

# Notes from NCIP

March 2009

Nebraska Community Improvement Program

## Conference Results

This year, NCIP joined with the Partnership for Rural Nebraska To host the 1st Annual Governor's Conference on Rural Development with 350 people attending the day long workshops. Speakers presented information on the theme of "Renewable Nebraska". More than 240 community volunteers and leaders attended the 45th Annual NCIP Awards Banquet in Kearney later that night. Communities were praised for good work in promoting and encouraging economic and community development.

In 2008, more than 90 completed projects and programs were submitted for award recognition, and volunteers contributed more than 118,000 hours of in-kind services toward these projects. Volunteer service, when multiplied by an average \$11 per hour wage, totals more than \$1.3 million of investment in Nebraska.

NCIP, a program of the Nebraska Department of Economic Development is sponsored by the following investor-owned utilities: Northern Natural Gas, Glenwood Telephone, Great Plains Communications Inc., SourceGas, North-Western Public Service, and Aquila. These sponsors help sup-

port the program year-round and provided plaques and cash prizes for the following 2008 NCIP award winners announced by the Governor:

Farnam claimed the **Otto Hoiberg** top award. Once again the tenacity of a small community shines through as it works hard to grow and develop. People of all ages are involved in Farnam and the community works to make newcomers welcome at the annual Welcome to Farnam Banquet. According to judges, Farnam was a model community for NCIP as it worked from the planning process to implementation to project evaluation.

The **Founders Award**, which recognizes an out-standing inter-governmental project in Nebraska, went to the School Districts of Laurel-Concord, Newcastle, Coleridge, and Wynot for their Innovation: School and Community Planning. The communities were honored for their collaboration in supplying the area with clean drinking water.

The **Good Neighbor Award** was presented to Eustis and Farnam. When a flood hit the area, several buildings were threatened. Residents of the communities helped

each other to pile sandbags and prevent water damage to the structures.

The **Marilyn Ristine Leadership Award** went to **Kathy Worrell of Ainsworth**. Kathy has been involved with NCIP since 1991. Sid Salzman, former Mayor of Ainsworth nicknamed her "Mrs. NCIP Ainsworth" because of her many years of involvement and the many awards given to the community under her leadership.

The **YLOCS Award** is given to youth who demonstrate strong leadership skills and an active involvement in volunteering throughout their communities. This year, awards were given to Kevin Ripp of Pleasanton, Christina Rice of Ravenna, and Neil DeVorss of Nebraska City.

For a full listing of award winners visit our website at [www.neded.org](http://www.neded.org).



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### Community Development Week 2009

Community Development Week provides the opportunity for states, localities, elected officials and the public to understand and recognize the benefits to the Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) program. CDBG funds continue to be cut. In FY 2001, the program received \$4.406 billion in formula funding. In FY 2006, the amount has been reduced to \$3.71 billion which is where it remains. To prepare for the week we challenge you to ask yourself the following questions:

When was the last time you briefed your local elected officials, community groups, banks and businesses on CDBG activities in your community?

When was the last time an article on CDBG appeared in your newspaper?

When was the last time you spoke to a member of your Congressional delegation about CDBG?

Community Development Week is April 12-18, 2009. Again this year, Governor Heineman will host a proclamation signing and announce the 2009 Showcase Community.

Communities are encouraged to submit applications for the 2009 Showcase Community Award. The judging criteria looks for communities that have demonstrated exceptional capacity in the last five to ten years to identify community development goals and strategies, combine local, state, and federal resources to achieve those goals, and accomplishment of major projects with positive impacts on the community.

Nomination forms are available online at: <http://www.neded.org/content/view/39/160/>.

For more information contact Sara Watson at 402-471-4168 or email [ded.ncip2@nebraska.gov](mailto:ded.ncip2@nebraska.gov).

### NCIP Important Dates

**March/April 2009:** NCIP Award Nomination Workshops

**Apr. 12-18, 2009:** CD Week

**June 1, 2009:** Submission Deadline

- NCIP Intent to Enter Form
- Government Resolutions
- Sustaining NCIP Community Form

**Sept. 2, 2009:** Submission Deadline

- Special Project Award Nominations
- Governor's Community Spirit Award Nominations
- Founders Award Nominations

**Sept. 4, 2009:** Submission Deadline

- Marilyn Ristine Leadership Award Nominations
- YLOCS Award Nominations
- Good Neighbor Award Nominations

**Sept. 2009:** Special Award Nominations Judged

**Oct. 5-9, or Oct. 12-16, 2009:** Governor's Community Spirit Award Site Visits

**Nov. 6, 2009:** Governor's Conference on Rural Development/ NCIP Annual Recognition Banquet

### -Alliance, Nebraska-

Alliance swept through the awards table at the NCIP Banquet this year, winning two special project awards, an honorable mention, and top overall community for Class III.

It had been a busy year for the residents of Alliance. In 2002, President George W. Bush challenged all Americans “to dedicate at least 4,000 hours—or two years—to service over the course of their lives.” Alliance’s RSVP group set out to recognize individuals who had volunteered more than 4,000 hours since 2002. Through the Volunteer Reporter computer program, they tracked each volunteer’s hours of service.



Five local citizens were nominated and awarded a national Lifetime Presidential Volunteer and Service Award at the 35th Annual Awards and Recognition Banquet. This project earned Alliance first place in

the Volunteer and Leadership Development category.

Residents of Alliance and surrounding communities can economically assess their health at the Box Butte County Health Fair. Over the years, it has grown to be the largest health fair in the Panhandle with more than 50 participants. The health fair provides educational information, and a number of health screenings that are available for free or a nominal fee. The health fair is provided on a strictly volunteer basis and serves an estimated 3,000-4,000 people during the one-day event. Alliance’s outstanding work with the Box

Butte County Health Fair earned the community first place in the Business Assistance and Development category.

Last year, in conjunction with the summer reading program, children were encouraged to meet goals of reading books and writing reports as part of the “Read for a Ride” program. “Read for a Ride” set goals for each age range

over a six-week period. Once the goals were met, the children entered into a drawing



for a free wristband for the annual Heritage Days Carnival, enabling them to a night of unlimited rides. A total of \$5,055 donations from local Chamber members paid not only for last year’s program, but will cover costs for this year too. “Read for a Ride” received honorable mention in the Community Services category.

Alliance has continued to astound NCIP with its hard work, dedication, and volunteerism. We look forward to hearing about more successes in the community! Keep up the good work Alliance!

For more information, contact Pam McDonald at (308) 762-4357 ext 3425.