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Seeds of Innovation

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Seeds of innovation

What an encouraging development a University of Nebraska at Omaha professor describes in a Midlands Voices essay today. UNO, she explains, is working with small-business owners in north Omaha to improve their computer and telecommunications skills.

As noted by Sajda Qureshi, an associate professor in UNO's College of Information Science and Technology, the project has benefited a variety of "microenterprises" in north Omaha. Among the different types of businesses helped: a delicatessen, tutoring services, a massage therapist, a cake decorator, a pet groomer, a modeling agency and a house for inmates re-entering society.

Qureshi has a sophisticated understanding of how new-media technologies open up economic opportunities crucial to alleviating poverty. The UNO professor intensively studies technology/economic development projects in both developed nations as well as in low-income countries.

Her work here in the Midlands and overseas reinforces her central thesis about the high value of the links between telecommunications skills and economic development.

This north Omaha initiative reflects well on the University of Nebraska as a whole and illustrates the type of innovative, forward-looking approaches Omaha needs in addressing its poverty challenges.