

# People, Programs and Points of Excellence (P<sup>3</sup>E)

## Report for October 11, 2024

The People, Programs and Points of Excellence (P3E) is a biweekly update from across all four campuses of the University of Nebraska System leaders that focuses on the best work happening across the University of Nebraska and allows us to recognize and lift up the outstanding efforts of our faculty, staff and students.

### **University of Nebraska at Kearney**

#### **1. Regional Engagement Center at UNK strengthens ties between university and rural Nebraska**

The University of Nebraska at Kearney (UNK) celebrated the grand opening of the new Regional Engagement Center, a 52,000-square-foot building in University Village. The center, developed in partnership with Woodbury Corporation, serves as a hub for collaboration between UNK, private businesses, and community organizations. The facility will enhance the university's academic mission and workforce development initiatives, benefiting Kearney and rural Nebraska. The building includes flexible meeting spaces, supports public-private partnerships, and houses key university staff, including the UNK Alumni Association and Nebraska Extension.

**Related Media Item:** <https://unknews.unk.edu/2024/10/03/from-dream-to-reality-regional-engagement-center-will-strengthen-unk-rural-nebraska/>

#### **2. University Beef: NU program elevates farm-to-table with student-raised and processed beef**

The University of Nebraska at Kearney (UNK), in collaboration with the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture (NCTA) and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL), has launched the University Beef program. This innovative initiative involves students in the complete beef production process, from raising cattle to processing and serving the meat in UNK dining services. The program provides hands-on learning for students while delivering high-quality, locally raised beef to the campus community.

**Related Media Items:**

- <https://unknews.unk.edu/2024/10/02/university-beef-nu-program-takes-farm-to-table-to-a-new-level/>
  - <https://nebraska.tv/news/local/university-of-nebraska-system-launches-farm-to-table-program>
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## **University of Nebraska–Lincoln**

### **1. Inaugural Cohort Named to Nebraska Entrepreneurship Accelerator**

The Center for Entrepreneurship at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln has selected 23 student entrepreneurs for the inaugural cohort of the Nebraska Entrepreneurship Accelerator. The accelerator is tailored to undergraduate students, providing access to scholarships, exclusive resources, and structured peer groups. Students can work with local entrepreneurs and participate in workshops and programs to receive assistance and feedback on prototypes. They also can learn about funding options, as well as how to establish legal entities, develop market strategies, source talent and plan for expansion.

#### **Related Media Items:**

- **Nebraska Today:** <https://news.unl.edu/article/ferrer-moya-looks-to-community-impact-through-entrepreneurship>
- **Center for Entrepreneurship:** <https://business.unl.edu/academic-programs/center-for-entrepreneurship/>
- **Nebraska Entrepreneurship Accelerator:** <https://business.unl.edu/academic-programs/center-for-entrepreneurship/student-involvement/entrepreneurship-accelerator/>

### **2. Nebraska ROTC Cadets Soar in Guiding Memorial Stadium Flyovers**

Each home football game, UNL Air Force ROTC cadets are stationed atop Memorial Stadium, radios and time sheets in hand, guiding pilots in for celebrated military flyovers. The work is helping Nebraska students build leadership skills and shape their military careers before graduation. The project is led by Cadet Elena Burgwald, a junior criminology and criminal justice major from Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and Mason Beck, a sophomore pre-health student from Lincoln.

**Related Media Item:** <https://go.unl.edu/qtvd>

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## **University of Nebraska Medical Center**

### **1. College of Nursing Ranked in Top 20**

The UNMC College of Nursing's Bachelor of Science in Nursing program placed in the top 20 in the latest U.S. News and World Report rankings for best undergraduate nursing program. The College of Nursing tied for 19th out of 686 schools as part of the 2024 Best Colleges Report. UNMC tied with the University of Arizona, University of Colorado Denver, University of Florida, University of Kentucky, University of Minnesota-Twin Cities and University of San Francisco. Creighton University tied for 26th.

**Related Media Item:** <https://www.unmc.edu/newsroom/2024/10/08/unmc-college-of-nursing-ranks-19th-among-bsn-programs/>

## 2. EDGE District Announced

A district that seeks to cultivate collaboration, innovation and economic development just west of UNMC in Omaha has a new name – EDGE District. The district will become a dynamic hub for health-focused scientific discovery, entrepreneurship and commercialization, some of the key items needed to ensure the state of Nebraska remains competitive on the national stage. It also will become a premier destination within the city of Omaha – a place where people want to work, live and enjoy vibrant entertainment.

**Related Media Item:** <https://www.unmc.edu/newsroom/2024/10/10/edge-district-is-new-name-of-unmc-saddle-creek-development/>

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## University of Nebraska at Omaha

### **'More complex than it's ever been': National and local officials address election security concerns**

The National Counterterrorism Innovation, Technology, and Education Center (NCITE) at the University of Nebraska Omaha hosted a live Q&A with CISA Director Jen Easterly, who addressed concerns about election security. Easterly emphasized the complexity of this year's election threat environment but reassured voters that multiple safeguards, including cybersecurity assessments, physical security measures, and post-election audits, are in place to protect election integrity. She highlighted that 97% of voters use paper ballots, ensuring accuracy through recounts and audits if needed.

**Related Media Item:** <https://www.ketv.com/article/more-complex-than-its-ever-been-national-and-local-officials-address-election-security-concerns/62548890>

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## Agriculture and Natural Resources

### **1. Grazing demonstration expands CASNR hands-on learning opportunities**

For the past few years, UNL's College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources has worked to expand hands-on and experiential learning opportunities for students. In CASNR, all students have at least one hands-on and experiential learning opportunity, including an undergraduate research experience, an internship, a study abroad experience and/or other opportunities. East Campus's roots are as a working farm, where students learned about the latest farm technologies and management practices by doing. On Sept. 30, Dave Wedin, director of the Center for Grassland Studies, in partnership with other faculty, as well as staff and graduate students, fenced off a portion of the restored prairie north of Hardin Hall on East Campus and move four steers there for a day-long grazing demonstration. Students from a variety of departments were able to learn about grassland systems, grazing as a management tool, and to observe cattle grazing behavior. The event was also a nod to East Campus's beginnings as a working farm.

**Related Media Items:**

- <https://news.unl.edu/article/east-campus-returns-to-its-roots-with-grazing-demonstration>
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GYV0DK\\_I\\_oA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GYV0DK_I_oA)

## **2. 2,000 OPS students to grow agricultural and food system literacy during East Campus visits**

### **Summary**

Beginning Oct. 16, 2,000 students from four Omaha schools will visit East Campus through a partnership between OPS and UNL's College of Agriculture Sciences and Natural Resources. The purpose of these visits are to help students see how agriculture connects to their daily lives; gain exposure to key concepts related to food, energy, water and societal systems; and understand the breadth and diversity of careers related to agriculture and natural resources in Nebraska. This series of OPS visits, which are new this year, is part of a statewide CASNR effort to connects students to CASNR and UNL while they are K-12 students. Efforts include a pathway program with Lincoln Northeast High School, as well as other growing partnerships with school districts across Nebraska.

**Related Media Item:** None, though coverage is planned

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## **University of Nebraska Foundation**

### **2024 Wear Black, Give Back Sets New Records**

UNO backers, near and far, came together to support Omaha's metropolitan university during Wear Black, Give Back, Oct. 8-9, 2024. Over 24 hours, 6,242 gifts were made to raise a record-setting \$907,396.

#### **Related Media Items:**

- <https://nufoundation.org/2024-wear-black-give-back-sets-new-records/>
  - <https://www.unomaha.edu/news/2024/10/2024-wear-black-give-back-sets-new-records.php>
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## **Buffett Early Childhood Institute**

### **Nebraska Gov. Jim Pillen Signs a Proclamation in Honor of We Care for Kids/Por todos los niños Week**

#### **Summary**

We Care for Kids/Por todos los niños Week took place on Sept. 29-Oct. 5. On Oct. 2, early childhood supporters gathered at the Nebraska State Capitol as Gov. Pillen signed a proclamation for the weeklong celebration. The proclamation signing is part of an effort to build awareness that access to quality, affordable early childhood education impacts all Nebraskans. Nearly 20 community organizations and child care providers also held events across the state to celebrate the week.

We Care for Kids/Por todos los niños is a \$6 million education and awareness campaign with anchor funding from The Holland Foundation. The Buffett Institute coordinates the campaign, and more than 120 community partners have signed on.

The campaign focuses on the importance of quality early childhood education and the valuable role that early educators play in the lives of young children, the employability of families, and the economy of Nebraska and its many local towns.

#### **Related Media Item:**

<https://www.facebook.com/BufettECI/posts/pfbid04QzzLsLbJwRaeACyHCKgLRCqGXy3oduYdiFx7iv14yRGYMRxUnQPDjhq8WDiFWqcl>

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## **Daugherty Water for Food Global Institute**

### **DWFI leads sessions at the Drought +10 High Level Meeting on National Drought Policy**

DWFI contributed to several sessions at the [Drought +10 High Level Meeting on National Drought Policy](#) in Geneva, Switzerland, September 30-October 2, 2024. Organized by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and other UN agencies, the Drought +10 Meeting brings together countries, experts, and practitioners to scale up and accelerate drought action on the ground. Jesse Bell, DWFI's Director of Water, Climate, and Health led a plenary session at the conference highlighting the often-overlooked health consequences of drought. Highlighting the need for cross-sector collaboration in drought preparedness and response, the session featured efforts from organizations around the globe to integrate health into drought planning, educate public health professionals and healthcare providers on mitigating drought-related health risks, and engage stakeholders at local, national, and international levels. The National Drought Mitigation Center was also involved. The insights gained at the Drought +10 Meeting will shape the negotiations at the [UNCCD Conference of Parties \(COP16\)](#) negotiations in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia in December 2024.

**Related Media Item:** <https://www.droughtmanagement.info/hmndp10/>

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## **National Strategic Research Institute**

### **NSRI chem/bio staff host DOD collaborators**

This summer the NSRI chemical and biological defense team hosted several face-to-face engagements and interim project reviews with DOD customers at the NSRI National Capital Region Conference Center & Laboratory at the NSRI National Capital Region Conference Center & Laboratory in Annapolis Junction, Maryland. The projects range from wastewater surveillance to aerosol particle sensors to sampling capability development. The reviews focused on cost, schedule and performance and covered achievements of key milestones, lessons observed during field tests, future testing scenarios and next steps. The meetings have resulted in customers expanding project scope, follow-on work and additional funding. NSRI staff also recently conducted a tabletop exercise for 94 DOD personnel from 20 organizations and a project kick-off meeting at customer locations with NU faculty involved.

**Related Media Item:** N/A