


Spring 2008

# Connected to the Community

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# Connected to the Community

Linda Mannering  
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*University of Nebraska at Omaha  
Strategic Advance, Spring 2008*

# **UNO: Connected to the Community**

**Connected → Engaged**

**=**

**Academic Excellence**

# Connected → Engaged

- *Community service*
- *Civic engagement*
- *Professional Preparation*
- *Research*
- *Service-learning*



# Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching

## *Elective Classification*

December , 2006

# Carnegie Classification - UNO

## Elective Classification:

- *Curricular Engagement*
- *Outreach & Partnership*

## CARNEGIE DEFINITION

*Community Engagement [is]...the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity.*

# Carnegie Community-Engaged Institutions

## 1. CURRICULAR ENGAGEMENT

Curricular where teaching, learning and scholarship engage faculty, students, and community in collaboration.

## 2. OUTREACH & PARTNERSHIP

Outreach focuses on the application of institutional resources for community use.

Partnerships are collaborative interactions for exchange, exploration, and application of knowledge, information, and resources.



# UNO is well Positioned

*Carnegie Classification*

*Campus Compact*

*President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll*

*Coalition for Urban and Metropolitan Universities*

*Midwest Consortium for Service Learning*

*Faculty grant-funded research, presentations, publications*

*\$1.7m grants direct or indirect impact on the Omaha metro [FY06]*

*Nationally ranked programs*

*40+ UNO college organizations - advance community engagement*

*Invited to participate in national projects*

# Omaha Metro

*Engagement is our heritage, a thriving tradition and our **future***

Omaha is 4th among Top 10 Cities in U.S.

- The Top 10 Cities have:
  - *a high level of community attachment*
  - *higher homeownership rates*
  - *higher volunteer rates*

*Volunteer rates increase as level of education increases.*

US Census Bureau, Bureau of Labor Statistics Current Population Survey.

# Volunteering in America: 2007 Rankings

## TOP 10 CITIES BY VOLUNTEER RATE

* Minneapolis, MN	40.5%
Salt Lake City, UT	38.4%
Austin, TX	38.1%
* Omaha, NE	37.8%
Seattle, WA	36.3%
* Portland, OR	35.8%
Kansas City, MO	34.9%
Milwaukee, WI	34.4%
Charlotte, NC	34.3%
Tulsa, OK	33.7%

\* Cities with Carnegie Classified Community-Engaged Campuses

- Corporation for National and Community Service

Forbes.com

Omaha's volunteer rate mirrors the statistics for Nebraska as a whole--nearly 40% of its citizens do some type of organized volunteer work each year.

In Omaha's case, this means that approximately 224,000 people in the greater metro area volunteer annually.

The most popular type of activity here is fund-raising.

What it means to be a good citizen in America and the world today is very much in flux – in some circles, there is a sense that American civic life is in decline.

-- Stephanie Sanford, Deputy Director Education, Gates Foundation,

How do we prepare citizens for the future?

## Service Learning is Active Learning

- Community service is correlated with higher scores on critical thinking, perspective taking, complex thinking, & self-confidence. *The American Freshman: (CIRP)*
- Service-learning courses should be specifically designed to assist students in making connections between the service experience and the academic material. *(HERI, 2000)*

What makes partnerships work?

## Hope Skate

### Building Employment through Service-Learning

I know now that I can help those who are poverty stricken and don't have opportunities that I have had. I now know there are more ways to help than to just donate money.

The further we advanced into the project, the less I worried about a grade and the more I worried about creating a result. I have never in my entire educational "career" felt anywhere near that level of pride in what I was doing.

*-Business Students*

## Be Authentic



## Hope Skate – UNO Students



## Hope Skate

The worst thing about this class was not having any idea what we were doing at times. I am not really used to that and it was hard to get used to the real world type of atmosphere that this class had.

The best thing about this class was going off-site and allowing us to work with a real business. When we finished we actually felt like we did something.

*- Business Students*

**Build capability**



# Teaching Computer Basics in the Douglas County Department of Corrections



## Teaching Computer Basics in the Douglas County Department of Corrections

UNO students are prepared in advance to work with individuals from different ethnic, socio-economic and cultural backgrounds.

Inmates have little or no training in using a computer.

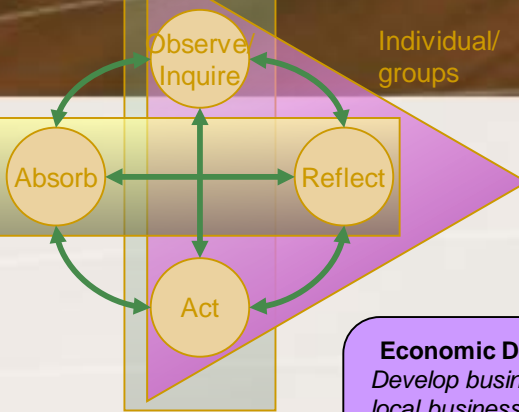
A UNO student tutors one or two inmates during a class.

Classes meet twice a week.

Students learn the principles and practices of IT for development and apply them in partnerships with micro-businesses in Omaha.



classroom



Individual/  
groups

Software evaluation Systems integration

**Economic Development**  
Develop business plans for local businesses that enable funding, innovations and sourcing of materials. IT implementation adds value

**Social Development**  
Learn to communicate IT in very simple terms Explain how clients can make informed choices about IT

A service learning course emphasizes learning through service, reflection, and teamwork.

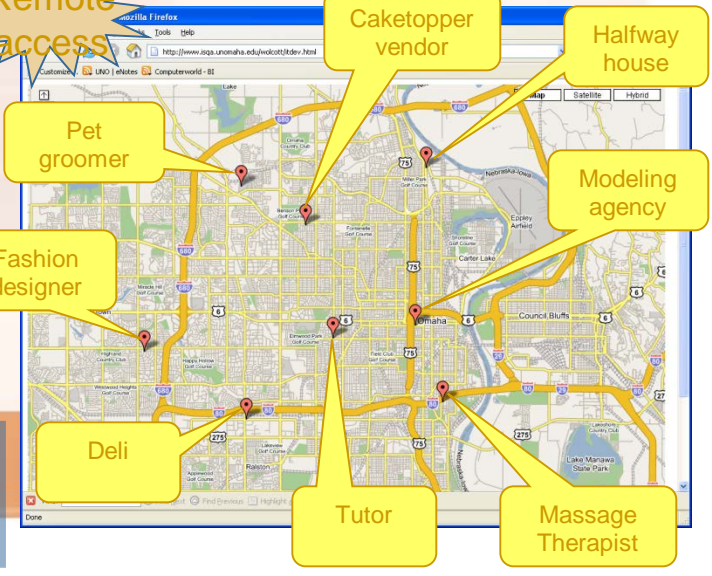
Throughout Omaha, students partner with micro-businesses that have received "Techquity Grants" from eBay Foundation



Technology planning Application integration POS systems

Multimedia presentations Remote access

**Human Development**  
Engage in local community. Develop information literacy skills for the community Build relationships with local entrepreneurs



Web development Search engine visibility



Dr. Sajda Qureshi  
Dr. Peter Wolcott

In this diverse world, we need to achieve a comfort level with moving in different cultures -- and be able to communicate in ways that are not hurtful.

People in the community are perfectly willing to be sensitive teachers to our students -- we must be in their communities to be taught.

UNO students get the idea.

When students say "I used to think...." then they are taking ownership of a deep stereotype – and the new experience is challenging their old ways of thinking.

**Build Cultural Competency**

## Books and Barks





# Looking for a Community Partner?

Community partner wish lists of potential service-learning projects are found at the UNO Service Learning website.

146 community partners –

*Limitless possibilities*



<http://www.unomaha.edu/servicelearning/commpartners.php>

Dancing Classroom Scholarship Program funded by the  
Sherwood Foundation in collaboration with  
The ARTery & UNO's The Moving Company

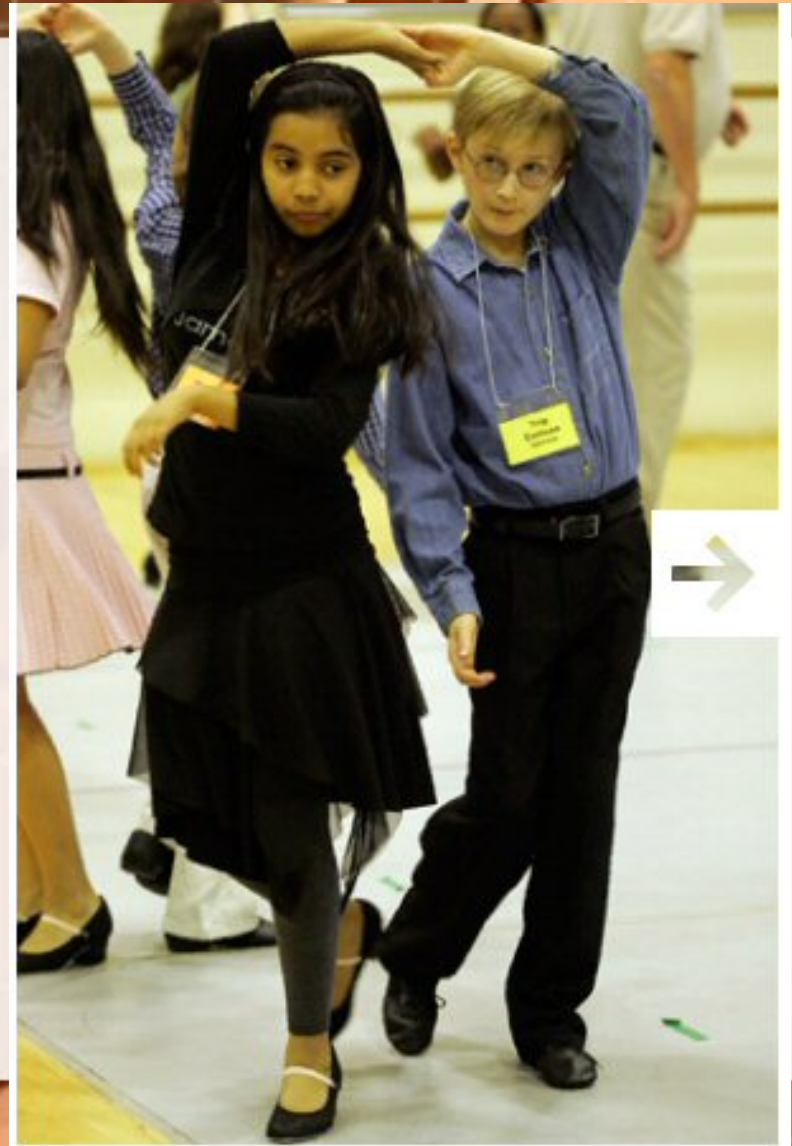


Photo by Tim Fitzgerald

UNIVERSITY OF  
**Nebraska**  
Omaha

# Dancing Classroom Scholarship Program

Photo by Tim Fitzgerald



# Civic Participation/Community Service

## Seven Days of Service – El Museo Latino



UNIVERSITY OF  
**Nebraska**  
Omaha

Photo by Tim Fitzgerald



a  
Omaha

**“Let Us Build The World By Building One Another”  
--Teilhard de Chardin**

# Community Service Rake-a-thon Women's Soccer Team



UNIVERSITY OF  
**Nebraska**  
Omaha

Photo by Tim Fitzgerald

# Civic Participation

## Community Engagement of Minority Elderly through Intergenerational Transfer of Culture

UNO students help community organizations build or strengthen relationships of elders with youth in their communities.

The Spring 2008 project is to carry out pilot demonstrations to lay the groundwork for successful engagement of elders as teachers and guides for youngsters learning about their own culture.

Funding: UNO Mini-grant  
Midwest Consortium for Service-Learning

# Intergenerational Transfer of Culture





# Civic Participation

## **Newspapers in Curricula**

*The New York Times*    *The Omaha World Herald*    *USA Today*

Core group of faculty promoting newspaper-based curricula

Patricia Carlson, Social Work

Christina Dando, Geography and Geology

Claudia Garcia, Foreign Languages and Literature

Dennis Hoffman, Criminal Justice

Jerilyn Hynes Kamm, Communication

Teresa Lamsam, Communication

Larry Menyweather-Woods, Black Studies

Saundra Wetig, Teacher Education

**Funding for the papers is provided by student fees**

# Civic Participation

## Deliberative Polling Initiative

UNO is one of 15 institutions to participate in the AASCU Deliberative Polling Initiative

March, 2008 Event: to increase campus understanding and have an informed opinion about a significant public policy issue

**The Issue: A Deliberative Poll of UNO's Undergraduates Concerning Higher Education**

# Faculty Mentoring Student Research

## Ecology Class Experiment at Allwine Prairie Preserve



# Faculty Mentoring Student Research

## Controlled burn at Allwine Prairie Preserve



# Faculty Mentoring Student Research

## National Science Foundation Project – Isolating Genes





**A Snapshot View of Omaha's  
Trail Use**

***(On a blustery Saturday morning.)  
Neil Jones Master of Arts Candidate  
Recreation and Leisure Studies  
Advised by Dr. Donald Greer***

# Employer Perspective

One of our defining principles is having a passion for our community. From the beginning, First National Bank has dedicated itself to our community – after all, when the community thrives, so does its bank.

We are pleased to partner with the University of Nebraska at Omaha and continue to receive well-prepared graduates from the University.

-Liz Cook, College Relations & Recruiting Coordinator,  
First National Bank

Engagement is our heritage,  
a thriving tradition

and our *future*