

POLICYTALK

The Latest in Public Policy Center News and Events



Featured News

Nebraska Strong Recovery Project Awarded Additional \$5.3 Million to Help Nebraskans Impacted by COVID



The **Federal Emergency Management Agency**—through an interagency partnership with the **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)** — just awarded \$5,326,327 (on top of an initial grant of \$1.4 million) to the State of Nebraska to help Nebraskans impacted by COVID-19. The PPC, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the

Nebraska Emergency Management Association (NEMA) worked together to facilitate the grant funding for the project. The **Nebraska Strong Recovery Project** (a collaboration between the University of Nebraska Public Policy Center, six State Behavioral Health Regions, NEMA, and the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services) is facilitating the effort, which offers outreach,

crisis counseling services, and resources to Nebraskans. Nebraska Strong is currently printing more than 650,000 pieces of outreach material to distribute to teams of crisis counselors around the state. Learn more on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#), or find more resources on the [Nebraska Strong Recovery Project website](#).

Multi-State Crisis Counseling Program Meeting Led by Senior Research Director

Crisis counselors met virtually for the **Great Plains Multi-State Crisis Counseling Program** (CCP) meeting at the end of August to learn from one another. Arizona, Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, and South Dakota all participated in these talks. The meeting was led by Dr. Denise Bulling, senior research director at the PPC. The CCP teams discussed challenges and strategies for virtual outreach during COVID-19.



Guiding K-12 Schools in Disaster Preparedness

The **University of Nebraska Public Policy Center** is collaborating with the **Nebraska Department of Education** to help Nebraska schools develop emergency operations plans. "The project is two-fold," said Denise Bulling, senior research director with the Public Policy Center and expert in disaster response. "One is to enhance the ability of the Nebraska Department of Education to offer technical assistance with developing these plans, and two is to increase the quality of emergency operations plans within K-12 schools." The project is focused on training educational service units and public schools to take a wholistic approach in planning for emergencies.



Find out more about how the PPC is helping schools prepare for disasters and future emergencies in [Nebraska Today](#).

Follow us to see the latest news and events.



Spotlight of the Month

Nebraska Youth Suicide Prevention Promotes Awareness During Suicide Prevention Month

The **Nebraska Youth Suicide Prevention Project** is working to decrease the suicide rate among Nebraska's youth through trainings, resources, and a variety of social awareness campaigns. During the month of September, which is National Suicide Prevention & Awareness month, the project teamed up with Big Red Resilience for "R U OK" on World Suicide Prevention Day. The "R U OK" initiative emphasizes the importance of asking those around you how they are doing and knowing how to direct them to get help. For World Suicide Prevention Day, the PPC team shared resources on suicide prevention and took part in the "Take 5 to Save Lives" challenge, where individuals take five minutes to learn five steps to prevent suicide. The team will continue the suicide awareness campaign by sharing suicide prevention resources on **Facebook**, **Twitter**, and **Instagram**. This expansive work is supported by funding provided by **SAMHSA** via the **Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Grant**. The University of Nebraska Public Policy Center is managing this program and working with Region V Systems and the Nebraska Department of Education.



Read the full story in **Nebraska Today** to find out more about how the project is working to prevent youth suicide in Nebraska.



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

Upcoming Events

October Thomas C. Sorensen Seminar Series to Focus on U.S. Diplomacy

The Thomas C. Sorensen Seminar Series will feature Ambassador Marc Grossman speaking on "Reinventing U.S. Diplomacy: A Foreign Service for the 21st Century."

Date: Wednesday, October 28, 12PM-1PM CST
(Free and open to the public via Zoom)



Amid growing recognition of a mismatch between the way in which American citizens view their own interests and the way U.S. leaders define the national interest, the search is on for solutions. Ambassador Marc Grossman will discuss what he and fellow former diplomats think should be done to address this challenge through the American Diplomacy Project at Harvard University. Drawing upon his 29-year diplomatic career, which included service as U.S. Ambassador to Turkey, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, and Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, Ambassador Grossman will share his perspective on renewing the

Foreign Service for a new era—and why citizen input is so important.
For more details, visit go.unl.edu/marc-grossman.

*This event is presented by the **University of Nebraska Public Policy Center** and the **Clayton Yeutter Institute of International Trade and Finance at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln** and is part of the Thomas C. Sorensen Policy Seminar Series with support from the **University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Arts & Sciences Thomas C. Sorensen Endowment**.*

**Register
Today**

Nebraska Environmental Trust Public Roundtable Discussion

The Nebraska Environmental Trust (NET) will hold a roundtable meeting on-line via Zoom to allow public input and help inform future funding decisions for surface and groundwater, air quality, municipal waste/recycling, soil management, and habitat. There is a limit of 150 participants for each meeting.



Register Now

Public Meeting Wed., October 14.

Center News

Four New Staff Members Join the Team at the PPC

This summer, four new staff members joined the PPC team. **Tim Menke** and **Matt Luther** joined as Information Technology Specialists in positions shared jointly with the PPC and the Center on Children, Families, and the Law. Before joining us, Tim Menke had worked at the Nebraska Department of Revenue and Matt Luther had previously working remotely for Milestone Technologies in Arizona. In addition, **Jennifer Farley** has joined the PPC as a Research Manager and **Elizabeth Gleason** is our newest Research Specialist. Dr. Farley's work focuses on education, including research and evaluation projects specific to school climate and culture, family engagement, and diverse learners. Elizabeth's work focuses on safety net and child support policy and she has experience as a research analyst at the University of Maryland.



Learn more about our staff and the work they do, including our

newest members, by going to ppc.unl.edu/staff.

We are Hiring a Full-Time Grants Coordinator

The PPC is hiring a full-time Grants Coordinator to work with faculty and staff from multiple disciplines to coordinate proposal submissions and budget development.



Deadline for Applications is October 15.
Apply online at employment.unl.edu

Faculty Fellow Attends Big Ten Academic Leadership Program

Dr. Leen-Kiat Soh is one of six faculty selected by the Executive Vice Chancellor to attend the **Big Ten Academic Leadership Program**. A professor in the department of Computer Science and Engineering at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and a faculty fellow at the Public Policy Center, Soh will attend a series of virtual conferences and on-campus events throughout the academic year to learn about leadership. [Read the full story.](#)



Center Director Speaks at Multinational Conference on Threat Assessment



In September, Dr. Mario Scalora, director of the University of Nebraska Public Policy Center, was invited to speak to the European Network of Public Figures Threat Assessment Agencies. Dr. Scalora gave the keynote address on "Problematic Communication Activity: Risk Factors for Approach." [Learn more about Dr. Scalora's work](#)

Zero Suicide Academy Gives Organizations Tools for Suicide Prevention

On October 1-2, the University of Nebraska Public Policy Center hosted a two-day **Zero Suicide Academy** for 14 teams from health and behavioral health organizations seeking to dramatically reduce suicides among those in their care. The training was an opportunity for organizations to learn about the Zero Suicide framework, receive direction on how to put that framework into effect, and prepare for common hurdles. The Zero Suicide framework uses a systemwide organizational commitment approach to address suicide care in health and Behavioral Health care systems. It represents a significant culture



shift that reduces fragmentation of care and introduces a holistic and comprehensive commitment to patient safety which is fundamental for organizations to move forward in protecting their patients, helping them experience recovery.

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 Nebraska 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 Helplines 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.

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

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.

215 Centennial Mall South, Suite 401
Lincoln, NE 68588
402.472.5678 | ppc.unl.edu



Copyright © 2019. All Rights Reserved.