

UNIVERSITY OF  
**Nebraska** **Policy Talk**  
Public Policy Center

April 14, 2006

Today's PolicyTalk contains one item:

**1. Nebraska Connects: Mental Health Reform**

Last Friday, NET-Radio (<http://netnebraska.org/radio/>), working with the Public Policy Center in an effort funded by a Sound Partners for Community Health grant ([http://www.soundpartners.org/directory1987/directory\\_show.htm?doc\\_id=245038](http://www.soundpartners.org/directory1987/directory_show.htm?doc_id=245038)), a Benton Foundation and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation initiative, completed its 12-part in-depth series on mental health reform and access to care for Nebraskans in rural areas. Entitled "Nebraska Connects: Mental Health Reform" the series provides an overview of the history of mental health care in Nebraska, including the struggles and successes of rural communities in meeting mental health needs at the local level, as mandated by a Nebraska law enacted in 2004 (LB 1083). Dozens of Nebraskans were interviewed for the series, including mental health consumers, mental health care providers and advocates, elected officials, law enforcement, Health and Human Services Administrators, Native American leaders and Hispanic leaders. Communities represented in the series include Omaha, Hastings, Lincoln, Grand Island, Scottsbluff, Red Cloud, Shelton, Inavale, Macy, Winnebago, Murray, Pender, Salem, Nickerson and Kearney. The "Nebraska Connects: Mental Health Reform" series can be heard in its entirety as a podcast or on-line from [http://mynptv.org/ne\\_connects/index\\_mental\\_health.html](http://mynptv.org/ne_connects/index_mental_health.html). The NET-Radio/Public Policy Center's Sound Partners collaboration is the last effort of the Public Policy Center's NEBHANDS project. NEBHANDS was the acronym for "Nebraskans Expanding Behavioral Health Access through Networking Delivery Systems." The project was a three-year effort that started in October 2002 as one of 21 grants funded through the Compassion Capital Fund, Office of Community Services, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. A guide for organizations and communities interested in mental health, substance abuse, and addiction resources is available at <http://www.nebhands.nebraska.edu/>. Archived information from the NEBHANDS project is available from <http://www.nebhands.nebraska.edu/archievedinfoandresources/index.htm>.

Alan

