

## Chapter 2 – ServeNebraska, Nebraska Volunteer Service Commission

### History & Introduction

In 1994, Governor Ben Nelson signed Executive Order No. 94-5 establishing the Nebraska Commission for National and Community Service, in accordance with the federal National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993. The Commission's name has changed twice since then – to the Nebraska Volunteer Service Commission in 1999 and to ServeNebraska (a new operating name in 2008). The ServeNebraska Commission is composed of up to 25 voting volunteer members appointed by the Governor creating a commission of non-partisan, diverse citizens reflecting Nebraska's unique identity. For a list of State Service Commissions and their contact information, please go to:  
<http://www.americorps.gov/about/contact/statecommission.asp>.

The ServeNebraska Commission is a diverse non-partisan body representing a broad cross-section of community service interests and statewide leadership in Nebraska. Administratively, ServeNebraska is housed within the Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS), which provides in-kind operational support. Funding is provided by Corporation for National and Community Service and the State of Nebraska. ServeNebraska serves as an independent non-partisan commission which assumes responsibility for the distribution and expenditure of funds related to AmeriCorps\*State programs.

### Role

Through the programs of ServeNebraska, Nebraskans invest time, energy and talent to improve lives of others and strengthen their communities. By uniting together and forging new community ties, Nebraskans demonstrate strength of character and a sense of purpose. When Nebraskans participate in service and volunteering, creative solutions can be found to address critical local needs even in difficult and challenging economic times.

ServeNebraska's primary role is to provide resources and leadership to support local initiatives that tackle community needs. ServeNebraska directs effective AmeriCorps programs, disability inclusion initiatives, training opportunities and volunteer service recognition activities to gain a specific set of results that meet pre-determined performance outcomes. ServeNebraska creates grant opportunities; develops collaborative partnerships with agencies, foundations, community organizations and state, local and tribal governments; facilitates sharing of resources that enhance the effectiveness, efficiency and productivity to nonprofits; provides leadership in volunteerism and service; and ensures the quality of member and recipient experiences and continued involvement.

### Mission

Mobilizing Nebraskans to strengthen their communities through collaboration, volunteering, and national service programming.

## Values

The values below shape and guide how the Commission does its work

***Excellence:***

Pursue the highest standards of performance in all endeavors through a spirit of continual improvement

***Responsiveness:***

Creatively explore and embrace dynamic approaches to addressing current and emerging societal challenges

***Inclusiveness:***

Strive to involve and engage interested parties from all sectors of the state

***Collaboration:***

Involve complementary parties in mutually beneficial relationships

***Efficiency:***

Operate in a way which produces the greatest return for the least output of resources

***Integrity:***

Conduct all activities in accord with the highest ethical and moral standards

## Programs

ServeNebraska's work is carried out primarily through the following programs that engage people from communities across Nebraska and of all ages in service and volunteering.

***AmeriCorps*** – Provides opportunities for 200-300 Nebraskans each year to provide intensive results-driven service to meet critical community needs. AmeriCorps members serve in many nonprofit, faith-based and other local and governmental organizations.

***Disability Inclusion*** – Provides inclusion training for national service members and programs, facilitates accommodations to make service opportunities possible for national service members with disabilities and cultivates an environment which increases the interest and engagement of those with disability in community service. The Disability Inclusion program further includes mini-grant opportunities to provide successful outreach to communities that are new to this philosophy.

***Training and Professional Development*** – ServeNebraska's Training Program provides high quality individualized and group learning and professional development to national service program members and others involved in community and national service. The signature events reflecting the Commission's emphasis on AmeriCorps members are an annual Staff Launch, a member Conference and an end-of-year National Service Symposium to highlight reflection on each member's year of service.

***Volunteer Recognition*** – Service awards highlight extraordinary service and volunteerism of Nebraskans from all corners of the state through the quarterly Governor's Points of Light and the annual First Lady's Community Service Awards.

***Let's Build Nebraska*** – Online access to resources, training, webinars, best practices and links that increase the effectiveness, efficiency, and productivity of staff and volunteers working to make the good life in Nebraska even better.

## **InterCorps Council (ICC)**

The Nebraska InterCorps Council is a representative group composed of AmeriCorps members and other national service participants in service in Nebraska. InterCorps Council Members provide leadership in connecting and coordinating programs; increasing the awareness of the impact of National Service; effective outreach, community-wide service projects, civic engagement, promoting leadership skills and an ethic of service; and providing a forum for service members to voice collective opinions and ideas.

### ***Membership***

Members are selected by program leadership of national service initiatives in Nebraska. In selecting ICC members, program leaders should consider interest, and current or potential leadership, creativeness, action orientated, effective communication skills, participation in group discussions and geographic diversity.

### ***Goals***

- Develop the leadership skills of the membership
- Support meaningful and successful service projects and day of service activities
- Increase public awareness of the impact of national service in Nebraska in addressing community needs
- Create a strong voice for service members in Nebraska
- Increase opportunities for collaboration, understanding, and resource sharing between different streams of service
- Provide participant insight in an advisory capacity to ServeNebraska

### ***Responsibilities***

- Serve as ambassadors for the promotion of Nebraska's national service programs
- Participate in monthly (or more frequent) meetings and conference calls
- Act as liaison between the national service program and ServeNebraska -- promoting networking collaborating and sharing resources and information on a regular basis
- Promote her/his national service program with the ICC membership and the public
- Assume a key leadership role in at least one service project for the year
- Conduct at least two outreach presentations on AmeriCorps and national service
- Provide leadership to your National Service program for days of service that may include; Make a Difference Day, MLK Day of Service, Global Youth Service Day, Hunger & Homelessness Awareness Week, and AmeriCorps Week
- Assist with the promotion of inclusion with national service programs and Days of Service Events.
- Enhance the awareness of the impact of national service in Nebraska by collecting photos, stories, video among peers and colleagues
- Provide at least two stories and photos of designated national service program to be included in either the National Service Newsletter or the ServeNebraska e-newsletter
- Utilize networks and contacts – including social media – to enhance understanding and appreciation of national service in Nebraska

- Develop a collaborative relationship with at least one ServeNebraska volunteer Commissioner, sharing the impact of the national service program and equipping the Commissioner to serve as an ambassador
- Assist as mini-grant reviewers to critique applications received by ServeNebraska (MLK day and or GYSD)

### **Requirements**

- Interest and Active Participation
- Two Outreach Presentations;
  - Each InterCorps Council member will be responsible for conducting two community outreach presentations in his/her community. Presentations will be made to increase community awareness of the local AmeriCorps program, its impact and service opportunities, as well as information about other national service programs. ServeNebraska will work with ICC members to identify appropriate organizations and groups for which to present. A general presentation format and training will be provided. Each representative will be responsible for scheduling, planning, and carrying out the presentations, in addition to submitting an outreach presentation report.
- Great Stories/Newsletter Article Submissions
  - Each ICC member is expected to collect and submit at least two articles about his/her program to be featured in either the National Service Newsletter or the ServeNebraska e-newsletter. These articles may promote the program as an opportunity for others to serve their community or highlight a special program event or accomplishment.
- Serving as a Liaison
  - Each ICC member must be active in representing his/her program during ICC meetings, and in return, communicate information at each of his/her regular program meetings. ICC members must copy Program Leaders and Site Supervisors on communications regarding ICC conference calls, meetings, and other events that will require time away from day-to-day program activities.

## Commissioners

ServeNebraska Commissioners are active and engaged in policy guidance, helping to secure resources, promoting civic engagement and reaching out to Nebraskans as ambassadors of volunteerism and service. The primary areas of focus for the Commission Board include the following:

- Governance
- Policy Development
- Setting Direction
  - 5 year Strategic Plan
  - State Service Plan
- Outreach to Public/State Leaders
- Resource Acquisition
- Sustainable Infrastructure
- Community Volunteerism
- AmeriCorps Programming
- Collaborative Partnerships
- Vision/Planning

### 2012-2013 Commission Members

<i>Honorary Chair</i> <b>Sally Ganem</b> , Nebraska's First Lady Lincoln	<i>Commission Chair</i> <b>Jamesena Moore</b> , Retired Volunteer & Community Professional, Bellevue
<i>Commission Vice Chair</i> <b>Lois Wine</b> , Director of Volunteer Services Rose Blumkin Jewish Home, Omaha	<i>Chair, AmeriCorps &amp; National Service Committee</i> <b>Tami Bailey</b> , Grants Coordinator/Administrator City of South Sioux City
<i>Chair, Community Volunteering Committee</i> <b>Julie Nash</b> , President of Nebraska Senior Service Corps Senior Action, Inc., Hastings	<i>Chair, Sustainable Infrastructure Committee</i> <b>Donlynn Rice</b> , Curriculum Instruction Administrator Nebraska Department of Education, Lincoln
<i>Chair, Awards Committee</i> <b>Gerry Osborn</b> , Retired Postmaster, Ainsworth	<b>Lorinda Brown</b> , Independent Writer, Advocate Eight to Great Trainer, Grand Island
<b>Keelan Chapman</b> , Student University of Nebraska Lincoln Lincoln	<b>Nancy Faber</b> , Retired Principal, Omaha South Magnet High School & Adjunct Education Professor, Concordia University, Elkhorn
<b>Janice Fitts</b> , Executive Director Community Action Partnership of Western Nebraska Gering	<b>Tanya Hansen</b> , Attorney-at-Law Leininger, Smith, Johnson, Baack, Placzek & Allen Law Firm, Grand Island
<b>April Kelly</b> , President & Author/Speaker Gratitude Academy, Omaha	<b>Denise Kollath</b> , Executive Director Connect Columbus Volunteer Center, Columbus
<b>Ron Sedlacek</b> , Governmental Attorney Blackwell Sanders, LLP, Lincoln	<b>Carol Speicher</b> , Retired Lincoln
<b>Angela Volovich</b> , NE State Program Director Corporation for National & Community Service Lincoln	<b>Kevin Warneke</b> , Fundraiser The Steier Group Omaha
<b>Rose White</b> , Public Affairs Director AAA Nebraska, Omaha	<b>Sara Woods</b> , Associate Dean, College of Public Affairs University of Nebraska Omaha, Omaha

For additional information about the ServeNebraska Commissioners & Staff, go to [http://www.serve.nebraska.gov/about/about\\_commissioners\\_staff.htm](http://www.serve.nebraska.gov/about/about_commissioners_staff.htm)