs of animals, and the benefit that the shelter brings to the community. Youth execute a supply drive for the shelter and then be part of putting up the shelving and stocking shelves.
- City of Lincoln Parks & Recreation – F Street Community Center (Lincoln, Weekend of April 20) - Youth in after-school programming enhance and restore a garden bed that has been in existence for 6 years and helps students to understand the importance of nutrition and learn gardening practices to improve healthy eating habits.
- City of Sprouts (Omaha, Saturday, April 21) - Youth will plant vegetables, learn about their nutritional value, learn about how to prepare healthy meals with fresh produce and design a pamphlet to increase awareness of good nutrition benefits in the Orchard Hill area, a food desert with individuals living in poverty and at risk of obesity.
- City Impact (Lincoln, Saturday, April 21) - City Impact Youth Philanthropy team adopt a low income family in Lincoln to assist them and increase awareness of poverty issues. A food drive conducted in conjunction with a University of Nebraska Lincoln Service Day project.

- Crisis Center for Domestic Abuse/Sexual Assault (Cedar Bluffs, Friday, April 20) - Youth increase awareness of dating violence, bullying/bystander and sexual respect and healthy relationships within the school community. Skits presented by the health class to the entire student body help encourage respect with the rest of the student body. A banner made by the class encourages the student body be respectful of each other.
- Little Priest Tribal College (Winnebago, Friday, April 20) - Youth will work with the tribal elders to prepare garden boxes to be distributed to the elderly in the community. Focus on growing fresh garden vegetables enhancing the nutrition of the elderly but also enhancing the relationships between the two generations and passing along cultural information.
- Peru State College (Peru, Friday, April 20) - A community health fair provides information regarding health, activity and nutrition to promote positive lifestyles. Elementary students present information on curriculum and activities centered on healthy activities and the Healthy Eating Plate.
- United Methodist Ministries (Omaha, Saturday April 21) - This project unites youth from metro Omaha and surrounding rural areas together to address the needs of multiple sites and address poverty issues by filling food bags, sorting donations, building community garden beds, and/or stocking food pantry shelves.
- Willard Community Center (Lincoln, Thursday, April 19) - Youth from the community gather with the West A Neighborhood Association to clean up the roadways, parks and private property with homeowner's permission to keep the area clean from garbage.

Disability Youth Service Mini-Grant Awards – ServeNebraska is dedicated to ensuring that individuals with disabilities are fully engaged in their communities, have the opportunity to participate actively in service, and are vitally involved in community preparedness initiatives.

- Blue Valley Community Partnership (Fairbury, Friday, April 20) – Blue Valley Community Action (BVCA) AmeriCorps members along with the students that attend the afterschool program raise community awareness of the importance of bicycle safety and risk of brain injury. Students with and without disabilities will be exposed to the consequences of unsafe riding. Other features include presentation by law enforcement and present bike related prizes.
- Connect Columbus (Columbus, Saturday, April 21) - The ARC of Platte County disabled clients create a small visual garden in front of the Family Resource Center in Columbus. The Center is in need of a face lift to attract new tenants; signage will remind the community and the clients of the wonderful work done.
- Hart of the Matter (Omaha, Wednesday, April 18) - The “Hart of the Matter” is a partnership between Ackerman Elementary fifth grade students and Children's Respite Care Center (CRCC) which provides extensive care for medically fragile and developmentally delayed children. The Hart of the Matter as a service learning program teaches “typical” school age children compassion and sensitivity towards others. It helps to build awareness of peers that have various physical and mental disabilities. Cooperatively all youth create a mural as large as a normal sized gymnasium with the use of adaptive equipment. Art tools that hook up to wheelchairs help participants with limited movement or lack of fine motor skills be successful in creating artwork they have never been able to before.
- Prescott Elementary School (Lincoln, Saturday, April 21) - The project involves designing an outdoor classroom including a focus on a butterfly garden. Built by first & second graders with and without disabilities who are studying butterflies habitats their lifecycles. This garden will exist for years and contribute to hands-on learning from many 1st graders to come.
- Valley Alternative Learning Transitioning School (Gering, Friday, April 20) - Students with and without learning disabilities introduce the community of Scottsbluff to Bio-swales and the use of rain barrels, rain gardens. They prepare for two rain gardens and bio-swale in the landscape of a greenhouse and design a map for the plantings and plant and mulch the area. This provides the community with demonstration plots so they can learn and view the latest trends and techniques in food production and gardening.

ServeNebraska mobilizes Nebraskans to strengthen their communities through volunteering, collaboration and national service programs. To learn more go to, www.serve.nebraska.gov.

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