Volunteer Program Report 2005

Prepared by the Nebraska Health and Human Services System
Volunteer Program Coordination Team

Volunteer Program Coordination Team, Fiscal Year 2004-2005

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Introduction

In 1997 five state agencies, (Aging, Health, Juvenile Services, Public Institutions, and Social Services) merged into the Nebraska Health and Human Services System (HHSS). As a result, the volunteer programs merged and the HHSS Volunteer Program was organized. All employees serving as Volunteer Coordinators in the former agencies retained their responsibilities as Volunteer Coordinators. Currently, there are 48 Volunteer Coordinators working statewide in local service offices, facilities, and in the central office. Since these Volunteer Coordinators have other primary responsibilities, volunteer coordination is a small part of their job. As exemplified by the following statistics, the limited investment made by Volunteer Coordinators has a large payoff for HHS.

The HHSS Policy Cabinet adopted Minimum Operating Standards in April 1999, followed by the appointment of a state Volunteer Program Coordination Team. The team is comprised of one person from each of the six Service Areas, * appointed by the Service Area Administrator and each 24-hour facility, appointed by the Facility CEO; and one person representing HHSS central administration, appointed by the Policy Cabinet. A liaison from central administration was also appointed by the Policy Cabinet to assist the team. The responsibilities of the team include: (1) overseeing and recommending adjustments to the HHSS Volunteer Program standards and procedures, (2) developing volunteer program printed materials for statewide usage, (3) planning annual statewide recognition of volunteers, (4) arranging training and technical assistance for Volunteer Program staff and (5) providing an annual report. Team members serve as a resource for Volunteer Coordinators to assist with ideas, answer questions, and provide communication for purposes of continuity. Within the team, a communication lead was designated from each Service Area to ensure timely dissemination of information.

Nebraska Health and Human Service System Philosophy

The Utilization of volunteers provides a cost-effective means of supporting staff as well as assisting in the enhancement of service delivery. Staff at all levels should have the opportunity to be involved in planning effective utilization of volunteers. A well-managed volunteer program contributes to improved quality and quantity of services. Our mission is best served by the active participation of community citizens. To this end, we accept and encourage the involvement of volunteers at all levels of the system and within all appropriate programs and activities. In recognition of this belief, the Nebraska Health and Human Services System will maintain the following basic philosophy regarding the utilization of volunteer services:

- Volunteers are people with skills and needs.
- The trained and supported volunteer will be a good ambassador to the community at large.
- Most jobs within the HHSS can be extended, reinforced, or enriched by volunteer contributions. In no circumstances will a volunteer be a replacement for paid staff.
- Appropriate selection, placement, training and supervision of volunteers is essential so that the special skills each person brings to the job can best be utilized to the benefit of HHSS and volunteers alike.
- The benefits that can result from a good volunteer and staff partnership exceed the administrative effort involved.
- Timely and meaningful recognition is key to the retention of volunteers.

(Administrative Policy, April 13, 1999)

This report was developed by the Nebraska HHS System Volunteer Program Coordination Team to summarize volunteer program activity for fiscal year 2004-2005. The team began entering their figures on this program in the fall of 2004. The team wishes to thank and acknowledge Joanne Badura her assistance with the issuance of ID's, passwords and support to the group on the usage of this program.

Executive Summary

This section is an executive summary of information provided in detail later in this report.

Administrative Accomplishments: The Nebraska HHS System Volunteer Program Coordination Team was established in July 1999. This team is comprised of members from all areas of the state. In fiscal year 2004-2005, the Team accomplished the following:

* Provided a statewide training opportunities for HHS volunteer Coordinators
* Maintained the data reporting system set up by Lincoln, with all team Members entering their own data on a regular basis. The Volunteer Team manages this sight.

* Initiated statewide recognition items for National Volunteer Week in April
* Encouraged and supported ongoing volunteer recognition in local offices throughout the year.
* Obtained new participation at meetings from facilities in services areas who have never attended meeting before.
* Provided information regarding the Volunteer Program statewide through an article in "Connections".
* Had Team representation at the 2005 Governor's Convention May 11, 2005 on Volunteerism.
* Create Annual Report as mandated by our Minimum Operation Standards

Value of Time and Donations: The Team oversees the volunteer program statewide, including the collection of data on volunteer service and donations. A standardized data collection system was put in place January 1, 2000.

During the report period, HHSS benefited from services provided by volunteers either working individually or through membership in an organization. This service represented 72,346 hours of volunteer time. Using the Independent Sector national standard of the value of volunteer time, volunteer service is valued at $17.55 per hour for a total benefit of $1,269,672.30. Through a combination of contributions of goods, in-kind services, and money, HHSS received $244,799.31 in donations. T**otal benefit to HHSS in volunteer time and donations equals $1,514,471.61.**

Volunteers: Volunteers come to the Nebraska Health and Human Services System from schools and colleges, churches, Veterans' organizations, community organizations, and the public. They are of all ages and vary in socio-economic levels, education and experience, representing a very diverse background.

Volunteer Work: Volunteers and interns were engaged in work statewide in Nebraska HHS System facilities, the central office, and local service offices. Examples of activities volunteers were involved in include general office work and office coverage, recreational activities and outings, mentoring, tutoring, youth group sessions, meal delivery and transportation. Volunteers were also involved in music programs, special event luncheons and parties, yard and garden work maintenance of bird habitats, library, snow removal and yard maintenance for elderly and disabled clients, regular telephone contact with housebound individuals, and one-to-one personal assistance and support.

Volunteer Recognition: Volunteers were recognized during National Volunteer Recognition Month with a number of special events occurring during National Volunteer Week, April 17-23, 2005, or at the end of their volunteer experience in many local HHSS offices. The HHSS theme for volunteer recognition this year was "Key to our Success." Volunteers were given a laser engraved key chain as tokens of appreciation for their yearly contribution.

Benefits of Volunteer Service to Nebraska HHS System

The utilization of volunteers within the Nebraska Health and Human Services System provides a cost-effective means of supporting staff at all levels. According to the Independent Sector, a nationally recognized non-profit management organization, the dollar value of volunteer time assigned is $17.55 per hour. **The dollar benefit of volunteer time within the HHSS (72,346 total hours x $17.55 per hour) is $1,269,672.30**. During times when state agencies haven been asked to "do more with less," volunteers play a role in improving the quantity and quality of service.

Volunteer assist programs and facilities with activities, enable staff to perform other duties, help fulfill the agency mission, assist in creating a higher standard of living for those served, and create likelihood that those served will be law abiding citizens. Volunteerism provides a powerful tool for bringing people from all walks of life together to interact and solve problems. Volunteers provide valuable role models for many of those served by the Nebraska HHS System, and volunteers themselves also benefit by deriving satisfaction from helping improve the lives of others.

The benefits of a well-managed volunteer program exceed the administrative effort involved and the active participation of volunteers enhances the achievement of the Nebraska Health and Human Services System mission.

Contributions of Services, Goods and Monetary Donations

Since January 1, 2000 all Nebraska HHS System entities are reporting contributions and donations in a standardized way. For reporting purposes, donations were divided into 10 areas: household goods/appliances, clothing, food products, cash/checks, personal sundries, toys, services, gift certificates, miscellaneous and recreational items.

Donations are used within the facilities for members/patients/youth to assist clients, state wards, families at risk and individuals on public assistance. Donations are also received for foster parent and volunteer recognition.

Typical items received:

Household Goods/Appliances: microwaves, blankets, rocking chairs, furniture, park benches, wood working equipment and carpeting.

Total $7,212.00

Clothing: adult and children's clothing (i.e., shoes, coats, mittens, gloves, hats, scarves, etc.)

Total $34,011.50

Food Products: for recreational activities and recognition events and a minimal amount of emergency food.

Total $24,262.00

Cash/Checks:

Total $35,193.00

Personal Sundries: toothpaste, tooth brushes, soap, deodorant, razors, make-up, beauty products, hair products, brushes, sunscreen, bug spray, etc.

Total: $12,001.00

Toys: electronic games, dart boards, puzzles, board games, playing cards, computer games, dolls, and other items for children.

Total: $22,370.00

Services: worship services, sewing, moving and cleaning.

Total: $50.00

Gift Certificates: local retail stores and restaurants.

Total: $4,457.00

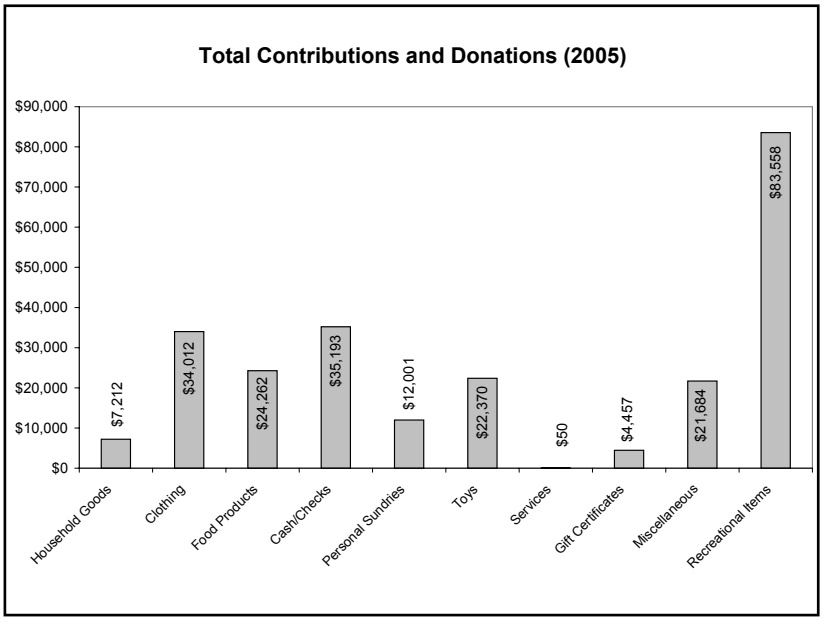
Miscellaneous Items: bibs; lap robes; table trays favors; floral arrangements; table cloths; wallets; framed art work; greeting cards; fish for the lake; bird, rabbit, chicken and fish food; party paper items; electric wheelchairs; Hoyer lifts; quilts; and afghans.

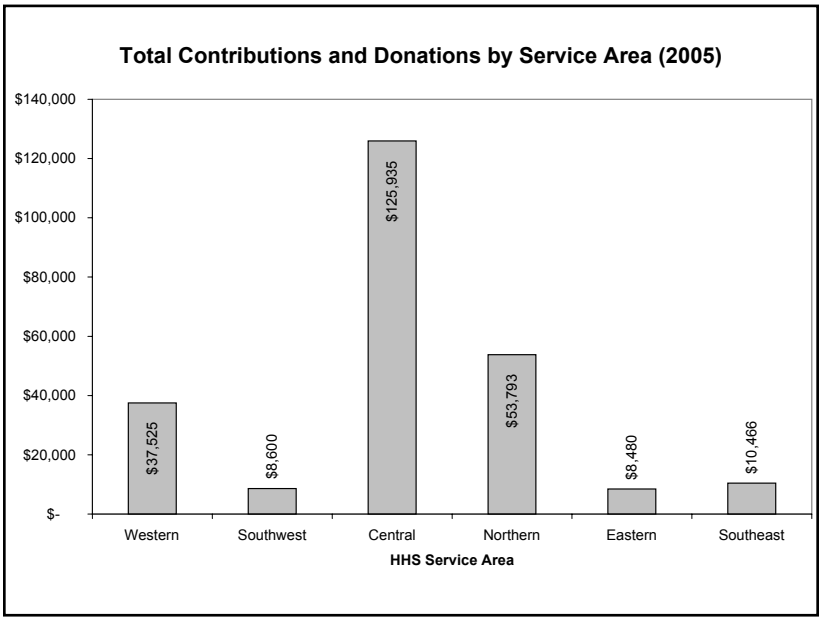
Total $21,684.35

Recreational Items: balls, bikes, fishing licenses, fishing equipment and bait, books, videos, magazines and subscriptions, newspapers, audio visual equipment, green ware for ceramics shop and zoo admission passes.

Total: $83,558.48

GRAND TOTAL $244,799.33





Vision for the Next Fiscal Year

The Nebraska HHS System Volunteer Program Coordination Team has developed and implemented many initiatives over the past four years. The team plans to continue to promote volunteerism and support Volunteer Coordinators.

On a yearly basis the team proposes to:

- Meet semi- annually. With other contacts via conference calls to save on expenses.
- Continue to expand membership to increase participation in team.
- Choose a theme and token of appreciation for Volunteer Recognition statewide. The service areas and facilities are able to choose whether they participate or develop their own recognition plans.
- Offer annual training for Volunteer Coordinators. (Administrative Policy states, "Volunteer Coordinators will be offered, at a minimum, six hours of in-service training annually related to the management of volunteers and /or professional development.")
- Educate and inform supervisors regarding the benefit of training for Volunteer Coordinators in an effort to increase attendance at the annual training sponsored by the Volunteer Program Coordination Team.
- Maintain and update Volunteer Program Guidelines as needed.
- Develop an ongoing, collaborative relationship with the Nebraska Volunteer Service Commission.
- Advocate for continued administrative support of volunteer programming within HHS.
- Create Annual Report as mandated by our minimum operating Standards.

AREA HIGHLIGHTS

Central Service Area

Grand Island Veterans Home's Volunteer Services primary goal is to assure an adequate number of competent volunteers to supplement staffing to provide additional programming or services assuring each Member the opportunity to engage in personally meaningful activities meeting their individual needs, interests, and abilities. Volunteers are utilized for group activities, office assistance, and individual one-on one programming throughout the facility. Without a strong and thriving volunteer program the Home would not be able to present the diverse recreational programming of our mission.

An average of 25-35 large group activities are conducted each month, including birthday parties, reading clubs, music concerts, dances, bingo's, and special events (Member attendance to these activities is between 70 to 150 with approximately 10-20 volunteers). There are also 1-3 daily activities per housing unit by the unit activity aides for Members (Member attendance to these activities is 20 – 30 with approximately 2-4 volunteers). Many special events took place this past year with the help of our group and individual volunteers:

The Grand Island Veterans Home received an estimated $121,629.00 in donations with $24,159.00 of those donations being of cash value.

-Nature Trip/Fishing Hole- A fun location for Members to visit is a "Back to Nature" area that two GIVH volunteers from Alda, Nebraska maintain at their home sandpit area. These volunteers spent many hours clearing land, building docks, making nature trails, etc, to accommodate Members and our vehicles. Frequent trips are made during the summer to this location where Members enjoyed pontoon boat rides, fishing, BBQ's, nature walks, visiting with the tree dogs, and golf cart rides throughout the grounds. Both daytime and evening outings took place at this beautiful sight. Whether Member's were fishing, boating or watching sunsets with a hootenanny-taking place, good times were had by all.

-"GIVH Diversity Team" a travel passport- Each month a new country is selected to learn about. Campus staff, Recreation Assistants, volunteers, and guests join in by incorporating unit programs and activities for Members that revolve around these countries. We continued to enjoy a year around the world with the assistance to volunteers, staff and guest speakers. We have invited many "Exchange Students" in our local schools to teach us about the countries they are from.

"Salute a Veteran Week" with a graduation ceremony, and Veterans Parade. The Parade that marches through the front drive and includes the area high school bands, military vehicles, during the entire parade over 2,300 high school, middle and public school students in the "Respect Walk" down the parade route to then take their spots to outline the parade route holding mini American flags.

"The 3nd Thunder Rolls & Run for the Wall" roars through campus – 125 motorcycles from Veteran Motorcycle Organizations from State and Nation wide visited campus as the roared through our front drive on Sat morning on their way to the Wall in DC. A BBQ was held so that all riders could enjoy a meal during their stop. The roars of the engines were exciting to all in attendance. Local Police and Fire men attend this special evening event. A very large American Flag is flown from the ladder of a fire truck over the grounds.

"Bus Outings" to the local live Horse Races, the Council Bluff Casinos, dining-out trips to local restaurants, fishing trips, car races, museums, and scenic tours and reminisce tours on our 14 passenger mini-bus and Recreation van. It would be difficult to offer these types of outings without the help of volunteers. We continue to receive monetary donations throughout the year from generous volunteer groups, and individuals to support group outings.

"Annual Classic Car and Bike Show" display on Campus with over 100 classic car and bike entrants. This event continues to be the main fundraiser for our employee generated Staff for Santa program – a program that allows employees to purchase a personal Christmas gift for all residents.

"The 3nd Annual United Veterans Club Veterans Appreciation Breakfast": Volunteers from the United Veterans Club, the Grand Island VFW, VFW Auxiliary, American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, Sons of the American Legion, and the AMVets held a wonderful breakfast on Veterans Day morning for all Veterans to attend. It was free of charge for all Veterans. The count of those attending was over 1,200.

"Seasonal Dances and Parties" are sponsored by volunteer organizations throughout the year (Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, Hawaiian Luau, Halloween, and New Years Eve), at which volunteers escort and dance to the live music with wheelchair and ambulatory members, serve refreshments, and have fun!

The 6th Annual Elvis on Campus" was a

wonderful show by an Elvis impersonator, a time for Members, Volunteers and staff to get "all shook up"! Volunteers helped to make it an exciting night where there was standing room only. The Sons of the American Legion Squadron #53 were bartenders making many non-alcoholic ice cream drinks for during the concert.

"Pet Therapy volunteers" are always willing to bring their house pets or farm animals to campus. These types of visits stimulate many intergenerational conversations and Members recall pets and animals they had as they were growing up.

"Library Computer Lab" currently houses (4) fully wheelchair accessible personal computers with (3) color printers and Internet access, a scanner. Members can use the computers to play games, send e-mails, search the net, or perform research, etc.

"Campus Golf Cart" the GIVH "six passenger golf cart" equipped with a roof and seat belts make it possible to Members to travel in style around campus with staff and volunteers to see the grounds. This golf cart was purchased for the GIVH by the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Nebraska.

"Music Youth Group" volunteers throughout the year many youth groups visit the GIVH to share their many talents, from dance, to plays, to song. The Members enjoy visiting with the youth and are always excited to have them perform for them.

"The 13th Annual "Youth Fishing Fun" a great summer program to encourage youth from the community to fish with Members during a half-day intergenerational program. The GIVH is the host site for this event, a day that many Members enjoy participating in.

"7th Annual Mountain Oysters Hit Campus" Volunteers from the "Sons of the American Legion Squadron 53 4th Annual Mountain Oyster Feed"(beef fries) was held in October, an evening Members look forward to each year.

"Picnic/BBQ/Breakfasts/Special Meal" volunteers are on campus throughout the year, winter, spring, summer and fall to serve up good eats to the Members. It is amazing just how many volunteers

it does take to put on a BBQ for 300 people. We have many regular "Grill Masters" who not only man grills, but who can flip a pancake or two.
"Seasonal Events" Individual and group volunteers provide seasonal parties, tray favors, cards, poster displays, and gifts throughout the year to make the holidays and seasonal times special at the GIVH.

The Grand Island Veterans Home utilized volunteers for a total of 14,891 hours for program activities. We had 549group volunteers, and 415 regular individual volunteers for a total of 964 unduplicated volunteers sharing their time at our Home!

A "Volunteer Open House was help to extend out volunteers recognition was held in April to honor the Grand Island Veterans Home volunteers. The awards program was followed by a light buffet meal with social time. An open house format was chosen so that volunteers could visit at their convenience, as some travel from large distances to come to the recognition program. Representation from Youth, Adult, Veteran Organizations and Community Partners were present. Each volunteer received a thank you card along with a laser engraved key ring with the Grand Island Veterans Home logo on it.

The Grand Island Office has continued to work with 400 hour college interns, several who have become valued employees. Their on-the-job experience gives them excellent opportunities to determine if they want to pursue a career in Child Protective Services and give them knowledge they can use during training if they are hired. The Cedar Hollow Elementary School student counsel donated toys, games, books, wall hangings and stuffed animals for the reception area and the interview rooms at the new 208 North Pine office that houses Protection and Safety Units. Grand Island also received over 100 "Cuddle Quilts" for youth in foster care this year from the Nimble Thimble Quilt Guild in their 6th year of donating quilts.

The Hastings Area Offices had several excellent interns and volunteers who provided much needed help for several areas. The staff are fortunate to have community members and colleges in the area who support human services volunteerism.

In at least one county, the volunteers are certainly a essential asset, and make it possible to hold the office open with staffing part time and still have privacy for staff to interview clients. They provide receptionist duties and are able to monitor incoming clients and answer telephones while staff are with other clients.

The interns with Protection and Safety and Resource Development are valuable in many ways. They provide assistance in record-keeping, filing, computer work, court hearings, home visits with clients, and follow-up with clients, among many other things. The interns also benefit by working for us. They usually have been working toward their degree in human services, public administration or criminal justice, and we give them insight into the types of things they may be doing when they get their degree. Many of these interns, upon graduation, come back and work for Health and Human Services agencies, so their internships create a win-win situation.

The Kearney Office has had several great volunteers that have continued to commit their time to the office. They're a great asset in assisting with many office functions. The Kearney area has also been fortunate to have some local business that believes in giving back to the community. There are times when families have struggled in trying to make ends meet and yet they are needing assistance in areas outside of Health and Human Services abilities. At these times we have been able to ask a local business for assistance and they always seem to come through. This business also donates school supplies to our foster youth and families in need each fall. Several other local businesses have also contributed supplies to foster youth and children in need. UNK sororities and fraternities showed their support around the Holidays by adopting families. They made sure that each family member had several gifts to open. The families received not only toys, but other needed items like clothing and household good. They also made sure that the families had all the fixings for a great Christmas Dinner. The Kearney community is very supportive of helping in the community whether its people volunteering directly in our office or offering other supports and services that aid us in helping families.

Eastern Service Area

In 2004-2005, two part time volunteer coordinators served the **Lincoln HHSS Office** and the **Omaha HHSS office**. (This information is listed under the Eastern Service Area and Southeastern Service Area because the coordinators served both areas.) During this time, 38 Interns were placed and over 100 individual volunteers were utilized in different capacities. In addition to individual volunteers, several groups volunteered their time to help with larger projects. Additionally, over $15,700 of donations were received by the Lincoln Office.

Partnering with area schools and universities in supporting an internship program has found to be an important resource for HHSS. Schools partnering with HHSS in the internship program include: Southeast Community College, Lincoln campus, Nebraska Wesleyan University, University of Nebraska, both Lincoln and Omaha campus's, Union College, Dana College, Creighton University, Hamilton College, Wayne State and Peru State Colleges. Internships are offered in the areas of Safety and Protection, Juvenile Services, Resource Development, Adult Protective Services, Social Service Work, Fraud Investigation and Child Support & Enforcement. Upon getting their degree, HHSS has hired a number of these interns. Included is an excerpt from an intern regarding her internship and how it helped her in future employment opportunities.

" I began my internship for Nebraska HHSS Office of Family Health in January 2005 while

I was a graduate student at UNO getting my Masters degree in Public Administration with an emphasis in health care administration. In October 2005, I accepted a position working for U.S. Senator Chuck Hagel in his Lincoln Office. My position with Senator Hagel consists of assisting constituents in their health and social service needs. Without my internship at HHSS, this job opportunity may have never been made available to me. This internship was a priceless supplement to my education, as well as landing me the job of my dreams." … Kori Taylor

The Southeast Area and Omaha HHSS are very fortunate to have a number of agencies that partner with them to provide volunteers. Agencies that provide referrals for volunteers are: Vocational Rehabilitation, Workforce Development, Senior Community Services Program, Region V Services, ServiceLinc, and Vital Services Inc. The Lincoln Office serves as a host agency for the training and placement of both the Senior Community Services Program and also Vocational Rehabilitation. The volunteers help with such duties as filing, faxing, sorting of mail, putting packets together and completing simple computer tasks.

Volunteer Groups are also a valuable resource. Periodically groups from Independent Living facilities volunteer for large projects such as mass mailings or completing informational packets. The residents of Burke Plaza and Mahoney Manor, a division of the Lincoln Housing Authority are always willing to volunteer.

Each year students from both College View Academy (Project Blitz) and Union College (Project Impact) volunteer for one day to help us at the Lincoln HHSS office. After viewing the HIPAA video, the students roll up their sleeves and start to work. The students this year moved over 2000 files, completed packets and made over 500 new Protection and Safety folders with 25 tabs in each section within the folders. The students volunteered 95 hours and were a joy to have.

The Lincoln Quilters Guild continues to be very active in providing new quilts for babies and small children that enter foster care. Over 75 quilts were provided this past year.

As in the past several years, Warren United Methodist Church has made Christmas a very special time for many state wards. The Church made many contacts with other churches, agencies, and individuals to ask their assistance in providing gifts to HHSS children and their families. Over 100 children were given gifts, and 15 families were provided with a Christmas dinner and gifts.

We gratefully report that over 1500 volunteers provided over 12,000 hours of their valuable time to the members of the **Thomas Fitzgerald Veterans' Home**. The volunteers kept the members busy with bingo sessions, ice cream socials, luncheons, and outings around the local community. Our members were treated to a circus on the grounds that even the hot summer weather could not disrupt. Every holiday is celebrated in style with good food and fun activities. The Home sponsored youth programs which allowed the members to socialize with the young people of their community. In-house bowling, bingo sessions and special occasion parties have kept members busy with volunteers leading the way. The one-on-one visits that volunteers provided to the members are so valuable a thing that we have come to rely on it every day. Volunteers have deep pockets and show their gratitude to the members who served them during wartime by ensuring that special items are made available to help keep them healthy and happy. Thank you all!

Northern Service Area

Ten Volunteer Coordinators in the Northern Area supervise volunteer programming in 24 counties, including two facilities

The Dakota City Office has been fortunate to have a variety of volunteers to help us serve our four county regions of Cuming, Dakota, Dixon and Thurston Counties. One organization conscientiously continues to provide lawn and snow removal service to twelve elderly and disabled households. These volunteers have enabled eighteen persons to remain independently in their homes. Donations totaling $13, 060 along with ninety-eight volunteers from nine agencies provided a happier holiday season to several families in our area. Individual volunteers have provided a myriad of services including filing, shredding documents, assembling training and informational packets, receptionist duties and distributing foster parent recruitment materials. During our office move, volunteers assisted by organizing store rooms, hanging pictures and bulletin boards and strengthening our keyboard shelves. We are very grateful to our eight individual volunteers as well as the ten organizations with their one hundred fifty-seven volunteers for enriching the lives of the people of Nebraska this past year.

Elijah S., 8, (pictured) was adopted through HHS two years ago. Since then, he has gone shopping with his mother Kris to pick out toys and clothing for other foster children. Christmas 2004 and this year, Elijah has brought in large bags of new (and gently used) toys and clothing for other "kids who need stuff". His mother said he has a great time making the selections and thinks about what ages of children would like what toys.

Three volunteers that were referred by Developmental Disabilities shredded paper in the **Valentine Office** for 8 hours last year. Organizations in **Holt** and **Cherry counties** again helped make Christmas special for needy families. Holt county had over $1,500 in Christmas donations and Cherry county had over $3,000.

Southeast Service Area

The **Beatrice offic**e appreciates the faithful volunteers and interns that have helped out with clerical support this past year. They have helped with purging files, mailing, stuffing envelopes, filing, answering phones, and with computer data entry. The holidays always bring out the best in people, and Beatrice is no exception. Last November, a number of staff and volunteers collected food for Thanksgiving baskets that were delivered to families in need. At Christmas, HHS received donations from Beatrice service clubs

for Christmas gifts for area foster children, and we have a church group that regularly donates personal hygiene care kits to be used for children from disadvantaged families.

Geneva Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Center: The YRTC-Geneva volunteer program is still as strong as ever. We have recruited two more groups of 15 people who work with our girls both individually and in groups. One group is from Omaha's Assembly of the Saints Church and they work with our girls from the surrounding Omaha area. They are collaborating with the girls and finding mentors once released from YRTC-G in hopes of giving the girls a positive role model and someone in the community to help them succeed. The other group is the Christian Motorcycle group from Norfolk, they have been great in providing services and working with our girls from the surrounding Norfolk area. These new group help boost our volunteers to approximately 45-60 people strong.

We had a big celebration in April for our volunteers, as Jack & Sharon Jacob's were named the Volunteers of the Year. They do so much for the girls as a whole and their intense individual work with some very difficult young ladies. They have been volunteering for over nine years and have worked with numerous girls during those years as role models and especially as surrogate parents. Thanks so much for all you have done and continue to do, we are so grateful to have this couple in our volunteer program.

YRTC-G hit some real milestones this year as we had two volunteers who have been working with our girls for the past twenty-five years, Mrs. Dorothy Schlegel and Mr. Frank Heinisch. Mrs. Schlegel has been a volunteer in our Prison Ministries, and in addition to individually working with our girls. She has decided to retire from doing this all the time and slow down a little. She will be missed tremendously by our youth and staff. Mr. Heinisch has also worked with our girls both individually and as a member of the YRTC-G Community Advisory Board. His role as a board member has initiated some changes that are key to our new program and he continues to raise the level of excellence at YRTC-G. He will always be the one in the meeting who will ask "why" and wait until he gets the answer. We thank him for all the great insight and fighting for the rights of our girls.

Our volunteers have done so much for our girls this past year and we are so grateful for all the hours of work they have donated. We have been very fortunate in the number of people who give their time without expecting something in return. In Summary, we Thank all of our volunteers who donate their time and effort, without them we would miss so much.

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The Southeast Area and Omaha HHSS are very fortunate to have a number of agencies that partner with them to provide volunteers. Agencies that provide referrals for volunteers are: Vocational Rehabilitation, Workforce Development, Senior Community Services Program, Region V Services, ServiceLinc, and Vital Services Inc. The Lincoln Office serves as a host agency for the training and placement of both the Senior Community Services Program and also Vocational Rehabilitation. The volunteers help with such duties as filing, faxing, sorting of mail, putting packets together and completing simple computer tasks.

Volunteer Groups are also a valuable resource. Periodically groups from Independent Living facilities volunteer for large projects such as mass mailings or completing informational packets. The residents of Burke Plaza and Mahoney Manor, a division of the Lincoln Housing Authority are always willing to volunteer.

Each year students from both College View Academy (Project Blitz) and Union College (Project Impact) volunteer for one day to help us at the Lincoln HHSS office. After viewing the HIPAA video, the students roll up their sleeves and start to work. The students this year moved over 2000 files, completed packets and made over 500 new Protection and Safety folders with 25 tabs in each section within the folders. The students volunteered 95 hours and were a joy to have.

The Lincoln Quilters Guild continues to be very active in providing new quilts for babies and small children that enter foster care. Over 75 quilts were provided this past year.

As in the past several years, Warren United Methodist Church has made Christmas a very special time for many state wards. The Church made many contacts with other churches, agencies, and individuals to ask their assistance in providing gifts to HHSS children and their families. Over 100 children were given gifts, and 15 families were provided with a Christmas dinner and gifts.

Lincoln Central Office has enjoyed the skills of volunteers utilizing their clerical duties for mass mailings, labeling & stuffing envelopes to filing, checking inventory and computer data entry. The Diversion program through the Court System uses our Volunteer program, which we are grateful for in making the Volunteer program a win-win situation for us as well as the Volunteers needing to complete their community service. We still are very fortunate to maintain our Volunteers base in our Distribution Center assisting us with the huge volume of mail being dispersed on a daily basis. Our thanks as well to the Medicaid Unit who is also a large user of the HHSS Volunteer Program.

Lincoln Regional Center benefited from the time, talent, and expertise of volunteers who gave a combined total of 20,425 hours to our clients and our staff. We also benefited from the gifts and donations that totaled $7000.

In addition to the valuable hours spent with our clients we had volunteers help with a number of special projects. Nebraska Wesleyan University's Lend a Hand Day brought 12 students to our Community Transition Program to paint and help organize the clothing room. Our clients access new and slightly used clothing at no charge from this project.

For the third year Pius X High School came to Lincoln Regional Center for a day of caring/sharing. They moved our museum to a new location. The students appreciated the information and insight gained from the various items and articles they carefully stored and carried to the new location.

Our valuable volunteers contributed to the health and well-being of our wonderful clients. They weeded the flower beds, tutored the students, mentored, entertained, and gave hours of their time to help insure the continuous progress towards wellness of those we serve. We recognized this dedication by presenting each volunteer with a thank you gift in April.

Amanda Sprvill an intern for the **HHSS in York** is from Lovette, Texas and is a junior at the York College in York, NE. Amanda began her internship at the York HHSS Office in January 2006. The internship program requires Amanda to acquire 150 hours of field experience.

This past month Amanda has primarily observed the five Child Protection & Safety workers in the

York Office. Already Amanda is amazed at what a big job the CPS workers have. As an intern Amanda learns from experience, and she stated, "I am learning much more than I could from just reading my college textbooks." Amanda's goal is to learn how the various caseworkers work with their clients in different situations. Amanda was surprised to learn that; "Sometimes the case workers have to "parent" the parents." She has found it interesting how parents and children view and interpret differently the same situation. This past month Amanda has accompanied the CPS workers on initial assessments, and visitation of state wards. Amanda also helps the workers with their filing.

Amanda's academic goals are to graduate, and then pursue grad school. Her career goal is to become a Christian counselor in marriage and family therapy.

Geri Rutledge, Juvenile Parole Officer & Protection and Safety Worker in the York HHSS Office estimated that over the years the York HHSS Office has had 10 student interns. Geri stated that she likes it when," The interns have moments of reality, & learn that bad family situations really happen in rural America, not just on the 20/20 TV Show."

The interns shadow the CPS workers when they attend family meetings, go on home visits, or intakes, and attend court hearings. They are able to work in the office, reviewing a file, or reading a case history.

Geri Rutledge stated that she particularly enjoys getting to know the students. "I like it when they continue to email and update me as they continue on their journey." The interns have even brought their parents to HHSS when they come to Nebraska to visit. The office staff gets to know the interns pretty well. Geri stated that, "Sometimes it's more fun to hear a reflective story a couple years later, and hear the intern's take on a particular situation then when it was actually happening."

Western (Southwest) Service Area

Imperial Local Office

There are various organizations in Benkelman, Imperial, Hayes Center and Wauneta that donate their time to pack and deliver food boxes for Thanksgiving and Christmas to low income families. The Imperial Office also receives gifts that individuals and organizations bring to the office that are wrapped and ready to deliver to families that have given us permission to give out sizes and gift ideas so they and their children can have a Christmas. Girl Scout and Boy Scout and Sunday school classes and their sponsors work very hard for two months making this happen. The Chase County Pantry is sponsored by the ministerial association and they also give food baskets to families that have requested help in the past year. The Imperial Office usually gives the contact person of every organization or group a small volunteer appreciation gift.

Lexington Local Office

Volunteers have many different roles and opportunities through the Lexington Local Office. Students are placed through the University of Nebraska at Kearney as interns. They are supervised by staff and gain valuable experience working with families and other agencies in

the communities. Volunteers who are looking for work experience are referred by Arbor to Lexington Office. These and other volunteers are utilized to assist with clerical tasks such as answering the phone, filing, assembling packets and files, and interpreting. Groups volunteer at Christmas to help wrap presents for the foster children. Four individual volunteers have worked with the department this year and one group. The Lexington Local Office volunteers receive a gift of appreciation.

McCook Local Office

Even though it seems though everybody's time and money has to be stretched further and further, the people of Southwest Nebraska are still willing to share both with those less fortunate. We have businesses, organizations, and individuals that donate everything from gift certificates, food, clothing, toys, etc. This is especially evident at Christmas time, but we also receive donations for Thanksgiving and Easter, as well as Foster Parent Appreciation. We also have those organizations and individuals that donate for other needs. When one young mother and her daughter needed a new start in their own apartment, the community rallied together and supplied them with everything from pots and pans, furniture, food, and even a Christmas tree. Several church groups in the area make comforters for us to give children and families. We have one loyal volunteer, which, even though she is still recovering from a car wreck she was in over a year ago, comes in twice a week to help workers catch up on filing and shredding. The McCook Office appreciates the generosity and giving spirit of the people in this area.

North Platte Local Office

The North Platte Office has one very dedicated volunteer that helps out regularly in many ways and often assists with special projects. There were also several volunteers that have helped us out for a few months while looking for permanent employment. They assisted with answering the phone and transferring calls to the workers, filing, copying, assembling folders and mailings. The employees in the North Platte office assembled a "Gardening Basket" for the regular volunteer to say thank you for all the help and hard work. The basket was filled with flowering gardening supplies such as gloves, a small hand shovel and rake, flower seeds, a decorative pot and a small plant. All the volunteers received a thank you card and a study metal key chain with the HHS logo on it.

Ogallala Local Office

Ogallala HHS Office has 12 volunteers that are very dedicated to volunteering. Not only do they volunteer for HHS but for other agencies in our community. We have volunteers that started within the last year and one that has been with us for 17 years.

Each year we have two celebrations to recognize and thank our volunteers. In May we had a spring luncheon. This May we enjoyed listening to a local High School senior perform his humorous, winning State Speech Contest speech. Each of the volunteers received a gift provided by the State of Nebraska, plus a candy bar wrapped with a special volunteer saying. In December we had a Christmas luncheon of soups and desserts. A special gift of Christmas ornaments and candy in a holiday bag was given to each volunteer.

Our office depends on our volunteers to help cover the front desk during lunch hours and annual/sick leave of our clerical staff. In a small office there is usually only one clerical staff and the volunteers' willingness to cover the phone and the customers are very much appreciated in our office.

Western (Western) Service Area

Alliance Office

Once again we need to recognize Marge Prince as our superb volunteer in the Alliance Yellowstone office. Marge has been with us for ten years. She is very knowledgeable about the programs, policies, and most important, she knows the clients. In 2005 she volunteered 108 hours answering the phones, filing and greeting customers. Marge has a wonderful sense of humor and brings a positive, upbeat attitude to work.

In 2005, over 200 blankets were distributed in the northern panhandle to all children placed in foster care and to children who are seriously ill. Project Linus Chapter from Pat's Creative in Hemingford gave beautiful, new, handmade blankets, quilts and afghans.

Also in 2005, Thiele's Pharmacy and Gifts in Alliance donated many nice gifts and toys to be distributed to foster families at the annual Panhandle Foster Families Picnic. And, the Alliance Lions Club donated $1000 for Foster Parent Recognition activities.

We are very fortunate in the northern Panhandle to have so many wonderful people willing to help.

The Bridgeport Office had 3 active volunteers this year.

We had one volunteer work at our front desk answering phones and working with people who come into the office.

Our local office is unique; we are the only Health and Human Service Office to have a food panty located here. Two younger volunteers work in the panty stocking the shelves when we receive our food orders.

We are very fortunate to work with a group of ladies from the 'Giving Bee' located in Lewellen, Nebraska. These ladies sew quilts and large canvas bags and school backpacks to give to the Panhandle foster children. They also donated tooth brushes, paste, socks and underwear for the bags.

Chadron's 2004 Caring Sharing Season

2004 was another successful Caring Sharing Season. This project begins the week before Thanksgiving and this year was completed by Dec. 18th. A group of 43 Volunteers (donating a total of 959 hours) received, sorted, wrapped, & delivered "baskets" of food and gifts to 84 families. A total of 183 children received at least on, if not two, new toys. Also given out were 308 coats that had been cleaned by our local Laundromat. There are more volunteer's community wide that we have not counted such as the Chadron Public School, both students and teachers, who have canned food challenges between the grades to see which class can donate the most! Custom cruiser and motorcycle groups who "ride for the kids", Wal-Mart employees, Job Corp students, Youth Build, many Chadron State College organizations and various other groups are just the tip of the iceberg for uncounted volunteers! This program would not be the one it is without all of the volunteers!

Gering Office

From July 1, 2004 through June 30, 2005, Gering HHS had 5 volunteers who put in a total of 181 hours of volunteer time. The volunteers helped primarily with support activities, such as photocopying, putting provider packets together, working on Foster Parent recruitment handouts, preparing tabbed dividers for files, and similar activities. Volunteers receive small tokens of appreciation from the HHS office. Recognition is given to all community volunteers annually through the Volunteer Bureau.

Sidney Office

From July 1, 2004 through June 30, 2005 the Sidney office had two people volunteer their time: Melissa Barngrover and Doreen Schaub. Also, the 2nd Annual Hay Day Festival; food was donated from the Sidney area to the food banks. Brand new clothing was donated by Kay Hajek for foster children. Quilts were hand sewn and donated by the Threads of Friendship Quilt Guild the president of this group is Florence Treimen. Brand new stuffed animals were donated by the Sidney Jaycee's.

Western Nebraska Veteran's Home

We have been truly blessed with all of our organizations and individual volunteers, with all of the monthly bingos, socials and the parties. They have kept our members busy.

In January: We had the line dancers volunteer and they were great. They were asked to perform by our state VFW.

February: We had our annual sweetheart supper. Volunteers serve our members prime rib and/or shrimp, with all of the trimmings. Every member gets his/her photo taken as everyone dresses in their finest attire.

March: Las Vegas night with one of our organizations, the Scottsbluff Elks lodge. They do this once every three months. It is Bingo, Black Jack and a door prize.

April: We had the volunteer brunch. Over 100 of our volunteers were in attendance. Mr. Brozek (administrator) and Laura Singleton (Activity Supervisor) spoke on upcoming events and did the thank yous for all of the hours spent volunteering.

May: We had a May Day Party sponsored by the DAV & A and AMVETS. Mr Brehm is great about having holiday parties for our facility.

June: Western Nebraska Sportsmen Association volunteer time on most Saturdays to assist members with fishing. They bait, cast, reel and clean fish from our pond for our members.

July: Fireworks sponsored by the Gering Sons of the American Legion and VAVS. They (The Sons) arrive when the sun goes down and they set off the fireworks in a magnificent display. It is enjoyed by all: members, families, and staff.

August: The facility has a member/family picnic put on by the facility with staff & volunteers assisting. The theme last year was "Luau".

September: The Western Nebraska Sportsmen Association comes back and fries up all of the fish we have caught throughout the summer. They bring all of the condiments.

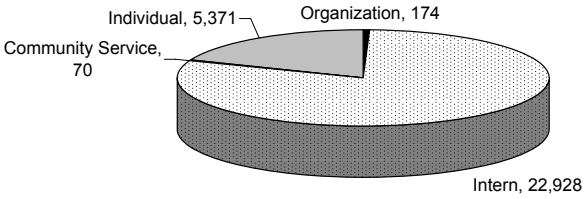
October: A Halloween party sponsored by the DAV & A and AMVETS #9. Includes, costumes and prizes, treats and laughter.

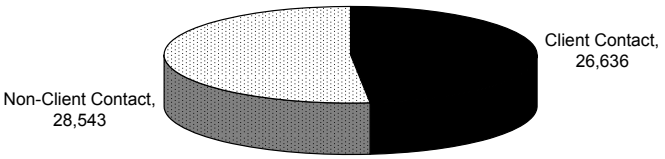
November & December: All of the parties and socials by numerous organizations. It is a very busy and fun time for everyone.

Without the continued support of our volunteers it would be difficult to entertain and celebrate so many different holidays and events.

Thank You to all who serve our Veterans and Families.

Breakdown of Contributed Hours Charts





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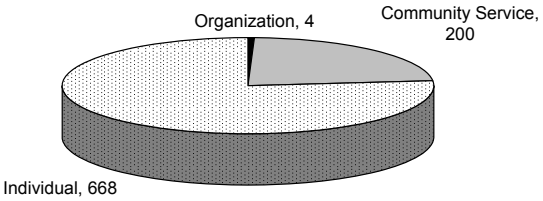

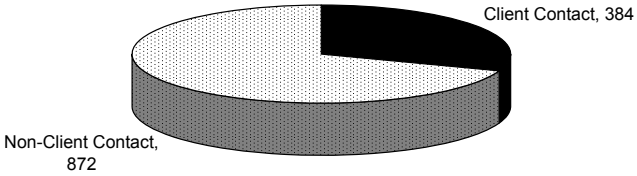

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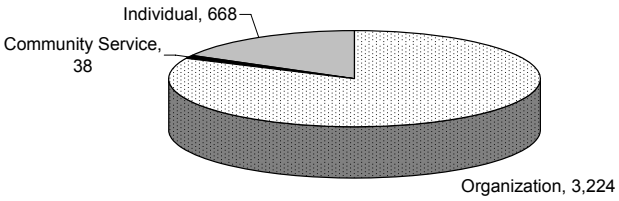

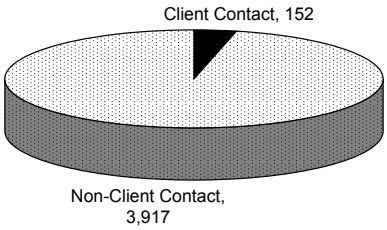

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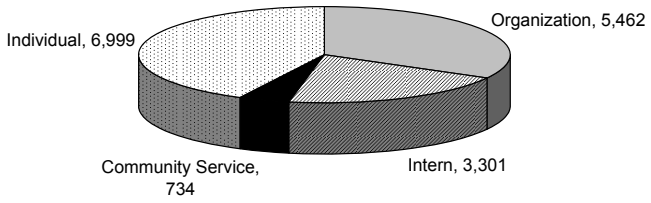
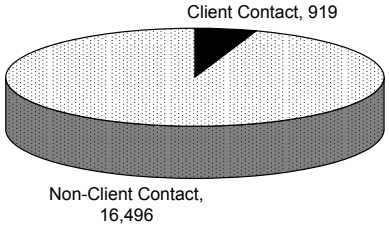
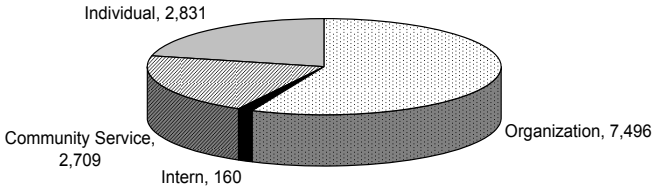
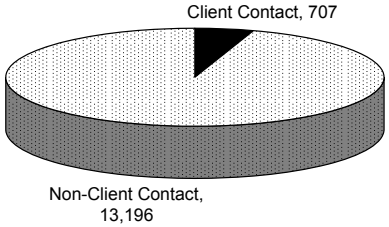




CENTRAL





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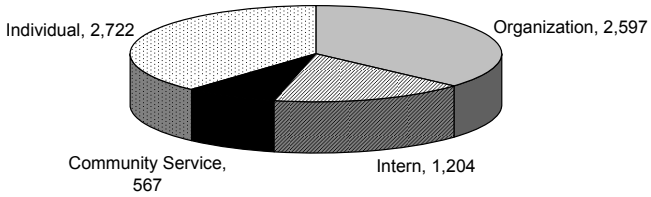
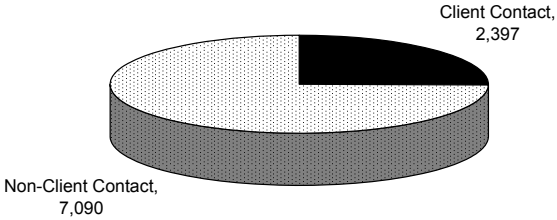




NORTHERN

NEBRASKA HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES SYSTEM

2004-2005 Volunteer Coordinators

CENTRAL AREA

Joanne Badura, Grand Island Veterans Home
Hastings Office - none
Linda Minard, Kearney Office
Sherene Morris, Broken Bow Office
*June Oliphant, Grand Island Office
Ord Office - none
Dick Wetjen, Kearney YRTC

SOUTHWEST AREA

Norma Cox, Imperial Office
Laura Davis, North Platte Office
Laurie Moorhous-Orr, Ogallala Office
*Kristi O'Meara, Lexington Office
Karen Roland, McCook Office

WESTERN AREA

Karen Boysen, Alliance Office
Lynn Fitzgibbon, Chadron Office
*LeAnn Laurent, Bridgeport Office
Yvonne Lease, Kimball Office
Tricia Lee, Gering
Louann Nicholaus, Sidney Office
Jeanette Fisher, Western NE Veterans Home (Scottsbluff)
Laura Singleton, Western NE Veterans Home (Scottsbluff)

NORTHERN AREA

Patti Brady, Neligh Office
Jennifer Buss, Norfolk Office

Peg Emory, Norfolk Regional Center
Maggie Fleming, Columbus Office
Bob Furr, Fremont Office
Kate Hofman, Norfolk Veterans' Home
Ruth Moore, Dakota City Office
Judi Pedersen, Fremont Office
*Bob Thomas, O'Neill Office
Darci Wittler, Norfolk Office

SOUTHEAST AREA

Janet Apfelbeck, Beatrice Office
Mike Baumfalk, Fairbury Office
Theodore Burns, Wilbur Office
Brenda Coonrod, Seward Office
Polly Griess, Lincoln Regional Center
Jenise Kouma, Wahoo Office
Angie Lewis, Falls City Office
Eike Marthaler, Lincoln Office
Pat Pittman, Lincoln Office
Bette Rabstejnek, Auburn & Tecumseh
Larry Ramsey, BSDC
Avis Rathje, David City Office
*Shawn Maloley , Geneva YRTC
Teri Stukenholtz, Nebraska City Office
Laura Weatherby, Plattsmouth Office

EASTERN AREA

William Grayson, Omaha Office
*Patti Howe, Thomas Fitzgerald

CENTRAL OFFICE

*Rita Imlay
Karen Johnson - Policy Cabinet Liaison

* Denotes Area Lead

NEBRASKA HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES SYSTEM

Volunteer Program Area Leads 2004-2005

Central

June Oliphant
Area Lead -Grand Island

Northern

Bob Thomas
Area Lead -O'Neill

Southeast

Shawn Maloley
Area Lead- Geneva

Southwest

Kristi O'Meara
Area Lead- Lexington

Western

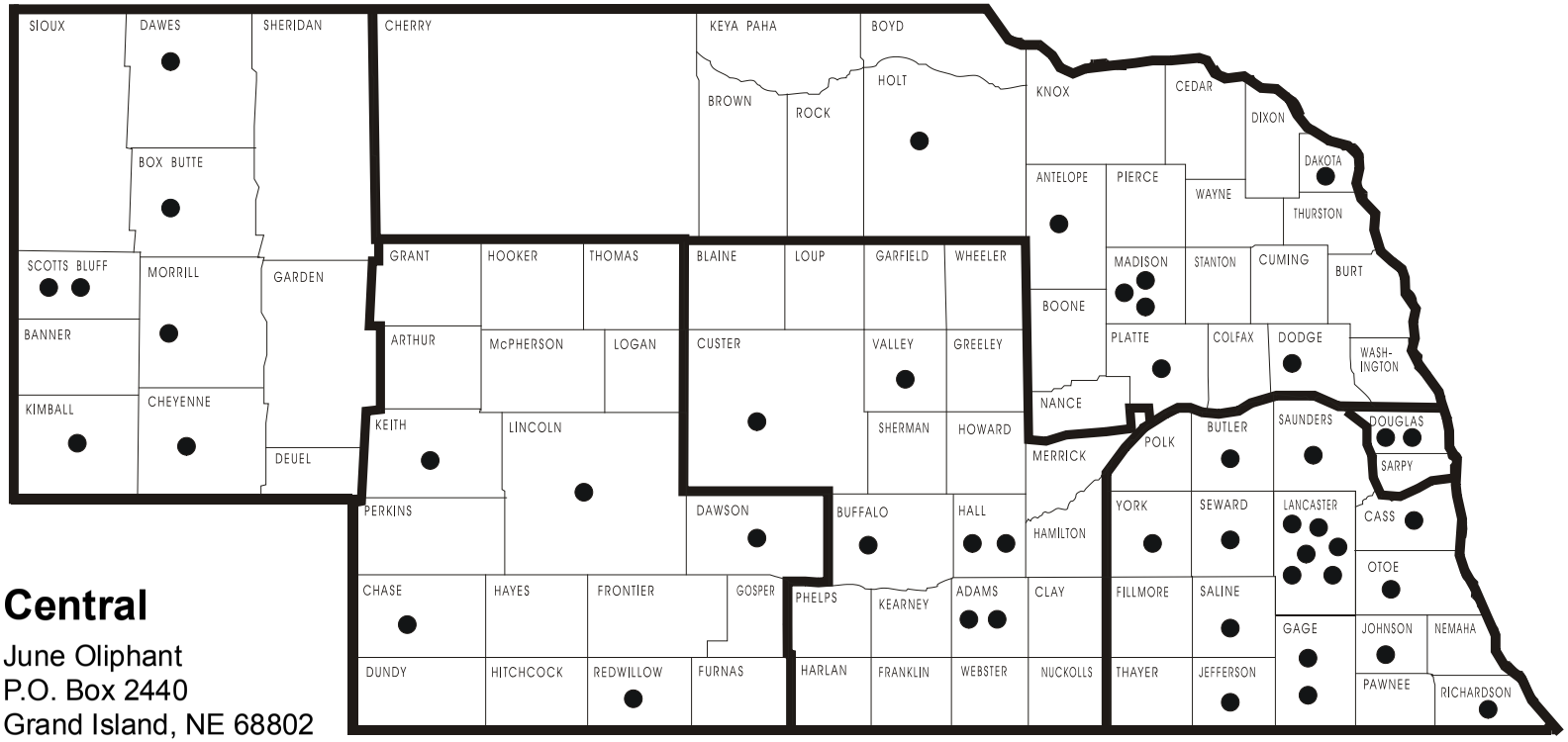
LeAnn Laurent
Area Lead - Bridgeport

Eastern

Patti Howe
Area Lead - Omaha

NEBRASKA HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES SYSTEM

Volunteer Program Area Leads Service Map 2004-2005



● Denotes location of local Volunteer Coordinators, including facilities

Central

June Oliphant
P.O. Box 2440
Grand Island, NE 68802
(308) 385-6252 ext 452

Northern

Bob Thomas
P.O. Box 669
O'Neill, NE 68763
(402)336-2750

Southeast

Shawn Maloley
855 N. 1st
Geneva, NE 68361
(402)759-3164

Southwest

Kristi O'Meara
P.O. Box E
Lexington, NE 68850
(308)324-6633

Western

LeAnn Laurent
P.O. Box 669
Bridgeport, NE 69336
(308)262-1913

Eastern

Patti Howe
15345 W. Maple Rd.
Omaha, NE 68164
(402)595-2180 Ext. 235

HISTORY OF VOLUNTEER COORDINATION TEAM FACILITATORS

(Fiscal Year July – June (2 year terms)

Beginning –1999 Volunteer Coordination Team Facilitator - ***Pat Taft*** – Lincoln Office

1999-2000 & 2000-2001 Volunteer Coordination Team Facilitator – ***Lynn Brehm*** – Lincoln Office

2001-2002 Volunteer Coordination Team Facilitator – ***Larry Ramsey*** – Beatrice State Development Center

2002-2003 & 2003-2004 Volunteer Coordination Team Facilitator – ***LeAnn Laurent*** – HHSS Bridgeport/Gering

2004-2005 & 2005-2006 Volunteer Coordination Team Facilitator – ***Joanne Badura*** – Grand Island Veterans Home

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HHS-PB-12 (99888) 9/06