

December 2024

UNIVERSITY OF
Nebraska PUBLIC POLICY
CENTER



POLICYTALK

The Latest in Public Policy
Center News and Events

Featured News

Nebraska Strong Recovery Project Helping Those Impacted by April Tornadoes



The University of Nebraska Public Policy Center is working with the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and Region 6 Behavioral Healthcare to help those impacted by severe weather in Nebraska through programs where crisis counselors provide outreach to the affected communities.

DHHS said as the holiday season approaches, feelings of distress after a natural disaster may increase and that anyone that is feeling

alone in those thoughts should reach out. Call Region 6 Behavioral Healthcare Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 402-444-6573 or call/text 988 for help.

Learn more on the [Nebraska Strong Recovery Project Website](#) or see the news coverage at [10/11 News](#), [KETV](#), and [WOWT](#).

Faculty Highlight



Leen-Kiat Soh Training Next-Gen Computer Science Teachers

With a new grant from the National Science Foundation, an interdisciplinary team of University of Nebraska-Lincoln faculty, including University of Nebraska Public Policy Center's faculty fellow Leen-Kiat Soh, aims to address a shortage of computer science teachers at the K-12 level. This team will research best practices and methods for recruiting, training, educating, and engaging undergraduate students becoming teachers. Collaborations and partnerships with community colleges, state institutions, and partners in the local industry will help ensure readiness for various classroom settings and provide ongoing support and education throughout their careers.

[Read The Full Story](#)

Events



Violence Risk Assessment Workshop

Dr. Mario Scalora

Virtual: Via Zoom

February 18, 2025

9:30 AM - 3:00 PM (CT)

This free workshop will enhance and promote statewide clinical expertise in violence risk and threat assessment in Nebraska and help practitioners address risk assessment and management issues in their clinical activity.

**Register
Today**

Center News

We Are Hiring for an Administrative Associate



The University of Nebraska Public Policy Center (NUPPC) is currently seeking **an Administrative Associate** to provide executive assistance and administrative support for the Center Director, Senior Research Director, and Operations Manager. Some of the associate's job tasks include managing communications and calendars, preparing materials for meetings and projects, making travel arrangements, processing reimbursements, and creating/proofing documents.

Applicants will be required to answer two supplemental questions about skills when completing the application. Review of applications will begin **January 6, 2025. Apply today.**

Researchers Speak at National Annual Conference on School Mental Health



On December 6, Drs. Jennifer Meek, NUPPC Senior Research Manager, and Janell Walther, Research Director, presented with Amber Hartsock, AWARE Grant Specialist at the Nebraska Department of Education at the 2024 Annual Conference on Advancing School Mental Health: Promoting Well-being in School in Orlando, FL. The presentation focused on how to address the stigma of mental health in rural communities with school mental health programs. School mental health programs provide students who have mental health concerns with prompt support and treatment in the school building, reducing barriers to care.

Faculty Fellow Discusses Second Warmest Recorded October Since 1895

This year has seen some of the driest and



warmest months on record. Due to the heat and high levels of dryness across the country, 87% of the United States is in dry or drought conditions. Mark Svoboda, director of the National Drought Mitigation Center at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and NUPPC faculty fellow, called the combo of heat and dryness a "double whammy" to ABC News. [Read More.](#)

Great Plains Grassland Conservation Important in Federal Agriculture



Terry Cosby, Natural Resources Conservation Service chief, recently met with Dirac Twidwell, professor at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and NUPPC faculty fellow, to discuss successful conservation efforts. "Most people know that land-use conversion was one of the top drivers of grassland loss last century," Twidwell said. "In recent decades, woody encroachment has emerged as the other primary driver of grassland loss in the Great Plains and actually converts as much grassland every year as row crop conversion." [Read More.](#)

Holiday Closedown at end of December



The NUPPC office will be closed from December 23 through January 2 for the holidays. We will return to normal business hours on January 3.

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