ServeNebraska
Nebraska Volunteer Service Commission

Nebraska Voices For Volunteerism
Listening Tour 2010
6 Cities in 2 Months

Listening Tour Summary

Background

On April 21, 2009, the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act was signed by the President. The Serve America Act reauthorized and expands national service programs administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service by amending the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (NCSA) and the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973 (DVSA). This extraordinary new legislation to support national service and volunteerism has had a huge impact on ServeNebraska and included a requirement for each to provide a plan to expand services to meet the Serve America Act opportunities, a State Service Plan.

Some of the ways the Act may impact Nebraskans include:

- A new Summer of Service program for young people.
- Increases for AmeriCorps from 75,000 positions to 250,000 by 2017 [At our 2009 level of AmeriCorps members, Nebraska's projected share of 250,000 is 450 (.0018%)].
- Improving service options for experienced Americans and permits individuals age 55 and older to transfer their education award to a child or grandchild.
- Increases in federal and state support for State Commissions.

Purpose of State Service Plan Listening Tour

The general purpose of the Listening Tour is to help gather information in an open process to:

a. develop a state service plan that addresses the components of the 2009 Serve America Act,
b. measure the needs of local communities in the state, and
c. discover ways volunteers and national service can help meet some of those needs.

Input was expected to vary and encompass a wide variety of areas that could be categorized and organized along common themes to look for ways to build those needs into the Commission's new five-year strategic plan to be developed in October 2010.

Framework and Process

In fall 2009, the Commission conducted an online survey to gather information about persons age 55+ and began to plan the redesign of a new three-year State Service Plan. The scope of the public input process was reviewed with Commissioners in January 2010. Research was conducted on the successes of other Commissions to garner advice and use best practices in implementing a process. Process development began on the Listening Tour prior to the April 2010 Commission meeting with guidance from commissioners. Participants were invited to attend community forums in six Nebraska cities and asked questions about critical issues in their communities in the six federal priority areas of education, health, environment, economic challenges and veterans. Viewing service as a strategy to meet local Nebraska needs and expanding service opportunities to those over 55 yrs were also included in the forum discussions.

The Commission collaborated with commissioners, local national service partners and other groups to find locations, arrange for meeting rooms and to publicize the forums to maximum publicity and generate good attendance at each of the community forums. Publicity outreach was a partnership with local partners and the Commission to better reach the local newspaper and broadcast media. Partners included: *CNCS State Office, Senior Corps Programs (RSVP, FGP, SCP), Volunteer Centers, United Ways, CAP Agencies, K-12 Learn and Serve Programs, AmeriCorps*

Programs, VISTA members, Local Health Departments, Foundations, nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, corporate volunteer managers, local government and veteran's organizations.

Although this report reflects a snapshot of community needs as identified and expressed in summer 2010, these findings are convincing and well-founded with implications for action. The needs expressed by the public will help inform the work of the ServeNebraska Commission in developing a State Service Plan and, possibly, directing resources in response to these priority needs. As with all efforts to gather public input and assess local needs, the inherent limitations of staff, time, budget, geographic scope and representation, particularly in rural and frontier areas of the state, were present in the 2010 Listening Tour initiative.

The large numbers of persons registering for the Listening Tour forums, and attending, was much more than preliminary estimates and unexpected. A total of 135 persons pre-registered for the forums with 126 attending. In addition more than two dozen additional persons shared their input through the Online Survey that was available to the public through August 31, 2010.

This summary is about community "needs" as identified by the attendees in their respective locations. All areas of Nebraska have encountered difficult times yet are finding ways to work through the hard times through resourcefulness and hard work. While reading through the themes and specific needs for each forum location (in Appendix A), we cannot lose sight of the fact that all communities possess many positive aspects not covered in this report. Of particular note is the strong support for Senior Corps programs in the communities where they have a presence.

Common Themes

Almost all communities identified the similar needs. Those are included here as Common Themes. While communities want help form the "outside," most reported that the kind of support they want is the provision of resources (and even change in rules/regulations) so that they can take care of their issues themselves. Supports needed to help them move farther down the track toward expanded service and volunteerism to help with some of the need areas hadn't been considered as a solution very often in the past and was a new area to put a focus on.

The feedback from attendees at each of the six cities' forums is included in detail in Appendix A. The input varies widely in specific issues but can be combined into general categories such as youth & persons age 55+, education & literacy, economic challenges, health & special needs, transportation, new population groups & language roadblocks, the environment and veterans. Neighborhood violence was an area of importance in the metro Omaha area, perhaps slightly in the Lincoln area, but was not as large a concern in the remaining rural and frontier communities in Nebraska. Education and youth appeared to be a major focus area in all forums.

The following themes are offered with sample needs listed under each. These community needs were taken from the Listening Tour feedback from all cities:

Schools/Education

- Teacher shortages/teachers don't want to relocate to towns of less than 1,000-5,000
- After school programs/latchkey children/no child care available (especially for 2nd & 3rd shifts)
- Family involvement in schools

Travel/Transportation

- Travel time in rural NE/2-3 hours/limited or no public transportation/limited drivers/concerns for medical emergencies when community is not served with an ambulance/rural EMTs are volunteers/limited numbers available/have limited availability during the day/first responders are aging out/shortage of doctors, dentists

Environment

- Recycling not feasible is rural areas because of large fees to transport/no infrastructure for recycling
- Large feedlots and confinement areas are detrimental to air and water quality/issue not addressed by State elected leaders since this area is seen as helpful to state economy/should not have protection when people's health is at risk
- Alternative sources of energy needed/weatherization of older homes (most of those in small towns/villages)

Volunteer Opportunities

- 55+ want one-time volunteer opportunities/desire to apply professional skills
- Youth want opportunity to develop professional skills/experience without having to go to college
- Counter perception that service learning is "forced volunteerism"/teach youth what volunteering is

- Link intergenerational groups to help each other/engage elderly who have strong work ethic/mentor youth who don't understand what a work ethic is/engage youth to help elderly understand high tech world

Rural Life Not Understood by Elected Officials/Metro Populations

- Lack of understanding of rural areas in Washington and in Lincoln/Omaha/some rules & regs as written don't apply to life in the rural, less populated areas/ok to have rules & regs but they should actually have some reality for rural resources or lack thereof, e.g., some communities don't have access to high speed internet and few people own computers/rural broadband not available/no access to Skype or Internet

Veterans

- Veterans are not informed of where to go for service, e.g. the county veterans' offices/major services only available in Omaha or Sioux Falls, SD – hundreds of miles away/substandard housing in rural areas/growing population/concern about homeless veterans
- Two-year wait list for wheelchair users for limited housing in rural communities

Elderly Living/Medical Needs

- Need more volunteers especially at nursing home/same people volunteer for everything and get burned out/need clerical volunteers

Youth Development - Capability to Live Independently

- Teen pregnancy and parenting skills for teens
- Parenting skills training for parents in 20's and 30's
- Too many homeless youth under 21
- Foster care kids are aging out and have no living skills to live independently leading to homelessness, crime and pregnancy
- More job opportunities
- Survival education/life skills

Nebraska's Mental Health Issues

- Nebraska has not solved the huge mental illness/mental health issues that have been plaguing communities for the last few years

New Populations/Cultural & Language Issues

- Cultural/trust issues/minority cultures resist assistance/don't know how to access services/lack of understanding by both sides of cultural/social differences/language barriers/lack of interpreters (different than translators)/fear of government/ integration of new populations
- Multicultural separation/growth of gangs/limited or no services to other cultures: Latino, Nigerian, Somali
- Underserved populations/adult education/GED/market social services/lack of affordable, decent housing

Aging Professionals Leave Small Towns

- Business succession planning/training needed in very small towns where professionals are aging out and new people are not coming to the towns, e.g. lawyers, accountants

Economic Realities

- Increased number of working poor
- Financial access to meds or food – huge dilemma for older adults with few resources/challenges for aged population to stay in their homes in rural areas/no supports or family around to help/social isolation
- Affordable family activities in summer

Loss Sense of Community/Commutes for Work and Services

- Deteriorating sense of community
- Many commute long distances for work and services/jobs don't pay a living wage/businesses are not hiring/schools laying off paraeducators/United Way didn't meet fundraising goal (rural southwest Nebr)

Ex-Offender Re-entry

- Programs hard to find/programs for children of parent in prison
- Education/employment

Gangs/Violence

APPENDIX A
Feedback from Listening Tour Cities

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Listening Tour Feedback
Columbus, NE – July 6, 2010

14 Participants
1 Commissioner
2 Staff

Teacher Shortage
- Students have increased needs
- Fewer resources
- Positive effect of foster grandparents in classroom

Integration of New Populations
- Schools- more English as a Second Language students
- Medical – language issues/interpreters
- Community involvement – limited involvement in children's education
- Gangs – primarily Latino
- Groups include Latino, Sudanese, Myanmar
- Wayne State students helping with Spanish speaking populations

Involvement of Skilled Professionals Sharing Expertise
- Challenges facing felons in hiring due to increased background checks

After/Out of School Programming
- Volunteer availability
- Latchkey children
- No child care in schools
  - No provider to partner
  - Church involvement in some communities, not in others

Childcare
- Availability – especially for 2nd and 3rd shift workers
- Affordability
- Quality

Family Involvement in Schools

Travel Time for Services in Rural Nebraska
- 2-3 hours
- Online services not a viable option for many seniors
- Limited public transportation between communities
- Limited availability of volunteer drivers
  - Liability an issue
- Health care concerns especially with emergencies

Lack of Awareness of Eligibility by Many who Qualify for Benefits

Challenges in identifying and quantifying need
Many will not complete forms to avoid stigma of being poor in small communities
Offer for all to target to “disadvantaged”

Volunteers
Positive role of Connect Columbus

Environment
Fee charged for recycling to cover transportation costs in small communities (Pender)
Use of recycled tires – sprinkled on landfill, not ground and re-used
No infrastructure for recycling

Volunteering
Liability issues
Awareness/training of issues
When is a background check needed?
Engaging 55+
Desire for one-time opportunities
Immediate gratification
Desire to apply their professional skills
Engaging youth
Youth want opportunities to develop professional skills and experience

Increased Number of Working Poor
Increased need
Need more volunteers
Backpack program (Hastings)
Summer food program (Columbus)

Health
Rural EMTs are volunteers and have limited availability during the day

Rules and Regulations
Drafted in Washington D.C.
Lack of understanding/applicability to rural areas

Veterans
Distance/access issues with services in Omaha and Sioux Falls
Lack of awareness among veterans of services provided by county veterans’ offices
Idea: promote veterans’ offices as part of creating monuments

Ombudsman for Nursing Homes (Area Agency on Aging)
Need for more volunteers
Do try to recruit at senior centers
Possibilities: RSVP and/or Experience Works
Need for clerical volunteers

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Listening Tour Feedback
Kearney, NE - June 24, 2010

22 Participants
2 Commissioners
2 Staff

Youth

- Teen pregnancy and parenting skills
- Mentoring programs – Teammates
  - Big Brothers/Big Sisters (Grand Island)
- Parenting skills/parenting education
  - Program in schools (Grand Island and Kearney)
- Teen dropouts (school)
- Homeless – under 21
- Foster Care – aging out of system and not having living skills to live independently
  - Leads to homelessness, crime, and pregnancy as a way to survive & belong
- "Throw Away" kids
- Workforce Investment Act/Vocational Rehabilitation
  - Youth component (national) up to 24 years
- Crossroads Program
- Teen Net program (Kearney)
- Substance abuse issues
- Mental health/behavioral health services
  - Shortage of psychiatrists/mental health providers
  - Closing of Regional Center
  - Community based services
  - Law enforcement training
    - Lack of expertise for handling situations
  - Medicaid rules/regulations
  - Funding/geography
- After school programs (Kearney)
  - Use sliding scale
- Cultural/trust issues
  - Resistance to assistance
  - Knowing how to access services
  - Lack of understanding on both sides re: cultural/social differences

- Multicultural separation
  - Lack of trust among different cultures
  - Growth of gangs in different ethnic groups
  - Unable to provide services to other cultures: Latino, Nigerian, Somali, etc.
- Not enough youth activities that are affordable
- Boys-n-Girls Club
- Girl Scouts

Lack of after school programs in smaller, rural areas
Sexuality – too young
Communication gap
    Don't have neutral areas to meet
    Lexington has made some progress
AmeriCorps
    Help teachers with curriculum
    Provide expertise
Social gathering – Help partner schools with parents of students
Student led initiative/Slang
    More respectful
Leadership classes
Losing their youth
    No opportunities
    Community is too small
    Little economic development
    Need for jobs for young adults
Apprenticeships
    Develop skill sets – trade school
    Not well known
Business succession planning /entrepreneurship
Rural development districts – provide training for succession planning
Get volunteer opportunities out there and known
Community service requirements at schools
    Need to counter perception that service learning is "forced volunteerism"
    Minnesota and Wisconsin have good programs for K-12 service learning
Teach youth what volunteering is and what it means
    Build a culture of personal sacrifice/giving back

55+

Social media use missing this population
Computer literacy – UNK Senior College training
    Community Action Agency offers training
Disabled – how to effectively communicate with them
Homeless
Financial access to medication/ Meds or food?
Do not want to ask for help/Can't afford it – do without it
Independent/Proud
Do not know how to market self in today's workforce
Intergenerational activities
    College students teach seniors
Challenge for aged population to stay home in rural areas
Rural broadband
    Do not have access to Skyping or Internet
Lack of accessible housing – people forced to go to nursing homes
Transportation
    Limitations on use of HandiBus – Medicaid regulations/benefits
    Social isolation
Public perception that housing for elderly is not attractive
    Educate the public
    Involve architects/builders
Engage elderly
    Want to learn
    Want to have fun
    Want to give back
Strong work ethic

Veterans

Geographical expanse makes outreach difficult
Not enough Service Centers
Mental health services
Substandard housing
Limited housing available

Two year waiting list for wheel-chair users
Apartments not available in 2009 in Grand Island

How Needs can be Addressed Through Service/Volunteerism

Educate youth and encourage strong work ethic
Intergenerational interactions
Value in connecting youth with people 55+
Center for Rural Affairs has resources regarding generational differences
PSA's – Local celebrities/respected individuals in community
Peer-to-peer discussions
Colleges →High School
High School →Middle School/Elementary
Talk about how you can leave community and return
USDA has many financial and technical resources, mostly low-cost loans and some grants, in the areas of business, energy, housing, utilities, broadband, and community infrastructure
Need to network for more opportunities for newly disabled, returning veterans
Need more networking to build in-home care and accessible living units for aged population A collaborative grant to increase services for aged in rural areas will also empower
Emergency preparedness plan

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Listening Tour Feedback
Lincoln, NE – July 9, 2010

15 Participants
2 Commissioners
2 Staff

Parenting skills/Availability
- Positive: Afterschool programs; Teammates
- Difficulty in making connections in community

Older adult support
- Living skills/independence
- Transportation services – difficulty in accessing basic services (doctor's appts., grocery stores) esp. in rural areas

Language barriers
- Driver's education for New Americans/refugees
- Barrier to understanding school system, parenting skills, cultural difference, medical care
- No services for older refugees
- Translation vs. interpreter roles
- Literacy & life skills
- Draw retired teachers as volunteers
- 29 different languages in schools

Education
- No Child Left Behind does not take in to account issues such as mobility
- Students not meeting testing standards
- Lack of cultural diversity training
- Need general liaisons to support teachers, counselors, etc. in schools
  - Example of resource liaisons in Omaha schools

Adult literacy

Awareness of different ways of communicating
- Social media
- Emotional intelligence

Employment
- Economic stressors compounding unemployment issues
- Long-term, lasting solutions
- Entrepreneurs and support of micro-financing
- Build skills of individuals

Silos of funding that result in duplication of services

How can senior companions assist older New Americans?
- RSVP?

Success in collaboration
- Help those with needs to be involved in helping themselves
- Resources but also responsibility
- Sustainability on personal, organizational, and community level

Veterans & Post-traumatic stress
- Family support
- At Ease program

Environmental issues
- Large feedlots and confinement areas affect on air & water quality
- Some issues not being addressed due to state's economic viability
- Individual homes (mold, etc.)
- Low-income & rentals
- Weatherization of older homes
- Radon
  - Not addressed because of cost
  - Some of the highest levels in nation
- Integration of alternative sources of energy
- Recycling
  - Limited availability of curb-side pickup
  - Prescription drugs
  - Distance vs. cost benefit of recycling in rural areas

Expensive medications hurting people economically
- Community gardens (good, but require investment of time)
- Village concept (neighbor connection) can help older adults stay in their homes
- "Green village" retrofitting

Low-income housing
- Newer housing vs. older homes and upkeep
- Poor conditions
- Unhealthy situations
- Lack of funds
- Individual based
- Increased cultural diversity – some people from other cultures have a fear of government
- Progress through trusted individuals

Need for clear understanding of what volunteers do
- Understanding of volunteer management by elected officials
- Liability if volunteer is injured

Neighborhood services exchange (skill swap networks)
- Taxes paid on services was an obstacle

First responders in rural areas are volunteers
- Not enough new first responders to replace those who are "graying" out
- Shortage of doctors, dentists

Deteriorating sense of community

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Listening Tour Feedback
North Platte, NE - June 23, 2010

6 Participants
1 Commissioner
2 Staff

Youth

Loss of Boys & Girls Club
- Lack of funding
- Covered jr. & sr. high school age
- Gathering place after school

Need more mentors
North Platte Schools are trying to focus on basic skills – reading, writing, grammar
New technologies can help with education – Kindles to 5th & 6th graders
Salvation Army has existing program – Kids' Club
- Offers summer programming

Underserved Populations

Lack of availability of affordable homes and rentals for low/middle income
- Substandard housing (trailer parks)
- Resources to help are lacking
- Foreclosures up

Many commute to North Platte from adjoining counties for work and services
- Commuters motivated by superior benefits

Consumer is cautious about economic recovery
Agriculture heavily influences local economy
Decline in jobs paying a living wage
Businesses are not hiring
Tenneco-Cozad Closed
- Possible loss of 400+ jobs
- Ripple effect

North Platte Public Schools laying off paraeducators
Homeless shelter built to accommodate increase of homeless families
United Way did not reach fundraising goal

55+

Transportation Issues – hours of availability are limited
Low income elderly struggle to make ends meet
North Platte provides Medical Center with satellite service locations
Strong senior volunteer program (RSVP)
- Potential burnout of 55+ volunteers if overly involved

Veterans

Veteran population growing
Concern about increase in homelessness among veterans
North Platte's location leads to transient population
    Railroads/I-80 could bring in homeless

Environment

Need for larger recycling capacity
Expand recycling initiatives

How Needs can be Addressed Through Service/Volunteerism

Recycling project if grant is received
Connect inter-generationally with youth
Find ways for retired persons to share their expertise/experience
Structure volunteer opportunities to build in more flexibility and short-term opportunities
Coordinated volunteer pool would be helpful
Reaching out beyond "core" volunteer group is difficult because different people have
    different priorities based on age, gender, etc.
Develop business employee program
Local survey confirmed that people 55+ want to give back to community

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Listening Tour Feedback
Omaha, NE - June 29, 2010

58 Participants
3 Commissioners
2 Staff

Youth

- Employment
  - Need more job opportunities
  - Need career explorations activities
  - Counselors need to be more open-minded about career options
  - More funding for programs like Youth Build
  - Public/private partnerships to provide job shadowing
  - Apprenticeships
- After school programs
  - Help students stay in school
  - Supply gas vouchers to volunteers who provide transportation
  - Need affordable, family activities during summer
    - No-fee public pools
- Parenting
  - Clearinghouse for parents to find resources
  - Mentoring for parents
  - Parenting classes for young men (Fathers for Lifetime)
- Create volunteer requirements for high school students
- Survival education
  - Coping mechanisms
  - Interpersonal skills
  - Life skills (home maintenance)
- Need responsible role models
- Violence/Gangs
  - More afterschool programs
  - Continuity/stability of programs in especially important
  - Donations to afterschool programs
  - Mentoring programs
  - Helping youth obtain and maintain employment
  - More adults need to get involved with youth activities to learn what their needs are
  - Avoid stereotyping youth
- Need programs for children with a parent in prison
- Need more sports programs in North Omaha
- Need for STD, STI, and HIV prevention programs
  - High rate of Chlamydia in Omaha

Underserved Populations

- Need for more businesses and employments opportunities in North Omaha
- Jobs aren't available where people need them
- Employment opportunities for people with disabilities
- Homelessness
  - Education programs for the homeless
    - GED or Adult Basic Education
    - Soft skills such as interviewing
    - Life skills
  - Need to identify current services and effectiveness of services
- Need to market social services as many do not know about the programs
  - List resources on paper shopping bags
  - Clearinghouse of resources
  - Assistance/help is sometimes patronizing
  - Marketing through radio, block parties, flyers at Goodwill possible ways to reach people with limited literacy
  - UNO Service Learning Program has classes on marketing to specific populations
- Income requirements to receive aid from DHHS are too low
- Illiteracy - Need for collaboration among agencies that address issue effectively
- Housing
  - Lack of affordable, *decent* housing
  - Need to rehab buildings and houses in blighted areas
  - Volunteers could work on homes for senior/disabled citizens
- Provide access to examples of success – people don't believe they can succeed because they haven't seen examples of success
- Consumer Education
  - Counsel people how to get off welfare
  - Help people open savings accounts
  - Educate people about predatory practices (ex. Payday loans)
- Refugee/Immigrant Communities
  - Need for free, open-enrollment ESL classes located near populations in need
  - Not enough certified interpreters for refugees/immigrants
    - Affects medical care
    - Agencies not abiding by Title VI laws to budget for interpreters
      - Governor/legislature could send memo to agencies
  - Many Nebraskans unaware of refugee populations in our state
  - Lack of cultural competency in dealing with refugees and immigrants
  - Prenatal care for undocumented persons
  - Legislature could look at successful refugee programs in other states for guidance
- Utility Assistance
  - Funding of sewer repairs in MUD service area
    - MUD bills will increase steadily in upcoming years
- Need for more drug treatment centers
- Need for better mental health care
- Ex-offender re-entry programs
  - Programs hard to find
  - Increase in prison population
  - Use ex-offenders in volunteer programs

Community

- Transportation
  - Need for public transportation between Omaha and Lincoln
  - Omaha bus system inefficient
  - Create more bike trails
  - Buses don't go far enough into Sarpy Country
  - Potholes
- Promoting healthy eating
  - Community gardens
  - UNMC College of Public Health
- Cultural competency

Lack of respect for other cultures
Need for multicultural, multigenerational activities such as fairs, tours, books
Omaha is segregated by specific neighborhoods

Volunteers could organize tours to different neighborhoods
"Passport to Omaha"-type program could encourage people to visit different neighborhoods and cultural events.

55+

Elderly need assistance with driving to doctor or grocery store

Veterans

HETRA is starting an equine therapy program, "Horses for Heroes" for veterans this year

Service/Volunteerism

Funding for small non-profits is scarce
- Volunteers are vital
- Partnerships with businesses to support infrastructure

Need volunteers to clean and take care of parks – "Adopt a Park" program
- Now only mowing near path

Volunteer Management
- Sharing volunteer coordinator between agencies

Development of more youth involvement in non-profits
Need for innovative, impactful ideas

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Listening Tour Feedback
Scottsbluff, NE - June 22, 2010

11 Participants
1 Commissioner
2 Staff

Youth

Hidden population with high risk behaviors
Need for creative solutions, such as entrepreneurial opportunities, for nontraditional workforce with skill sets that communities do not have jobs for
Cost of living – hard to 'make it'
    Limited employers
    Limited number of jobs available
Go away- but come back to community
Need activities for youth
Rural areas have greater limitations for youth who "burn bridges," i.e. for juvenile offenders
Need private businesses willing to hire/mentor high risk youth
    Corps can't hire people with criminal records
Need to be more creative with job/business opportunities and support so youth can "prove" themselves
Use of technology - Youth socialize differently and cannot communicate well with everyone; adults need to step into their world to understand youth
Sexual mores
Communities need to embrace what youth are passionate about and how they communicate their passion
Different generations can teach each other
Community meetings held at youth-friendly access points to connect youth with community service opportunities
Youth want to volunteer at
    Human Society
    Hospital (actually doing something, not just visiting)
    Hands-on things
    Settings that lead to job skills
Childhood obesity
Box Butte County formed suicide prevention group in response to increase in youth suicides
Suicide prevention needs to address self-esteem, depression, access to mental health
Treatment/access/cost of mental health services for youth
Parents not providing basic needs and drug-free environment – barrier to education
Parenting classes
    Love & Logic covers adolescents and pre-school
    Common Sense Parenting

55+

Need more public transportation

In home services to allow elderly to stay at home

- Handy-man help
- Provide companionship to counter loneliness

Intermediate care opportunities before assisted living for middle-income

Seniors who have to come out of retirement due to economy but don't have computer or other needed skill sets

Seniors living longer and investments are not enough

Not enough jobs available

Discrimination in hiring/pay levels may occur

- Businesses don't want to pay seniors more than minimum wage

Rural geography – ratio of people to landmass

- Cost of medical services – need to drive far distances to see specialists

Need volunteers to shuttle seniors between rural communities

Veteran suicide rate high (higher than youth rates)

Proud generation – don't want to receive help

Seniors seeking good health/fitness

Medicine or food dilemma

How do we engage seniors who want to give back to community?

- Current volunteers can recruit others by sharing their good volunteering experiences
- Make volunteers feel needed and appreciated

Senior volunteers are going beyond non-profits' work

- Care of community
- Volunteer in homes, hospitals, nursing homes

Sheridan County youth center started by 83 year-old

- Provides lots of intergenerational activities/interaction
- Creates opportunities to teach each other (cross-training)
- Nutrition education

<u>How Needs can be Addressed Through Service/Volunteerism</u>

Mentoring

- TeamMates Mentoring and Rejuvenate in Box Butte County
- CrossRoads Mentoring in Panhandle has 3,000 contacts

New need for business owners to mentor youth to take over established community businesses (succession planning)

<u>How Needs can be Addressed Through Service/Volunteerism (continued)</u>

Youth want mentors/opportunities from professional trades – plumbing, electrician, welding, auto mechanics-that can lead to jobs

- Apprenticeships/Internships
- Connect with Homebuilders Association

Opportunities for contractors who know how to preserve historical buildings

- Connectivity goal with history, too

High school opportunities in *meaningful* service learning (ex. – Omaha Zoo "poop" research)

Do/Learn/Take Action

Native American population in rural areas

English as a second language population – need to combat language barriers

Need to reform Service Corps program rules in areas where one person might cross boundaries including state lines

Hemingford Youth Center also under development

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Panhandle Youth Plan – Nebraska Children & Family Foundation

Youth struggle to make healthy relationships and partnerships
Lack of activities in the community to keep youth off the streets and youth out of trouble
Not enough mentors in our community
Need to develop more families mentoring families

Community Awareness of Foster Care
- Train on Native American and Hispanic cultures including poverty issues
- More parenting classes for parents and foster youth who are parents
- Lack of cultural ties with foster child's native culture
- Separation of siblings and parents with no or little visitation

Community Engagement
- There aren't that many youth events of hang out spots
- More after school activities other than sports
- Stigma with youth growing up in bad situation
- Community Center not accessible to low-income youth

Education
- Not enough tutoring available
- Computers are not available to students who can't afford them
- Access to technology and extracurricular activities
  - Foster youth lack resources to work toward higher education
  - Lack of funds for extracurricular activities in the schools

Employment
- Very few jobs for youth who want to work under the age of 16
- Need more jobs available to youth
- Not enough job training
- Lack of employment opportunities due to age and job skills
- Lack of local business relationships, partnerships and job opportunities; examples: job shadowing on the job training, CAPWN partnerships, Youth Build
- Transportation issues for foster youth and homeless youth
  - Lack of funding for transportation such as gas, insurance and purchasing and maintaining a vehicle
- Lack of training in job skills such as filling out job applications, how to create resume and other job necessities
- Lack of internship and work study programs in the Panhandle

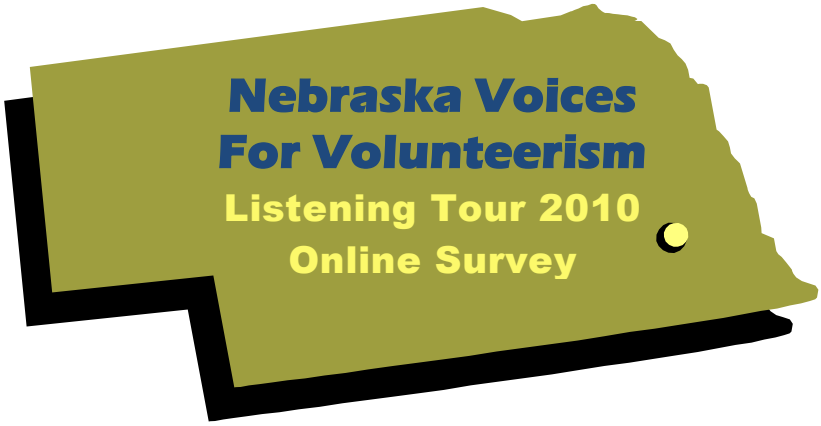
Stigma on mental health and foster youth
Lack of funds for paying for medication
Lack of mental health providers and Medicaid

Lack of partnerships with voc rehab services

More sex education, mental health, drug/alcohol and healthy lifestyle information
Lack of pregnancy prevention and abortion education
Lack of skill development on financing and budgeting
Youth lack skills that will help them become successful adults, such as cooking, budgeting, savings/ checking, paying bills, appointments and making healthy choices
Lack of homeless shelters for ages 18-24
No youth shelters or homeless shelters in area
No public transportation

APPENDIX B
Listening Tour Online Survey

ServeNebraska
Nebraska Volunteer Service Commission
www.serve.nebraska.gov



The Listening Tour Has Moved Online

Share Your Thoughts on Needs in Your Community

And How Service & Volunteerism Strategies Can Address Them

The six stops of the Listening Tour 2010 were a great success with strong turnouts in Gering/Scottsbluff, North Platte, Kearney, Omaha, Columbus, and Lincoln. Thanks to all who took part!

We Want to Hear From You!

Provide your thoughts thoughts, concerns, best practices on community needs through a quick and easy online survey.

Take Part Now

WHO?

YOU! Everyone has a valuable perspective!

Concerned citizens • community leaders • elected officials • businesses • nonprofits • faith-based organizations • foundations • service clubs/organizations • national service programs • volunteer programs • local health departments • secondary schools, colleges/universities • local government • veterans organizations • and others from any Nebraska city or county are all invited to participate.

WHY?

ServeNebraska is responsible for developing a State Service Plan aimed at utilizing service as a strategy to make the good life in Nebraska even better. This Listening Tour allows you to help ensure a diverse collection of voices are heard and that key issues are addressed in the plan. The resulting plan will serve as a guide for future programs and investments that support service and volunteerism activities. The plan will be posted on the ServeNebraska website and be used to create approaches using service as a strategy to address critical needs throughout the state.

QUESTIONS?

Contact:

Barbara Wilson Thomas
E: Barbara.thomas@nebraska.gov
P: 402-471-6227

ServeNebraska
Nebraska Volunteer Service Commission

ONLINE SURVEY: The Road to the Nebraska State Service Plan

Please take a few minutes to add your voice and thoughts as ServeNebraska – the Nebraska Volunteer Service Commission -seeks to learn what Nebraskans think are the most pressing needs in their communities and what the volunteer sector can do to address these needs. Cumulative results of this survey, public forums held during summer 2010, and research will guide the creation of the Nebraska State Service Plan which will help structure future investment and program development. Learn more about ServeNebraska.

*** 1. In order to best understand community needs throughout the state and to know the sources of input we receive, please provide the key information requested below. In order to best understand community needs throughout the state and to know the sources of input we receive, please provide the key information requested below.**

City/Town:

County:

Name:

Organization/Company:

Email Address:

2. If you are involved in a national service program, please indicate how below:

DROP DOWN MENU CHOICES: AmeriCorps Member, AmeriCorps*VISTA, AmeriCorps or VISTA Alum, AmeriCorps Program Staff K-12 Learn & Serve, Higher Education Learn & Serve, Senior Corps, Not Involved

3. KEY POPULATIONS: Nationally, youth and those age 55+ have been identified as priority populations for providing and receiving service. Please mark below if you agree, adding any other population(s) you believe merit priority consideration in the "Other" box.

- ☐ Youth
- ☐ Age 55+
- ☐ Other (please specify)

4. KEY ISSUES: Nationally, the issue areas listed below have been identified as priority areas. Please mark below if you agree, adding any other issue(s) you believe merit priority consideration in the "Other" box.

- ☐ Veterans issues
- ☐ Education & Literacy
- ☐ Addressing Economic Challenges
- ☐ Health and Special Needs
- ☐ Environment

Other (please specify
)

5. COMMUNITY NEED: Please list the 1 or 2 needs you believe are most unmet in your community

6. EVIDENCE OF NEED: What observations, statistics or studies support the need(s) you identified in the question above?

7. Do you believe that the needs in your community are different from those in other parts of Nebraska?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

If you indicated YES above, how are the needs in your community
different?

NEXT

ServeNebraska
Nebraska Volunteer Service Commission

ONLINE SURVEY: The Road to the Nebraska State Service Plan

Thank you helping to identify key issues and needs in your community. The final few questions look at solutions to these needs.

1. WHAT IS WORKING? Please identify some efforts currently underway that are addressing the pressing issues/needs you identified in previous questions.

2. SOLUTIONS: What are viable community service or volunteer-based solutions to the needs/issues you identified?

3. GETTING IT DONE: What resources must be dedicated or obstacles overcome to attain the solution you identified in the preceding question?

Thank you for your interest and involvement. If you have questions or would like additional details, please contact:

Barbara Wilson Thomas, Executive Director
ServeNebraska - The Nebraska Volunteer Service Commission
P: 402-471-6227
E: barbara.thomas@nebraska.gov

PREVIOUS SUBMIT REGISTRATION NOW

APPENDIX C
Listening Tour Info Flyer and Agenda

ServeNebraska
Nebraska Volunteer Service Commission

FIND MORE INFO:
www.serve.nebraska.gov

Nebraska Voices For Volunteerism
Listening Tour 2010
6 Cities in 2 Months

Share Your Thoughts on Needs in Your Community
Explore How Service & Volunteerism Strategies Can Address Them

WHEN?
Listening Tour 2010 stops will be held from 1:30-3:30 pm except Kearney. The Kearney stop will be from 2:00-4:00 pm. The cities and dates for the Listening Tour stops are:

Gering/Scottsbluff – June 22 North Platte – June 23 Kearney – June 24
Omaha – June 29 Columbus – July 6 Lincoln – July 9

WHAT?
Join ServeNebraska – the Nebraska Volunteer Service Commission, as we host a **free** 6-city "Listening Tour" to hear Nebraska's voices about service and volunteerism. Take part in engaging conversations identifying the greatest needs of our communities and how to expand service and volunteerism in our state to address them. You will have the chance to share thoughts, concerns, best practices and more with members of the Governor-appointed ServeNebraska Commissioners and staff. Find AGENDA information: http://www.serve.nebraska.gov/pdf/middleblock/listening-tour-agenda.pdf.

WHO?
YOU! Everyone has a valuable perspective!
Concerned citizens • community leaders • elected officials • businesses • nonprofits • faith-based organizations • foundations • service clubs/organizations • national service programs • volunteer programs • local health departments • secondary schools, colleges/universities • local government • veterans organizations • and others from any Nebraska city or county are all invited to participate.

WHY?
ServeNebraska is responsible for developing a State Service Plan aimed at utilizing service as a strategy to make the good life in Nebraska even better. This Listening Tour allows you to help ensure a diverse collection of voices are heard and that key issues are addressed in the plan. The resulting plan will serve as a guide for future programs and investments that support service and volunteerism activities. The plan will be posted on the ServeNebraska website and be used to create approaches using service as a strategy to address critical needs throughout the state.

HOW? REGISTER TODAY
Complete the **Online Registration at**: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Y6VX9CZ.

Or, PRINT & COMPLETE a paper Registration Form and **fax to 402-471-6286**. Find form at: http://www.serve.nebraska.gov/pdf/middleblock/listening-tour-registration.pdf

LISTENING TOUR STOP LOCATIONS - SEE NEXT PAGE

ServeNebraska
Nebraska Volunteer Service Commission
www.serve.nebraska.gov

Nebraska Voices For Volunteerism

Listening Tour 2010

6 Cities in 2 Months

LISTENING TOUR STOPS:

- Tuesday, June 22
  1:30 – 3:30 p.m.
  GERING/SCOTTSBLUFF
  Western Nebraska Community College
  Harms Center
  2620 Sykes Blvd.

- Wednesday, June 23
  1:30 – 3:30 p.m.
  NORTH PLATTE
  Quality Inn & Suites
  Sandhills Convention Center
  South Loop Room
  2101 South Jeffers

- Thursday, June 24
  2:00 - 4:00 p.m.
  KEARNEY
  Ramada Inn & Convention Center
  Dahlia Room
  301 2nd Avenue

- Tuesday, June 29
  1:30 – 3:30 p.m.
  OMAHA
  Scott Conference Center
  West Room
  6450 Pine Street

- Tuesday, July 6
  1:30 – 3:30 p.m.
  COLUMBUS
  Central Community College
  West Education Bldg
  4500 63rd Street

- Friday, July 9
  1:30 – 3:30 p.m.
  LINCOLN
  Nebraska Educational Television
  Meeting & Events Room
  1800 North 33rd Street

QUESTIONS?

Contact:

Barbara Wilson Thomas
E: Barbara.thomas@nebraska.gov
P: 402-471-6227

ServeNebraska
Nebraska Volunteer Service Commission
www.serve.nebraska.gov

Nebraska Voices For Volunteerism
Listening Tour 2010
6 Cities in 2 Months

Gering/Scottsbluff – June 22 • North Platte – June 23 • Kearney – June 24
Omaha – June 29 • Columbus – July 6 • Lincoln – July 9

A G E N D A

1. Welcome & Introduction

- *What is ServeNebraska & what does it do?*
- *What is the status of volunteering in Nebraska?*
- *What is going on nationally?*
- *Why is this Listening Tour happening?*
- *How will the information be used?*

2. Discussion

- *Review national priorities*
  1. *Engaging & meeting needs of youth*
  2. *Engaging & meeting the needs of those age 55+*
  3. *Education & literacy*
  4. *Addressing economic challenges*
  5. *Health and special needs*
  6. *Environment*
  7. *Veterans issues*
- *Identify the most pressing community needs*
  - *What are the greatest needs?*
  - *Which populations are underserved?*
  - *Are the needs in your community different than those in other parts of the state?*
  - *What initiatives are working? How could they be strengthened?*
- *What information exists to validate the need?*
- *How can identified needs be addressed through volunteerism and national service?*

DISCUSSION FORMAT

Break Out Session (if 25 or more attendees)

- *Participants divide into groups of 6-8*
- *Volunteers record discussion points*
- *Facilitators guide discussions*
- *Reconvene & report back to main group*
- *Examine common & varying insights*

Full Group Session (if fewer than 25 attendees)

3. Next Steps

- *ServeNebraska Commissioners will review Listening Tour & survey input and data from other sources*
- *Nebraska State Service Plan drafted and shared publicly online at www.serve.nebraska.gov*

APPENDIX D
Listening Tour PowerPoint Presentation

Nebraska Voices For Volunteerism
Listening Tour 2010
6 Cities in 2 Months

ServeNebraska
Nebraska Volunteer Service Commission

Listening Tour 2010

On the road to a State Service Plan

June-July 2010
Gering/Scottsbluff ~ North Platte ~ Kearney
Omaha ~ Columbus ~ Lincoln

2

Welcome

Introductions

Before We Get Started….

Housekeeping Items

www.serve.nebraska.gov

3

Why Are We Here?

Objectives

- Inform about ServeNebraska
- Learn about national developments
- Listen to you:
  - What are the greatest needs?
  - What is working to address these needs?
  - How can service and volunteerism solutions further address these needs?
- Develop a State Service Plan

www.serve.nebraska.gov

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What is ServeNebraska?

MISSION

Mobilizing Nebraskans to Strengthen Their Communities Through Volunteering, Collaboration, and National Service Programs

1990 National Service Act

- Authorized State Service Commissions

1993 National/Community Service Trust

- Created AmeriCorps Program
- Administered by State Commissions

www.serve.nebraska.gov

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What is ServeNebraska?

MISSION

Mobilizing Nebraskans to Strengthen Their Communities Through Volunteering, Collaboration, and National Service Programs

1994 Nebraska Governor's Executive Order

- Created Nebraska Volunteer Service Commission
- Independent State agency for volunteerism, community and national service
- Led by 20+ diverse Governor-appointed Commissioners who provide guidance, leadership and policy direction

2008 NVSC Rebranded as ServeNebraska

www.serve.nebraska.gov

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What Does ServeNebraska Do?

Promotes Addressing Local Needs

★ **Develops Programs and Partnerships**
- National Service
- Community Service
- Volunteerism
- National Days of Service
  - Global Youth Service Day
  - Martin Luther King Day

★ **Facilitates Partnering and Collaboration**
- Nonprofits
- Service and Business Sectors
- Government Agencies

www.serve.nebraska.gov

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What Does ServeNebraska Do?

Programs

- **AmeriCorps**
  - Grows **national service and workforce development** in collaboration with non-profits, schools and municipalities.
- **Disability Inclusion**
  - Maximizes the full **involvement of those with disabilities** in volunteering, community and national service.
  - Collaborates on **volunteer-led disability preparedness** efforts.

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What Does ServeNebraska Do?

Programs

- **Volunteer Recognition / Awards**
  - Recognizes and provides awards for **outstanding volunteer and service achievements** of Nebraskans.
- **Training and Technical Assistance**
  - Provides **resources and training** to increase professional development and effectiveness.
  - Biennial **Governor's Conference on Volunteerism**

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National Service in Nebraska

AmeriCorps
Federal: Corporation for National & Community Service (CNCS)
In Nebraska: ServeNebraska

AmeriCorps*VISTA
Federal: Corporation for National & Community Service (CNCS)
In Nebraska: Nebraska State CNCS Office

Senior Corps (RSVP, Foster Grandparents, Senior Companions)
Federal: Corporation for National & Community Service (CNCS)
In Nebraska: Nebraska State CNCS Office

Learn & Serve K-12
Federal: Corporation for National & Community Service (CNCS)
In Nebraska: Nebraska Department of Education

Learn & Serve – Higher Education
Federal: Corporation for National & Community Service (CNCS)
In Nebraska: Midwest Consortium for Service Learning in Higher Education at UNL
[22+ colleges in 3 states]

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Volunteering in Nebraska

JUST RELEASED: *2010 Volunteering in America Report*
Corporation for National & Community Service

National Service in Nebraska

- 19,000 people participate in national service
- More than 40 national service projects and programs
- CNCS commits $6,100,000+ to Nebraska national service

Volunteer Highlights [based on 2009 data]

- 509,500 volunteers
- 37.4% of residents volunteer – ranking **4th** nationally
- 65.2 million hours of volunteer service
- 47.9 hours per resident – ranking **5th** nationally
- $1.4 billion of volunteer service provided

[at Nebraska rate of $16.43/hr (2008)]

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Nebraska – A National Leader

Rates of Volunteering [based on average of 2007-2009 data]

- **In Top 5** states for rate of volunteerism for 5th straight year ranking 4th with 37.4% rate
- **Omaha in Top 20 Mid-Sized Cities** for 5th straight year with 33.8% rate
- **Older Adults** [ages 65+] ranked **6th** with 36.9% rate
- **Baby Boomers** [born 1946-1964] ranked **4th** with 42.3% rate
- **Young Adults** (ages 16-24) ranked **6th** with 29.9% rate
- **Teenagers** (ages 16-19) ranked **9th** with 36.1% rate
- **Millennials** (born in/after 1982) ranked **3rd** with 36.1% rate

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What Is Going On Nationally?

Serve America Act of 2009

- **Bipartisan support**
- **EXPANDS: AmeriCorps**
  - Goal: Increase from 75,000 to 250,000 members by 2017
  - Indexes Educational Award earned by members to Pell Grants
  - Educational Award may be transferred to child or grandchild
- **NEW: Volunteer Generation Fund** to grow volunteerism
  - $4 million in 1 yr grants (minimum $75,000)
  - To State Commissions
- **NEW: Social Innovation Fund** to invest in great ideas
  - $50 million in 3-5 yr grants (minimum $1 million-$10 million)
  - Public-private partnership with 1:1 cash match

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Serve America Act of 2009 Expands State Service Plan

The Serve America Act of 2009 says the
State Service Plan Must…

- Be developed through **open and public process**
- **Engage** private sector, organizations and public agencies
- **Reach out** to under-represented populations, municipalities and county government
- Include measurable **goals and outcomes**
- Provide **coordination in national service** within the state
- Include plan to **engage people 55+ in service**
- Cover a **three-year period** with annual updates

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National Priorities

The Corporation for National & Community Service identified the following as national areas for priority and emphasis

- **Populations**
  - Youth
  - Persons age 55+
- **Issues**
  - Education & literacy
  - Addressing economic challenges
  - Health and special needs
  - Environment
  - Veterans issues

These issues may – or may not – be priorities in Nebraska & your community

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What Happens After the Listening Tour?

ServeNebraska Commissioners and Staff…

- Compile input & develop summaries for **State Service Plan**
  - From Listening Tour – six cities
  - From Online Survey
- Develop, discuss & finalize a **2010-2012 State Service Plan**
- Submit **State Service Plan** to federal agency [CNCS]
- Publish the **State Service Plan** online at www.serve.nebraska.gov
- Work with local communities, nonprofits, organizations to implement the plan to address community priorities.

WWW.SERVE.NEBRASKA.GOV

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Let's Discuss…

NEEDS

What are the most pressing community needs?

- Greatest needs
- Underserved populations

How do you know?
What information validates the need?

Are these needs different
than those in other parts of the state?

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Let's Discuss…

SOLUTIONS

What is working?
How do you know?

How can your needs be addressed?

Through volunteerism, community and national service?

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Thank You

For sharing your time and thoughts on identifying community needs & solutions.

We look forward to your ongoing partnership.

ServeNebraska
Nebraska Volunteer Service Commission

State Capitol - 6th Floor West | PO Box 98927 | Lincoln, NE 68509-8927

Ph: 402.471.6225 or 800.291.8911 | Fax: 402.471.6286

Send additional ideas or thoughts to: Barbara.Thomas@nebraska.gov

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