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ACCOMPLISHMENTS As of March 13, 2000; Nebraska Network 21

Nebraska Network 21

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Publications

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

As of March 13, 2000

Nebraska Network 21 (NN21)

...bringing together education and communities to find creative ways to meet the learning needs of Nebraskans in the 21st century.

This report is not all inclusive, but does contain several exemplars exemplars of accomplishments of Nebraska Network 21 to date. Virtually all of the accomplishments in this report are the result of partnerships and collaboration between and among Nebraska higher education institutions and their constituents. NN21 teams and projects are engaging higher education with the public in new and innovative ways.

Exemplars described in this report are listed under four major themes:

1) *Changing the Campus Culture / Redefining Scholarship and Faculty Rewards*

2) *Partnerships and Collaboration*

3) *Engagement and Public Involvement*

A. New Programs

B. New Curricula

C. New Communities of Learning

4) *Institutional Change*

A. New Policies

B. New Groups and New Voices

C. New Funding

1) Changing the Campus Culture / Redefining Scholarship and Faculty Rewards

The NN21 Scholarship, Evaluation and Rewards Action Team organized ten focus groups with targeted faculty and staff to discuss issues of scholarship, evaluation and rewards. These took place at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL); in Northeast Nebraska including Wayne State College, the Northeast Research and Extension Center, Northeast Community College, Little Priest Tribal College, and Nebraska Indian Community College; and with community members and higher education representatives in Columbus, Nebraska.

The Team published its findings in the booklet, *The Contexts of Scholarship, Evaluation and Rewards*, which includes recommendations on redefining, evaluating, and rewarding academic work. This report was discussed with the Executive Committee of the UNL Academic Senate, and with UNL Deans and Department Heads and Chairs at a workshop sponsored by the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. It has been distributed to all faculty and administrators at the University of Nebraska, Nebraska state colleges, and Nebraska community colleges.

Copies of the report were also sent to other Kellogg-funded projects in the FSPE initiative, and will be made available to any other higher education institutions that express interest. Dialogue about the report's recommendations within departments, colleges, and institutions is extending learning on the topic to others and may result in new policies and procedures

2) Partnerships and Collaboration

Nebraska Network 21 has strengthened partnerships between and among the University of Nebraska (all four campuses), Nebraska's six community colleges and three state colleges. Virtually all of the NN21 accomplishments to date involve partnering and collaboration. Here are just a few examples of successful partnerships:

- An articulation agreement between the community colleges and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln allowing students to transfer credits
- A consortium of all institutions offering agriculture programs coordinating curricular offerings and jointly recruiting students
- The Nebraska Distance Education Catalog, <http://netdb.unl.edu/distance/>, a new Web site containing a listing of all higher education course offerings in Nebraska delivered by distance technology (This site had nearly 12,000 hits between July and November 1999!)

- A newly formed partnership in the Panhandle for solving telecommunications infrastructure problems in sparsely populated rural areas. Partners include leaders from higher education institutions, business/industry, and government. Their work has resulted in legislation currently being debated by Nebraska lawmakers.
- Two colleges at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln that are developing a new joint undergraduate minor in business and restaurant management. This partnership between the College of Business Administration and College of Human Resources and Family Sciences was initiated as a result of linkages made at an NN21 event.

NN21 partners who are actively involved in NN21 Action Teams, Demonstration Projects, and Regional Teams are listed below.

--within the University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources
 College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources
 Cooperative Extension
 College of Architecture
 College of Business Administration
 Teachers College
 College of Arts and Sciences
 College of Fine and Performing Arts
 Division of Continuing Studies
 Academic Senate
 Kellogg Leadership Initiative

--among educational institutions

University of Nebraska campuses
 University of Nebraska-Lincoln
 University of Nebraska at Omaha
 University of Nebraska Medical Center
 University of Nebraska at Kearney
 Community Colleges
 State Colleges
 Little Priest Tribal College
 Nebraska Indian Community College
 Creighton University
 K-12 Schools

--between education and communities

State government
County and local agencies
Business and industry
Communities and individual citizens
Non-profit organizations
Annenberg-funded School at the Center project
Native American tribes
Nebraska LEAD alumni

3) Engagement and Public Involvement

A. New Programs

- “Give Youth a Chance,” a program in Norfolk, Nebraska, for multiethnic youth ages 5 through 14 and their families; collaboratively developed by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and Cooperative Extension, schools, local businesses, and social service agencies
- “I Have Overwhelming Potential,” a mentoring program for at-risk youth at Lincoln High School
- “Nebraska New Directions,” a professional development program for community members and higher education faculty and staff

B. New Curricula

- Just Leaves? Conference for dietitians, nurses and pharmacists provided a variety of views on health care not usually included in the traditional curriculum. Conference materials are now in use in Nutritional Science and Dietetics courses at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and in continuing education classes for registered dietitians.
- Agricultural Sciences Magnet High School in Mead, Nebraska, offering both on-site instruction at Mead and at the nearby University of Nebraska Agricultural Research and Development Center. Courses are also offered by distance delivery. Partners include Mead Public Schools, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Nebraska Department of Education, and Omaha Public Schools.
- Food Systems Inventory, <http://www.unl.edu/NN21/fsi/fsi.html>, for use in schools and their communities. The inventory was piloted in Albion and included in Nebraska Agricultural Education Curriculum Framework and Content

Standards, developed with NN21 support.

- Lesson plans and teacher training in biotechnology education for K-12 teachers in six Nebraska counties and one Educational Service Unit; Web site forum for K-12 teachers involved in developing biotechnology units
- Videotapes, interactive Web sites, and visits by artists from diverse backgrounds in Artist Diversity program in seven high schools across the state; purpose is to enhance multicultural education
- A community-based Web publishing project in two Nebraska communities (Henderson and Taylor) linking K-12 students and teachers with community members and focusing on economics education
- Four-week Rural Alternatives Course offered by distance technology for farmers/ranchers who want to remain on the farm or ranch by starting a sideline business to generate additional income
- Learning Our Story Demonstration Project, a summer learning experience for 32 diverse children from Lincoln. The program culminated with a 1,000-mile trip across Nebraska during which the children learned about Nebraska history and natural science, improved their reading and writing skills, and interacted with children and adults in other parts of the state.
- Part-time/Beginning Farmers: What do they have to say?—booklet produced as a result of interviews and Web-site discussions among farmers about their educational needs

C. New Communities of Learning

- “Conversations in Collaborative Communities” workshop for Nebraska youth and adult leaders. A foundation was laid for regional youth networks that will collaborate with their adult counterparts on addressing economic development issues.
- “Conversational Skills for Collaborative Action” workshop for 85 community and education leaders from all regions of Nebraska. Participants identified potential collaborative projects, and three groups received seed grants from NN21. Their purposes are 1) to develop a statewide youth network, 2) to determine technology infrastructure needs in Nebraska’s Panhandle, and 3) to engage diverse communities in conversations around food and story telling to enhance cultural understanding.
- Workshops on collaborative leadership with Bill Drath, research scientist at the Center for Creative Leadership in Greensboro, North Carolina (co-sponsored by

NN21 and Kellogg Leadership Initiative at UNL)

- Conference for over 150 distance learning providers in Nebraska
- Nebraska's Preferred Future conference sponsored by NN21 in partnership with Nebraska Ag Relations Council, Nebraska Department of Economic Development, Nebraska Development Network, Nebraska Rural Development Commission, UNL Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Nebraska LEAD Alumni Association, and Nebraska Department of Agriculture
- Workshop on diversity for university and community members
- Workshop on teaching via television for post-secondary instructors in Nebraska. "Distance Learning Programs at American Universities" an article written by a workshop participant, was accepted for publication by Russian Language Abroad, a journal of the International Association of Teachers of Russian Language and Literature in Moscow.
- Seminars and meetings with the Rector and Vice Rector of EARTH College in Costa Rica, NN21 participants, and others; co-sponsored by NN21 and other units at UNL
- NN21 Chautauqua to share learning and reconnect all NN21 participants, especially external stakeholders who were involved in the NN21 Visioning Phase. New networking and collaboration emerged.
- Two statewide summits on Reinventing Agriculture and Natural Resources Education resulting in a stakeholder committee and new Governor's Task Force
- Two statewide symposia on Food Systems for 2020 for stakeholders and higher education faculty to explore future scenarios and the role of the land-grant university
- Meals using locally grown food to stimulate conversations about sustainability
- World Food Day events on both campuses of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to engage faculty, staff and students and to increase awareness of global food issues
- Just Leaves? Conference on herbs as dietary supplements and medicine helped develop links among dietitians, nurses, pharmacists and others interested in using herbs and herbal supplements. (Continuing education credits and videotapes of the conference presenters were made available to conference participants.)
- Communities of Learning videotape and discussion guide for use by communities
- Nebraska Distance Education Catalog
<http://netdb.unl.edu/distance/>
- Interactive Web site for over 400 Nebraska LEAD Alumni
- NN21 Web site

<http://www.unl.edu/nn21/>

- Dedication tabloid and invitations, brochures, and two tabloids with course offerings and class schedules for new Lifelong Learning Center in Norfolk made citizens aware of the Center's services and offerings

4) Institutional Change

A. New Policies

- Nebraska lawmakers are debating legislation that proposes ways to make telecommunication services more affordable in sparsely-populated rural areas. The legislation is a result of discussions by nearly 100 business, education, government and health care leaders who came together at the request of NN21's Telecommunications Partnership Regional Team. Five state senators from western Nebraska joined representatives from the Public Service Commission, Chadron State College, Western Nebraska Community College, University of Nebraska, and the Nebraska Department of Economic Development to discuss gaps, needs and possible solutions.
- Five white papers were commissioned by the NN21 Distance Education Action Team and presented at a statewide conference. The White Papers are available in full on the NN21 web site at <http://www.unl.edu/NN21/wpapers.html>. An executive summary of the White Papers, *Looking to the Future...Distance Education Issues in Nebraska: A summary of White Papers commissioned by the NN21 Distance Education/Outreach Action Team*, is currently being used to stimulate dialogue with policy makers and others at the local, state, and national level.
- Over 1800 Nebraskans were surveyed to determine their educational needs, access to technology, and perceptions of higher education institutions in Nebraska. The report, *Nebraskans' Educational Needs, Access to Technology and Perceptions of the University of Nebraska*, <http://www.unl.edu/NN21/baseline.html>, has been shared with Nebraska legislators, higher education boards, Nebraska Department of Education, various administrative councils, and other policy makers to inform decision making.
- The NN21 Food Systems in 2020 Action Team convened stakeholders and higher education faculty to explore future scenarios. A report summarizing priorities identified by external stakeholders for the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in addressing research and education needs for the food system of 2020 is available at <http://www.unl.edu/NN21/unlpriorities.html>. The report has been submitted to the Vice Chancellor for the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Institute of

Agriculture and Natural Resources. New policies may emerge.

- A consortium of all Nebraska higher education institutions offering programs in agriculture is now recruiting students as a single entity rather than competing with one another. The consortium is also coordinating curricular offerings.

B. New Groups and New Voices

- Governor Johanns has established a state Task Force on Agriculture and Natural Resources Education, http://www.unl.edu/aglec_govtfagnr/. Its goal is to integrate agricultural literacy into the lives of all citizens and to stimulate the preparation of a more diverse, competitive, and productive workforce for food and natural resource systems. The Task Force was the result of work done by the NN21 Visionary Food Systems Curricula Action Team and its external stakeholder group, the Steering Committee for Reinventing Agriculture and Natural Resources Education.
- A student in the Agribusiness MBA program at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln participated in the Governor's Trade Mission to China in 1999. This is the first time a student was included as a member of the group, and long-term plans are to include an MBA student in future delegations and to integrate the experience into the MBA curriculum.
- The Nebraska Women of Color Network has been re-established with support from NN21.
- Three women of color have been named to University of Nebraska President's Advisory Council.

C. New Funding Leveraged

Enormous contributions of time on the part of hundreds of individuals resulted in the many successes reported here. It is estimated that NN21 in-kind and cash contributions have already exceeded a one-to-one match of W.K. Kellogg Foundation dollars invested in this initiative. That means the initial \$1.5 million grant has been matched to this point by another \$1.5 million due to the dedication and commitment of hundreds of Nebraskans.

A few of the new grants and contributions awarded to NN21 teams and projects are described below.

- Grants totaling \$27,650 and in-kind contributions of \$500 for the Nebraska Development Youth Network Regional Team's activities

- Grant of \$9,500 from Nebraska Department of Education to support Artist Diversity program in rural Nebraska high schools
- Multiple sources of funding, including support from the University of Nebraska at Kearney, to continue annual conferences of Nebraska Women of Color Network (\$2,600 per year)
- Support of \$3,200 in volunteer time from the Junior League of Lincoln to continue the “I Have Overwhelming Potential” mentoring program for at-risk high school students initiated as an NN21 Demonstration Project
- Grant of \$3,000 from the Nebraska AgRelations Council, and \$6,000 in-kind contribution of volunteer time, to Nebraska’s Preferred Future Action Team activities
- USDA Grant of \$100,000 to meet the learning needs of beginning and part-time farmers
- Supplemental funds totaling \$10,000 to conduct survey of 1,827 Nebraskans. Those contributing in addition to NN21: UNL Cooperative Extension and IANR Communications and Information Technology, Nebraska Public Power District, Central Community College, Northeast Community College, Nebraska State College Association, and Nebraska Information Network (The survey, Nebraskans’ Educational Needs, Access to Technology and Perceptions of the University of Nebraska, provides baseline data for NN21 and useful information for policy makers.) Contribution of \$6,000 from Annenberg-funded School at the Center Project, based in Teachers College at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, to support the work of the NN21 Action Team for Sustainable Communities
- Gifts of \$1,359 from local business and private contributors, and \$10,121 in in-kind contributions of volunteer time for the Learning Our Story Demonstration Project

Respectfully submitted by:

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