



POLICYTALK

The Latest in Public Policy
Center News and Events

DECEMBER 2021

Featured News



Expanding the Reach of Suicide Prevention with "NE Needs You"

As of late September, some 5 million people were exposed to positive, empowering messages through the Nebraska Needs You campaign via digital, print, TV and radio. More than a dozen agencies and organizations are still collaborating to spread the messages statewide. Calls to the Nebraska Family Helpline spiked 86 percent from the same period the previous year.

"It highlights how something kind of small with multiple partners came together to spread a message of suicide prevention," said Quinn Lewandowski, a senior research specialist with the University of Nebraska Public Policy Center.

Learn More about NE Needs You.

Events

PATHWAYS TO RECOVERY & BUILDING EQUITY

FREE ON ZOOM



**Part 1: Tues, Jan. 18
1 p.m. – 4 p.m. (Central)**

This two-part training will explore the development of disparities related to substance use disorders and mental health, how to build health equity and community engagement, and helpful strategies for engagement, retention, and improving outcomes. **Learn More.**

**Register
Today**



WELL-BEING DURING TRYING TIMES

AIRS ON WORLD



Nebraska Public Media to Air New Connects Program Focusing on Well-Being

This month, the **PPC** partnered with **Nebraska Public Media** focused on support during stressful times and connecting viewers with resources such as the Nebraska Strong Recovery Project in the Connects program called "Well-Being During Trying Times." Panelists include Dominique Saldana, MPA, Region 6 Behavioral Healthcare; Kyle Kinney, LMHP, Program Manager, Nebraska Family Helpline; Sheri Dawson, Director of BH, Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services; and Susan Harris, MLS, Extension Educator, NE Extension. [Learn more.](#)

Thurs., Dec. 30, 7:30 p.m.

Sun., Jan. 2, 12:30 p.m.

The half-hour program "Nebraska Strong: Well-Being During Trying Times." focuses on coping with stress and promoting well-being, as well as where to find helpful resources.

Find Out
More

Partner Highlight

Barbara Bartle Reflects on Leaving Lincoln Community Foundation on a Positive Trajectory



This month, we spoke to Barbara Bartle, President of the Lincoln Community Foundation (LCF). Barbara and LCF have been longtime partners of the PPC, collaborating on Prosper Lincoln and Lincoln Vital Signs to address many of the challenges facing the Lincoln community. When asked about her hopes for the future of LCF, Barbara says, "There has been growth at the Lincoln the Community Foundation. More and more people know about LCF and feel connected and want to help. A talented staff and dedicated

board are in place. We have a great new leader, Alec Gorynski, coming in 2022. We have the energy and commitment to continue to grow and make a difference in our community. Alec has been a grantmaker and involved in housing initiatives in Omaha and Lincoln. LCF is in a really great position to move into this new era."

This month, Barbara is retiring as President of the Lincoln Community Foundation after 12 years of service. **Learn about her contributions to the Lincoln community** or read the full partner highlight at ppc.unl.edu/bartle.

Individuals Making a Collective Impact with Prosper Lincoln



This month, **Lincoln Community Foundation (LCF)** highlights Prosper Lincoln Drivers, individuals whose work centers on efforts to achieve equity in social and economic mobility in our community. In addition to Janell Walther, a senior

research manager at the Public Policy Center, LCF drivers include Anne Brandt, executive director of Lincoln Littles, Nola Derby-Bennett, director of Community Learning Centers at Lincoln Public Schools, Allison Hatch, director of workforce development at the Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development, Wynn Hjermsstad, community development manager with the City of Lincoln, and Shawn Ryba, former executive director of South of Downtown Community Development Organization. These individuals bring their expertise and passion to work together on solving a variety of issues facing our community. **Read More.**

Center News

Center Welcomes New Administrative Staff Member

This fall, we had several new staff members join our team. Our most recent addition is **Jason Shoner**. Previously working with LincOne FCU as a member service representative, he joins the PPC as an administrative associate and will be assisting our staff with our day-to-day operations.

Senators DeBoer and Williams Discuss Nebraska's Redistricting Process at Sorensen Seminar Series

The **Thomas C. Sorensen Policy Seminar Series** continues to support educational activities to help promote discussion of policy

issues among Nebraskans. This month's seminar included a redistricting discussion with Senators Wendy DeBoer and Matt Williams alongside political scientists John Hibbing and Elizabeth Theiss-Morse. The event is a collaboration of the Nebraska College of Arts and Sciences and the University of Nebraska Public Policy Center.

Read more.

High School Competition Focuses on Innovative Ways to Increase Protective Factors or Disrupt Extremism

The **PPC** is partnering with **Arizona State University** and **NCITE** on a recent grant funded by the Department of Homeland Security. College and high school teams will compete to develop ways to increase protective factors or interrupt acts of extremism through the development of mobile apps, social media campaigns, or other innovative approaches. Selected projects can go on to become non-profits or licensed organizations. The PPC and our partners will evaluate the impact of the program on the specific audiences selected by the students as well as the students who participate in the program.

Establishing Executive Protection Standards for Protectors

Center research staff are partnering with the ASIS executive protection group to help establish professional standards for Protectors. **Dr. Denise Bulling** and several of the work group leaders presented an update on development of the standards at the International Protective Security Board's Close Protection Conference in Las Vegas on December 9-10.

Weather Forecasting Using Drones

In collaboration with **Dr. Adam Houston**, professor of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences at UNL, the PPC has been conducting focus groups with National Weather Service personnel to determine how to maximize the usefulness of data and visualizations from the TORUS project for weather forecasting. This work builds on prior work by Dr. Houston and PPC researchers **Drs. Lisa PytlikZillig** and **Janell Walther** investigating the data needs of weather forecasters.

Honorable Mentions

- In November, senior research specialist **Tarik Abdel-Monem** with **Dr. Francisco Muñoz-Arriola** and **Alessandro Amaranto** of the College of Engineering at UNL had their publication, "Common Pool Resource Management: Assessing Water Resources Planning for Hydrologically Connected Surface and Groundwater Systems," included in a recently published book *Socio-Hydrology: The New Paradigm in Resilient Water Management*.
- **Dr. Denise Bulling**, **Dr. Jennifer Farley**, **Megan Allen**, **Liz Gleason**, and **Luisa Del Castillo** recently completed an annual report of the State Opioid Response Grant for the Nebraska

Department of Health and Human Services. The grant project, funded by SAMHSA, provides community prevention, treatment, and recovery services across the state of Nebraska.

- Congratulations to **Alyssa Sloane, Liz Green, and Victoria Stamadianou** on being accepted into Masters programs this year! Alyssa and Liz are studying Public Administration at UNO and Victoria is enrolled in the Quantitative, Qualitative and Psychometric Methods program in Educational Psychology at UNL.
- **Tarik Abdel-Monem's** photograph of school children in an Islamic school in Thailand appears in UNESCO's 2021/22 Global Education Monitoring Report, "Non-state actors in education."
Read the report.

Community Resources

Nebraska Youth Suicide Prevention

Nebraska Youth Suicide Prevention is working to decrease the suicide rate among young people by sharing resources on their website for people currently dealing with anxiety and worry. During difficult or challenging times, mental health is especially important.



Visit Our
Website

Nebraska Strong Recovery Project

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. The hotlines provide free and confidential support for all Nebraskans experiencing difficulty during the events surrounding COVID-19.

Both statewide hotlines will continue to offer support to Nebraskans after the grant supporting the Nebraska Strong Recovery Project ends on December 26.



National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-8255

Free 24/7 confidential support for people in distress, prevention, and crisis resources for you or your loved ones, and best practices for professionals.

Rural Response Hotline 1-800-464-0258 (M-F from 8AM-5PM)

Nebraska Family Helpline 1-888-866-8660 Free 24/7 confidential support for all Nebraskans.

**Visit Our
Website**

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