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Rural Civic Action Program

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Nebraskans for Civic Reform

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Rural Civic Action Program

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Program description

The program connects rural high school students with undergraduate fellows trained in leadership and service learning. Together, the students identify rural community issues and address them through meaningful service learning projects. Nebraskans for Civic Reform (NCR) provides funding and manages program logistics.

Program goals

Through service learning, undergraduate fellows and high school students will:

- Identify and assess community issues.
- Develop leadership skills.
- Promote their capacity to positively impact their communities now and in the future.
- Engage in community issues.

The program also aims to document trends of rural community engagement.

Why partner with us?

Nebraskans for Civic Reform (NCR) and the Agricultural Leadership, Education & Communication department (ALEC) at the University of Nebraska – Lincoln are experts in providing substantive service learning experiences. NCR provides expertise in service learning curriculum and projects that adhere to state education standards. ALEC incorporates service learning each semester. ALEC undergraduate fellows will serve as facilitators for the service learning projects designed by the high school students. NCR will manage partnerships between high schools and the undergraduate fellows.

How does the project connect to the classroom?

There are numerous ways to connect a community based service learning project to existing course or club curriculum. For example, the project could fulfill Nebraska Social Studies Standard 12.1.2 – engaging in meaningful civic participation in community issues – or align with the mission of the Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) group. Teachers will play an important role in encouraging collaboration and student leadership. Teachers will also accommodate 5-7 project meetings with undergraduate fellows (on-site at the high school) each semester.

Project timeline

1. Undergraduate fellows will lead students in critical thinking exercises to identify community issues.
2. Together, students and fellows will develop substantive projects to address identified needs. NCR will assist students identify and partner with community stakeholders.
3. Fellows will mentor students through the coordination and logistics of the project.
4. Fellows will lead reflection activities with students during and after the project.
5. Students will participate in pre- and post-assessments of civic efficacy administered by the fellows.