

# POLICYTALK

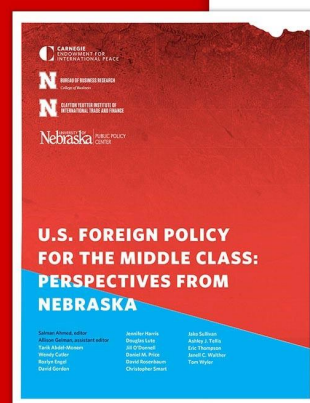
The Latest in Public Policy Center News and Events



## Featured News

### **Carnegie Endowment Report Highlights Nebraskan's Views on Foreign Policy**

Nebraskans in both rural and urban areas view international trade as the aspect of U.S. foreign policy that most affects their own lives and ability to earn a living. Even those who are not directly engaged in agriculture believe international commodity markets are important to the state's economy. Nebraskans also largely believe that immigration is critical to addressing the state's workforce needs. Though the interviews and research were conducted prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the perceptions and concerns expressed are more relevant as Nebraska considers its economic recovery and the impact of the pandemic on trade, immigration, and



other foreign policies. The report "U.S. Foreign Policy for the Middle Class: Perspectives From Nebraska" was developed in partnership with the **Carnegie Endowment for International Peace**, the UNL Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources **Clayton Yeutter Institute of International Trade and Finance**, the **Nebraska Bureau of Business Research** and the **University of Nebraska Public Policy Center**. Hear Senior Fellow Salman Ahmed, of Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, discuss takeaways from the report on the **Trade Matters** podcast. Read more about the report in **Tradevistas**, **Journal Star**, **Nebraska Today**, or see the **full report**.

## Center Works with Department of Education to Provide COOP Training for Schools

This spring, the Public Policy Center created a Continuity of Operations Procedures (COOP) webinar for the **Nebraska Department of Education** as part of the Department of Education Emergency Operations Plan project. The webinar is intended for school safety teams and guides them through the process of developing a COOP for their school or district. A COOP plan allows schools to continue providing essential services even if building structures or staff are unavailable due to a disaster or emergency, such as COVID-19. The webinar was introduced to two Educational Service Units (ESUs) in early June—ESU 5 and 6—which cover portions of southeast Nebraska.



**Lutheran  
Family Services**  
*of Nebraska, Inc.*

## PPC Partners with Lutheran Family Services to Create a Certified Behavioral Health Clinic

During the COVID-19 emergency, the need for mental health services is especially high. Lutheran Family Services (LFS) received a \$2 million grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to expand services at their Health 360 location in Lincoln to make it a **Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic**. The Public Policy Center will assist LFS with screening procedures, data collection and management, and evaluating outcomes for individuals at the clinic. Read more in the **Journal Star**.

## We're Hiring a Research Specialist

The Public Policy Center is accepting applicants for the **Research Specialist** position **until June 22**. Work with our collaborative team on a variety of public policy projects, including those in behavioral health, public participation, and other applied social sciences. The applicant will conduct and facilitate research, coordinate projects and stakeholder involvement processes, design survey instruments, collect and analyze data,



write reports, and present findings that impact state, local, and federal policy. Read more details and **apply today!**



## **Nebraska Strong Recovery Project to Provide Crisis Counseling During COVID**

The **Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services** received funding (\$1.4 M) to provide immediate crisis counseling services throughout all six Nebraska Behavioral Health regions to communities impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic with the

**Nebraska Strong Recovery Project.** The Public Policy Center will work to coordinate crisis counseling programs and information for those affected by the pandemic. During COVID, crisis counselors have distributed signs around their communities thanking essential workers, healthcare workers, and first responders for their efforts. Immediate services will include virtual outreach efforts, with plans to move to in-person services as that option becomes available.

## **PPC Research Specialist Assisting Medical Reserve Corps During COVID Outbreak**

Quinn Lewandowski, a research specialist at the **University of Nebraska Public Policy Center (PPC)**, has been supporting the **Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)** through their response to the COVID-19 outbreak with his work with the **Nebraska Emergency Management Agency.** The MRC is a national network of volunteers, organized locally to improve the health and safety of their communities. MRC volunteers include medical and public health professionals, as well as other community members without healthcare backgrounds.



The six Nebraska MRCs throughout the state have been supporting local public health efforts by: assisting in organizing drives for materials to make masks for those in need, sewing cloth masks, supporting local health departments in contact tracing, providing physiological first aid, delivering strategic national stockpile supplies, setting up drive-thru testing facilities and clinics, and supporting facilities experiencing staffing shortages related to the pandemic.

We at the PPC salute these amazing men and women for their service to their communities and state throughout this time of need!

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



# Spotlight of the Month



## Southeast Nebraska Medical Reserve Corps Receives National Recognition

The **Southeast Nebraska Medical Reserve Corps** (SENMRC) received national recognition for their efforts during and after the 2019 Nebraska flood disaster response. The SENMRC received the **Excellence in Key Priorities Award** on June 2, 2020 during a special MRC Program Recognition Awards Webinar. Volunteers with the SENMRC were quick to assist their neighboring communities by responding to Douglas, Sarpy, and Washington counties to help residents who had been affected by the flooding. They received the honor for developing and enhancing MRC unit programming to build unit capabilities in priority areas, which they demonstrated during and after the 2019 Nebraska Flooding Disaster. University of Nebraska Public Policy Center Research Specialist **Quinn Lewandowski** assisted the MRC and Nebraska Emergency Management Agency in planning the Nebraska volunteer response process.



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

## Upcoming Events

Save the Date

# BUILDING RESILIENCE

LONG-TERM RECOVERY:  
It's everyone's job

18<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL  
Great Plains Disaster  
Behavioral Health  
Conference

Wednesday, July 22, 2020  
Thursday, July 23, 2020

Virtual Conference  
Zoom

For more information go to [disastermh.nebraska.edu](https://disastermh.nebraska.edu)

## Annual Disaster Behavioral Health Conference Offered Online for Free in July

The **18th Annual Great Plains Disaster Behavioral Health Conference** will now be hosted virtually and is **free** for all registered attendees. To best accommodate our attendees, we will host morning sessions on both Wednesday, July 22 and Thursday, July 23. This year's theme focuses on building resilience for long-term recovery after disasters. It will include featured speaker, Jane Cage, talking about "Community Recovery: Lessons Learned from Joplin." Register at [go.unl.edu/dbh2020-register](https://go.unl.edu/dbh2020-register) to attend the conference. Visit [disastermh.nebraska.edu](https://disastermh.nebraska.edu) to learn more.



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## Community Resources

### City of Lincoln COVID-19 Response Fund

In March, Mayor Leirion Gaylor Baird was joined by Barbara Bartle, president of the **Lincoln Community Foundation**, to announce the establishment of the Lincoln COVID-19 Response Fund to rapidly deploy resources to non-profit organizations to assist those individuals and businesses who may be struggling with the economic impact of COVID-19. The fund is hosted by the Lincoln Community Foundation and is led by a coalition that includes the City of Lincoln, philanthropic organizations, and business partners. Learn more or donate at [my.lcf.org/covid19](https://my.lcf.org/covid19).

### University of Nebraska Emergency Fund to Support Students and Employees Impacted by COVID-19

Students, faculty, and staff facing sudden financial hardship related to COVID-19 can seek assistance through a University of Nebraska system emergency fund. Established in 2019 at the University of Nebraska Foundation, the **University of Nebraska Emergency Assistance Fund** was created to help members of the NU community facing financial distress due to unexpected crises, including last year's flooding, other natural disasters, home displacement, food insecurity, or other emergencies. Information on other opportunities to support the university during the COVID-19 crisis is available at [www.nufoundation.org/covid-19](https://www.nufoundation.org/covid-19).

### UNL Student Hardship Fund

The **UNL Student Hardship Fund** supports University of Nebraska-Lincoln students facing sudden hardship due to a crisis such as food insecurity, natural disaster, financial emergency, home displacement, or the COVID-19 pandemic. Visit [nufoundation.org/fund/01152420](https://nufoundation.org/fund/01152420).

### Nebraska Youth Suicide Prevention

**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. The PPC is proud to be an integral part of this collaborative effort to decrease the suicide rates among young people in Nebraska through our outreach and trainings. It is important we do our best to take care of our mental health during this time. **Individuals in need of help can contact The Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255.** It 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.

## SAMHSA Guide to Social Distancing

The **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)** has issued guidelines for taking care of your mental and emotional health during the current COVID-19 outbreak. **This short handout** explains social distancing, quarantine, and isolation; common reactions to these measures; and what you can do if you find yourself needing to implement these precautions.



### CONTACT US

University of Nebraska  
Public Policy Center

215 Centennial Mall South, Suite 401  
Lincoln, NE 68588  
402.472.5678 | [ppc.unl.edu](http://ppc.unl.edu)

**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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