

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

## Report for September 13, 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. New Loper Success Hub dedicated to student support**

The University of Nebraska at Kearney celebrated the opening of the Loper Success Hub, a new centralized space dedicated to student support, located inside the Calvin T. Ryan Library. The hub brings together key academic resources such as Academic Advising and Career Development, Disability Services, TRIO Student Support Services, Kearney Bound Scholars, First-Gen Lopers and Tutoring and Academic Support. This one-stop approach aims to enhance student success by offering a range of services in a single, student-focused environment. With lounge areas, tutoring spaces, and a testing center, the facility promotes collaboration and provides students with the tools they need to succeed, both on-campus and online.

**Related Media Item:** <https://unknews.unk.edu/2024/08/29/new-loper-success-hub-dedicated-to-student-support/>

#### **2. School districts from across region come to UNK to connect with future teachers**

The University of Nebraska at Kearney hosted an Education Opportunities Fair Sept. 5 at the Nebraskan Student Union. More than 200 students attended the event, which was organized by UNK's Academic Advising and Career Development department. The fair provided a platform for future teachers to connect with representatives from around 60 school districts and educational organizations across Nebraska and neighboring states. Sam Heitz, a senior studying music education at UNK, was one of the attendees. Coming from a family of educators, Heitz emphasized the cross-disciplinary nature of music in education and shared his excitement about beginning his student teaching next semester.

**Related Media Item:** <https://unknews.unk.edu/2024/09/06/school-districts-from-across-the-region-come-to-unk-to-connect-with-future-teachers/>

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## **University of Nebraska–Lincoln**

### **1. Berkowitz to lead NSF's math, physical sciences directorate**

The U.S. National Science Foundation has selected Nebraska's David B. Berkowitz to serve as assistant director for mathematical and physical sciences. He will start in the role on Sept. 9. Berkowitz, Elmer H. and Rudy M. Cordes professor of chemistry at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, will manage the NSF mathematical and physical sciences team and oversee the investment portfolios for the divisions of astronomical sciences, chemistry, mathematical sciences, materials research, physics and the Office of Strategic Initiatives, with a total budget of approximately \$1.7 billion.

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

### **2. Research center looks to future with \$5.8M NIH renewal**

The University of Nebraska–Lincoln's Center for the Prevention of Obesity Diseases through Dietary Molecules (NPOD) received a five-year, \$5,808,886 renewal from the National Institute of Health's Centers of Biomedical Research Excellence Program. The funding will support the center's efforts to solidify its research base and prepare to thrive in the long term. The center is led by Janos Zempleni, Willa Cather Professor of molecular nutrition.

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

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## **University of Nebraska Medical Center**

### **1. iEXCEL sessions prep professionals for opening of unit**

In anticipation of the opening of the Innovation Design Unit in January 2025, iEXCEL at UNMC recently hosted a series of collaborative sessions to explore cutting-edge care delivery models. These sessions, which took place over two weeks, brought together bedside nurses, nursing leaders, and members of various collaborating departments from Nebraska Medicine. iEXCEL collaborated with the Interprofessional Education (IPE) team to livestream an Introductory Panel statewide, engaging all first-year UNMC students. The panel highlighted the critical role of interprofessional healthcare teams in enhancing patient care as students embark on their journey toward becoming healthcare professionals.

**Related Media Item:** <https://www.unmc.edu/newsroom/2024/09/03/unmcs-iexcel-program-earns-full-surgical-re-accreditation/>

### **2. Seven graduates of UNMC high school program enter medical school at UNMC**

At the Aug. 20 UNMC College of Medicine White Coat Ceremony, seven incoming medical students were graduates of UNMC's High School Alliance program, which offers high school juniors and seniors a chance to learn from experts and practice hands-on skills. The program, which is held during the school year, is an inside look at what it's like to be a health care provider or researcher. Courses cover a range of health care topics, such as infectious diseases, anatomy and medical decision-making taught by UNMC faculty on the Omaha campus.

**Related Media Item:** <https://www.unmc.edu/newsroom/2024/09/04/alliance-out-in-force-for-white-coats-ceremony/>

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## **University of Nebraska at Omaha**

### **1. David and Jane Offutt Commit \$1 Million to Maverick Hockey**

David and Jane Offutt of Omaha have committed \$1 million to support the Omaha Maverick Hockey program through the University of Nebraska Foundation. Their donation will enhance the UNO Hockey Excellence Fund, which supports areas like travel, scholarships, and mental health resources for student-athletes. The Offutts, who became fans after attending a game in 2017, aim to inspire others to invest in the program as it continues to achieve new milestones.

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

- **KETV** - <https://www.ketv.com/article/omaha-hockey-fans-donate-uno-hockey-program/62179067>
- **Omaha World-Herald** - [https://omaha.com/sports/college/uno/omaha-hockey-program-receives-1-million-donation-from-david-and-jane-offutt/article\\_35503e4a-712b-11ef-a638-13a2bb06ca42.html](https://omaha.com/sports/college/uno/omaha-hockey-program-receives-1-million-donation-from-david-and-jane-offutt/article_35503e4a-712b-11ef-a638-13a2bb06ca42.html)

### **2. UNO Hosts Career Connect Symposium to Promote Paid Internships and Workforce Development**

The University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) hosted its annual Career Connect Symposium on Sept. 9, emphasizing the importance of paid internships in student career development. The event, led by UNO's Career Services and featuring keynotes from leaders like UNO Chancellor Joanne Li and internNE's Shonna Dorsey, included panel discussions with recruiters and students, networking opportunities, and professional development sessions. The symposium aimed to connect students with employers and equip them with essential skills for the competitive job market.

**Related Media Item:** <https://www.unomaha.edu/news/2024/09/uno-hosts-career-connect-symposium-to-promote-paid-internships-and-workforce-development.php>

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## **Agriculture and Natural Resources**

### **1. FFA students gather information on the Ag industry and careers at field day**

FFA students from across the Panhandle spent a day at the Panhandle Research, Extension and Education Center in Scottsbluff learning about weed ID, irrigation, nutrient management, livestock and principles related to careers in agriculture at a recent field day. This field day grew out of a partnership with area agribusinesses to expose high school students to a breadth of careers in agriculture.

- **Related Media Item:** <https://ianrnews.unl.edu/ffa-students-gather-information-ag-industry-and-careers-field-day>

## **2. IANR/Nebraska Extension connects with Nebraskans, ag industry at Husker Harvest Days**

Faculty, graduate students and staff from across IANR connected with thousands of Nebraskans during 2024 Husker Harvest Days. Husker Harvest Days is billed as the world's largest irrigated farm show.

Nebraska Extension in particular is a fixture at the show each year. Extension experts are available to provide resources and answer questions about a wide array of topics including cropping systems, livestock systems, water management, manure management, farm profitability/economics, mental health, plant diagnostics, and much more. Thousands of Nebraskans visit the Nebraska Extension building each year and connect with the university in the process. Next door, the CASNR recruitment and 4-H teams interact with students visiting Husker Harvest Days.

**Related Media Item:** <https://ianrnews.unl.edu/nebraska-extension-showcase-future-focused-solutions-2024-husker-harvest-days>

- Preview story linked above; this was picked up widely by Nebraska ag media and many media outlets featured aspects of our presence in their coverage of the event.

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## **University of Nebraska Foundation**

### **A legacy of global health: Steven J. Lisco, MD, Distinguished Professorship in Anesthesiology**

Steven Lisco, MD, chief academic officer for Nebraska Medicine and senior associate dean for clinical affairs at the UNMC College of Medicine, has made a gift commitment through the University of Nebraska Foundation to establish a professorship in the UNMC Department of Anesthesiology.

The Steven J. Lisco, MD, Distinguished Professor in Anesthesiology professorship will honor a deserving faculty member who demonstrates the traits of passion for mission, leadership and scholarship that made Dr. Lisco successful. The endowed professorship will help support the department's global health initiatives.

**Related Media Item:** <https://nufoundation.org/a-legacy-of-global-health-steven-j-lisco-md-distinguished-professorship-in-anesthesiology/>

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## **Buffett Early Childhood Institute**

### **We Care for Kids Engages Nebraskans in Early Childhood Issues at the Nebraska State Fair**

On Aug. 27, Buffett Institute staff visited with hundreds of fairgoers at the Nebraska State Fair as part of a large public education campaign coordinated by the Institute. We Care for Kids is a \$6 million statewide education and awareness campaign with anchor funding from The Holland Foundation. The multi-partner We Care for Kids campaign spreads awareness about 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. Throughout the weeklong fair, staff visited with nearly 1,500 families, shared campaign materials and swag, and encouraged fairgoers to learn more about early childhood education and get involved through the campaign.

**Related Media Item:**

<https://www.facebook.com/BufettECI/posts/pfbid0229iNwV13PbfXvgobj5X2jzX16P9ALTsYAapiKJN2jas1a7JUXjqYx8ioKUE11DM4I>

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

### **DWFI facilitated a field trip to West Central Nebraska for international irrigation startups**

DWFI recently hosted a field trip for two international agtech startups, AgInfinity and Raks Technologies, as part of the AgTech Connect conference. The goal of the tour was to help the startups understand Nebraska's agricultural landscape and agtech adoption potentials. The startups met with the UNL-TAPS and N-mobile irrigation testing lab program teams to learn about university resources for testing and validating their products. They also met with a grower to learn about the challenges faced by growers and the potential for agtech adoption. The tour highlighted the importance of local partnerships and university collaboration in agtech adoption.

**Related Media Item:** <https://waterforfood.nebraska.edu/news-and-events/news/2024/08/dwfi-facilitated-a-field-trip-to-west-central-nebraska-for-international-irrigation-startups>

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## **National Strategic Research Institute**

### **NSRI receives nearly \$13.6 million in contract awards this month**

Within the past month, NSRI has received four new awards from four different USG sponsors totaling \$13,596,389. The awards leverage three of the institute's existing IDIQ contract vehicles and maximize NSRI and NU capabilities in two of the institute's research focus areas:

**Related Media Item:** N/A