

# POLICY TALK

The Latest in Public Policy Center News and Events



## Featured News

### University of Nebraska-Lincoln and Public Policy Center Focus on Preventing Targeted Violence



Recognizing the signs and getting them reported to people trained to assess threats and avert violence is the focus of work by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's **Targeted Violence Research Team** and the University of Nebraska Public Policy Center (PPC). Dr. Mario Scalora,

director of the PPC and Dr. Denise Bulling, senior research director at the PPC, are both nationally recognized threat assessment experts. Scalora supervises research into threat detection, assessment, and management and works with Bulling and others to translate the findings into training an ever-widening group of people on how to assess and manage threats for the best outcomes. Read more about these efforts in **Nebraska Today**.

# The Nebraska Governance and Technology Center Invests in Policy, Land Use, and Climate Project



The **Nebraska Governance and Technology Center** has announced a \$50,000 investment in existing projects across the University of Nebraska-Lincoln through Supplemental Nebraska Governance and Technology Center Research Awards. One of those projects is "Linking Policy, Land Use Land Cover

Change, and Weather and Climate in Nebraska," led by Rezaul Mahmood, director of Nebraska's **High Plains Regional Climate Center** in the **School of Natural Resources**. Team members include Tarik Abdel-Monem of the University of Nebraska Public Policy Center, and Lilyan Fulginiti and Richard Perrin of UNL's Department of Agricultural Economics. Read more in **Nebraska Today**.

## Center Collaborates on Collective Impact Lincoln's "What Our Neighbors Said" Report



Public Policy Center staff, including senior research managers, Janell Walther and Lisa PytlikZillig; research specialist, Lisa Bowers; and research coordinators, Alyssa Sloane and Khadijah Davis, contributed to **Collective Impact Lincoln's** "What Our Neighbors Said" report. This report, released this month, features important topics and issues collected

through interviews with residents in six high poverty or highly mobile neighborhoods, identified through the **Lincoln Vital Signs** report. These neighborhoods include Belmont, Clinton, Everett, Hartley, Near South, and University Place. Collective Impact Lincoln is a partnership among **Civic Nebraska**, **Nebraska Appleseed**, and the **South of Downtown Community Development Organization**.

Explore more at [www.civicnebraska.org](http://www.civicnebraska.org), or read about the report findings in the **Journal Star**.

## Senior Research Director Speaks About Human Impacts of Disaster

In March, Senior Research Director Denise Bulling spoke during one of Nebraska Investment Finance Authority's "Webinar WedNESdays" focused on long-term emergency management. Her discussion



included the impacts of disaster on the behavioral health of the housing community and highlighting the work that has been accomplished through the **Nebraska Strong Recovery Project** during the 2019 floods and the pandemic. **Watch the webinar.**

**Follow us to see the latest news and events.**



## Spotlight of the Month

### **Suicide Prevention Course Reaches Over 10,000 School Educators and Staff**

The Public Policy Center's management and creation of the "Building a Suicide-Safe School Community" course has resulted in more than 10,500 educators and staff completing the training in school districts throughout Nebraska during the 2020-2021 school year.

Educators and staff can take this course to meet their required suicide prevention and mental health training requirement and it is part of a statewide effort to increase suicide prevention in schools. This course was developed by Dr. Don Belau and the NUPPC's Dr. Denise Bulling, Dr. Kate Speck, and Ryan Lowry-Lee.

This free online interactive training is designed for faculty and staff, introducing concepts that help staff understand what to do if a student is contemplating suicide and what to do to appropriately respond to a suicide using postvention measures. Postvention is an organized response in the aftermath of a suicide.



**Next Time:** The next issue of Policy Talk will include a new spotlight feature about an ongoing project.

## Upcoming Events

### Policy Seminar Series Focuses on Gender-Equitable Recovery and Resilience After COVID-19

The Thomas C. Sorensen Policy Seminar Series will feature Dr. C. Nicole Mason, president of the Institute for Women's Policy Research (IWPR), speaking on "Policies for a Gender-Equitable Recovery and Resilience After COVID-19."



**Date: Tuesday, April 13, 12PM-1PM CST**

*(Free and open to the public via Zoom)*

Following the worst pandemic in modern history, policymakers are debating how to address the deeply unequal impacts and recovery from COVID-19. Women and people of color suffered disproportionate harm from the pandemic, further threatening an inclusive, equitable, and prosperous economy and society. Dr. C. Nicole Mason, president of the Institute for Women's Policy Research (IWPR), will discuss the varied impacts of the pandemic on women and long-term policy needs that will lift and sustain women's well-being, economic stability, and upwards mobility in the United States. More information at [ppc.unl.edu](http://ppc.unl.edu) or register at [go.unl.edu/nmas](http://go.unl.edu/nmas).

This event is co-sponsored by the University of Nebraska Public Policy Center and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Arts and Sciences through the Thomas C. Sorensen Endowment.

**Register  
Today**

### Great Plains Disaster Behavioral Health Conference

The 19th Annual Great Plains Disaster Behavioral Health Conference will again be held virtually. This year, the conference will address resiliency, what it is, and how to promote it for individuals, organizations, and communities.



**Save the Date: July 22-23, 2021**

Virtually held via Zoom

More information coming soon on [disastermh.unl.edu](http://disastermh.unl.edu).



## Center News

### Research Specialist Serves as Reviewer on Suicide Prevention Technical Package Developed by the CDC

Senior Research Specialist Quinn Lewandowski accepted an invitation to serve as an expert reviewer for a suicide prevention technical package developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Quinn was able to provide feedback that will be incorporated to improve the quality of the technical package, which offers communities and states a core set of strategies to achieve and sustain substantial reductions in suicide based on the best available research evidence.



The CDC initially developed *Preventing Suicide: A Technical Package of Policy, Program, and Practices* in 2017. Since then, more research has emerged and new needs have surfaced with COVID-19. Through a cooperative agreement with the CDC, **Prevention Institute** has partnered with **RTI International** and the **Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)** to update the technical package content and develop **modules** that provide a foundation for activities during periods of infrastructure disruption, specifically for government agencies and community-based organizations operating at the state and local levels.

### Husker Speech Debate Team Ranks Sixth Nationally



The **Huskers Speech Debate Team** earned 6th place as a team at the American Forensic Association this month. This is the second highest Husker ranking in 150 years! PPC Undergraduate Research Assistant Cole Shardelow was a semifinalist in the competition for his Impromptu speech. Cole is a philosophy major and works at the Nebraska Attorney General's Office. Clare Frances Kennedy, a communication studies major, was a finalist, earning 4th place in Impromptu and 6th place in Drama.

### Undergraduate Research Assistant Selected for Yeutter Institute Summer Internship

Congratulations to Zachary Cheek, one of our undergraduate research assistants, on being selected by the **Yeutter Institute** for a summer internship focusing on applied



economics. Zack will take part in a research project with the chair of the Agricultural Economics Department at Cargill, where he will be focusing on international trade issues. Zack's past research experience includes his work at the PPC and an independent project through the UCARE program at UNL. He recently spent time interning for Congressman Bacon in Omaha, who is a member of the House

Agriculture Committee.

## Center Teams Up with U.S. Marshals Service on Threat Assessment and Management Research



Center Director Dr. Mario Scalora, Senior Research Manager Janell Walther, and Senior Research Specialist Quinn Lewandowski worked with the U.S. Marshal's Service on a study analyzing harassing and threatening behavior toward judicial officials. The result of this collaboration, an article titled "A Glimpse of Threat Assessment and Management Activity Performed by the United States

Marshals Service," recently appeared in the *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management*. Read the **full article**.

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## Community Resources

### Nebraska Youth Suicide Prevention and the Nebraska Suicide Prevention Lifeline

**Nebraska Youth Suicide Prevention** is working to decrease the suicide rate among young people by sharing resources on their **website**, **Facebook**, **Twitter**, and **Instagram** for people currently dealing with anxiety and worry. During difficult or challenging times, mental health is especially important. **Individuals needing help can contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255**. The lifeline provides 24/7, free, and confidential support for people in distress, prevention, and crisis resources for you or your loved ones, and best practices for professionals.

### Nebraska Rural Response Helpline and Nebraska Family Helpline Provide Help During COVID

The **Nebraska Strong Recovery Project** is working to help those affected by the COVID-19 pandemic by sharing resources on the **Nebraska Strong website**, **Facebook**, and **Twitter**. **Individuals in need of help can contact the Rural Response Hotline at**

**1-800-464-0258** (M-F from 8AM-5PM) or the **Nebraska Family Helpline** at **1-888-866-8660** (24 Hours/Day, 7 Days/Week). The hotlines provide free and confidential support for all Nebraskans experiencing difficulty during the events surrounding COVID-19.



#### **CONTACT US**

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**Our mission is to link policy with research, process & practice.**

We team with policymakers & other stakeholders to actively inform public policy & put knowledge into action.



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