

Fall 2021

## SLA Newsletter, Volume 12, Issue 1, Fall 2021

UNO Service Learning Academy  
*University of Nebraska at Omaha*

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UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA

SERVICE LEARNING ACADEMY

# NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 12 | ISSUE 1 | FALL 2021



**STRONGER TOGETHER**

UNIVERSITY OF  
**Nebraska**  
Omaha



## FIND INSIDE

**04 OVERCOMING OBSTACLES**  
Students partner with MSforward to develop an adaptive sports obstacle course for individuals with multiple sclerosis.

**06 MEANING MAKING**  
Service learning comes full circle as a UNO education student finds herself giving back.

**07 MPI AND ANTI-POVERTY EFFORTS**  
Faculty can connect their students with a variety of nonprofits to help them better understand poverty and give back to the community.

**10 CREATING COUNSELORS**  
UNO graduate students partner with Omaha-area schools to design and implement small group counseling sessions.

**11 OMAHA IN TRANSIT**  
A new SLA webpage provides resources and support for anti-poverty service learning projects.

## SUMMER SEMINAR

July 11 - 15, 2022

Don't forget to register for the Service Learning Seminar! This is a week-long professional development opportunity for P-12 and after-school teachers, administrators, and UNO full- and part-time faculty. Participants are provided with the opportunity to learn about service learning as a method of instruction, connect with community partners, and develop a service learning project. Register for the Service Learning Seminar at [sla.unomaha.edu](http://sla.unomaha.edu).

## SLA APPROACHES

Traditional and P-16 service learning courses are taught at UNO. The traditional service learning projects are collaborations between community partners and a UNO class. P-16 service learning courses include collaboration between a UNO class, a P-12 class, and a community partner. Throughout the newsletter, projects are identified as traditional or P-16 based on their project structure.

### TRADITIONAL MODEL



### P-16 MODEL



## MAVERICK PHILANTHROPY INITIATIVE (MPI)

The Maverick Philanthropy is another form of service learning which incorporates charitable giving. Students in this type of class practice philanthropic giving and learn how it affects community partners.

## MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS

Not only do service learning projects provide connections to curriculum, but many also align directly with the six issue areas that encompass the community engagement work at UNO and in the Omaha community. Throughout this newsletter, these indicators will show a project's connection to one of these six issue areas.



## LETTER FROM THE PAUL SATHER DISTINGUISHED DIRECTOR



This fall the Service Learning Academy, along with the community, came back to campus amidst a lot of uncertainty. I am so proud of the way our faculty members, community partners, and students showed up. Most service learning courses had contingency plans coordinated with "just in case" back up plans, but together we still managed to continue our engaged teaching and learning. In addition to this uncertainty, the Service Learning Academy underwent a lot of transition this semester. We added new team members and waved goodbye to others. The team filled holes and did their best to provide support during this transition. I am ever impressed by the way our team showed up with the faculty members, partners, and students teaching and taking service learning courses.

In its second year of a redesign, the Faculty Fellows program has increased our capacity and ability to connect and encourage service learning teaching and research at UNO. This newsletter highlights the six Fellows that serve each of the academic colleges and the UNL College of Engineering. An additional six Fellows serve to expand the service learning and community engagement efforts within each of the six Big Ideas and will be highlighted next semester. These Fellows have been instrumental to increasing our service learning course offerings and better connected the Service Learning Academy support to the colleges.

Together, we have achieved extraordinary efforts in engaged teaching and research. A special thank you to the Service Learning Academy team members and our Fellows for their efforts behind the scenes. It is an absolute pleasure to learn and serve with each of you. I hope you enjoy the results of their efforts.

Sincerely,

Julie Dierberger, Paul Sather Distinguished Director





## STUDENTS, WOLVES, AND ENRICHMENT

By: Ali Al-Ghalithi



As part of her *Animal Behavior Laboratory* course, UNO faculty member Rose Strasser partnered with Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium and Field Club Elementary School to teach her students about the behavior of wolves.

Field Club Elementary students in Kristine Bielenberg's 3rd grade class had three trips to the Wildlife Safari Park to explore their research question: *how do animals, such as wolves, interact with enrichment?* This exploration began with their first trip where they met with zookeepers to learn how the Safari Park takes care of the wolves. Their second trip allowed them to learn about enrichment by working in groups to create enrichment items for the wolves. During their third and final trip, students watched the zookeepers deliver the enrichment items to the wolves. Students then observed the behavior of the wolves and asked questions of what they were seeing first-hand.

Throughout this service learning project, UNO students met with the Wildlife Safari Park zookeepers to ask questions about wolf behavior and help collect data. During the first trip to the Safari Park, UNO students were able to

tell the elementary students the wolves' behavior and the research they were conducting. One student from Field Club Elementary said, "This is the best day of the year! I love the Safari Park and I am happy to come here today." Another 3rd grade student said, "I am happy since I saw all of the wolves and it was good to learn about the animals."

Not only did students learn about wolf behavior, but they also discovered the benefit of enrichment. In each trip to the Wildlife Safari Park, students enjoyed exploring the space and gaining a better understanding of animals. At the end of the semester, Kristine Bielenberg's class published an awareness video about the wolves from this project.

Field Club Elementary Student

"This is the best day of the year! I love the Safari Park and I am happy to come here today!"

## OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

By: Mallory Gauer



UNO faculty member Danae Dinkel taught *Implementation of Physical Activity in Diverse Populations* this fall. In this course, students developed an adaptive sports model for MSforward.

MSforward, a nonprofit gym located in Omaha, helps individuals fight the devastating effects of neurological disease or injury, but this was not always the case. The gym was initially opened to support high school athletes in their strength training for upcoming seasons. Shortly after opening his gym in 2001, the founder of MSforward, Daryl Kucera, began experiencing some severe health problems and was soon diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS). This diagnosis empowered him to modify his gym and welcome other individuals who shared his diagnosis. The gym welcomes older adults or individuals who require an assistive device (such as a wheelchair, walker, or cane) for mobility, individuals with multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's disease, and dementia. MSforward offers both tele-fitness and in-person classes, making the programs available to people across the country. Daryl Kucera's inspiration for this project was to design an ac-

tivity that would allow members of his gym to engage in sports again. Kucera said, "How can we come up with a sustainable framework to produce an adaptive sport that would engage their mind, memory, and muscle to coordinate the movement?"

For this service learning project, Danae Dinkel's students worked to implement an obstacle course at MSforward that included seven stations to challenge the mind and body. Monica Kwon, Gaurav Kumar, and Jenna Foss researched and designed exercises best effective for those with an MS diagnosis. Examples of these stations include striking down objects while maneuvering around a path, a wheelchair chalk path involving reversing, spinning, and parking, and a baseball bowling station. At these stations, members were challenged to complete the specified task in a certain amount of time depending on their level of mobility. Monica Kwon, a UNO student who designed the obstacle courses, expressed excitement leading up to November. Monica said, "These obstacle courses will be great to implement since they will challenge and improve their mental and physical wellness."





# WALK AGAINST HATE

By: Talia Smith



This fall, UNO and Benson High Magnet School partnered with the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) on a new service learning project. Students in UNO faculty member Sarah Nelson's *Introduction to Geography* course worked with two of Kelcey Schmitz's high school Language Arts classes to create infographics, videos, and other resources about the local sites included in the ADL's Walk Against Hate.

The Walk Against Hate is an annual event hosted by the ADL in multiple cities across the United States. During the walk, attendees visit and learn about sites that are significant to historical movements for civil rights and civil liberties. Omaha's first Walk Against Hate was held in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic, so instead of a large physical gathering, educational resources about each site were published online for attendees to view with the option of visiting the sites on their own.

This year, the ADL continued with this format, but event organizers wanted to expand the available resources by incorporating youth and student voices. The UNO and Benson students worked together remotely to provide their ideas to this service learning project. The students first met

with Susan Wallis, the ADL's Assistant Education Director, to learn about the organization and the Walk Against Hate. The students then divided into small groups depending on which site they were interested in researching.

Throughout the semester, the UNO and Benson students continued to meet via Microsoft Teams to work on their projects together. Each meeting began with a presentation or reflection activity about bias and allyship, and then students worked together in their small breakout groups. Between meetings, they also used Padlet to post articles, pictures, or websites they found while researching the Walk Against Hate sites. Due to the remote setting, each class then developed their own materials to present to the ADL for the Walk Against Hate website.

During group reflections, students shared how much they had learned about their community through the project. By working together throughout the research process, the UNO and Benson students were able to share their ideas and learn from each other. They also reflected on the importance of the Walk Against Hate event for raising awareness about historical events and countering bias.

The Omaha Walk Against Hate was held on November 28, 2021. The website can be viewed at [www.adlplains.com](http://www.adlplains.com).



## MEANING MAKING

By: Grace Nelson



This fall, UNO faculty member Sandra Rodriguez-Arroyo engaged in another semester of her *Introduction to Teaching* ESL courses through a service learning project called Puente al Éxito/Bridge to Success. Together, she and UNO faculty member Dr. Andrea Karpf taught two course sections connected to the project this fall. The project and partnership with the Learning Community Center of South Omaha (LCCSO) began in the fall 2014 semester. It started as College Prep and Family Learning with a college readiness focus. This project then shifted in 2020 to Puente al Éxito during the COVID-19 pandemic. Under the new name, the purpose of the project also shifted to focus on connecting families to resources. This past semester, UNO students connected with families from LCCSO weekly over a 6-week period. Students developed and facilitated lesson plans with their assigned families to promote their English language skills and connect families to community resources and activities to enhance family learning. Additionally, students gave families socially distanced tours of Dodge campus on two separate occasions in October to explore higher education and college readiness.

Upon introducing the project to her class this fall, Rodriguez-Arroyo made a meaningful discovery! She discovered that one of her UNO students, a junior named

Gabbi Calderon, formerly experienced this project with her family as a participant of LCCSO when she was a sophomore at Bryan High School. After she enrolled in UNO's Teacher Education program this fall, Calderon was prepared to engage in this service learning project, but this time, as a college student. Rodriguez-Arroyo added, "[This project] is the only long-term family engagement component that is part of a Teacher Education course, and we are seeing some powerful outcomes of it." Calderon is one of two students who has engaged in this project as a family participant and returned as a student in the Teacher Education program. Calderon shared, "Everyone tells me how it's so full circle and it's so true because I remember the two college students who were assigned to my family showing me Roskens because I told them I wanted to become a teacher and now I'm taking the same class as them years later."

Rodriguez-Arroyo reflected on the honor of having Calderon engaged in this service learning project in this new capacity, "Gabbi's eyes lit up when I first mentioned the service learning experience and week after week, she shows how she is committed to giving back to others what she was once given. We are coming full circle with this experience, and I know that Gabbi is just one of many other Latinx youth who will serve more families from their communities."







## ANTI-POVERTY INITIATIVE

By: Lourian Nieman

There are many ways you can incorporate an anti-poverty emphasis into a service learning project. It is crucial to recognize the factors that affect an individual's experience within poverty. These factors can range from physical needs such as food and housing to non-physical needs such as community, mental health, and even discrimination. While not every experience is the same, one approach to learning more about these factors is to review the social determinants of health as defined by the World Health Organization.

These social determinants represent several factors that impact an individual's life and can perpetuate the cycle of poverty. These social determinants include areas of an individual's growth such as social, physical, and economic conditions. By connecting social determinants to curriculum objectives, you can begin identifying a potential anti-poverty project. Visit the Service Learning Academy's page on Redlining to see how these social determinants connect to our current initiatives or the World Health Organization website directly to learn more.

## PERSUASION & INFLUENCE

By: Mazin Al Rahbi



Poverty is a world-wide issue with extreme impacts. Some organizations focus their efforts on doing all they can to eliminate poverty. UNO faculty member Whitney Gent said, "Very few students take any classes that require

them to learn about the economic inequalities in their community." In realizing this, Gent aimed to use service learning to open her students' eyes to the way poverty impacts individuals not only across the country, but in Omaha specifically.

Gent has been involved in service learning since spring 2021 through engaging in the Maverick Philanthropy Initiative (MPI). This semester, her goal was to integrate an anti-poverty focus into her *Persuasion and Influence* course. Gent said, "Through this service learning course, students not only gain an understanding of the scope of poverty

in Nebraska, they also learn about its causes, myths and metaphors surrounding it, and different approaches to alleviating it. Most importantly, by working with area nonprofits, they are empowered to do something about poverty in Omaha themselves."

UNO students collaborated with four community partners whose primary mission is to work with individuals in the community who are experiencing poverty. Students used theories learned in class (along with individual research) to provide an analysis of the organizations' marketing campaigns or website content. These analyses were undertaken to provide each organization with feedback on improvement. At the end of the semester, students delivered their findings and recommendations to community partners through written reports and presentations. In addition, UNO students chose one of the four community partners to distribute a \$1,000 grant.

## FALL 2021 MPI Grant Recipients

- Heart Ministry Center
- International Council for Refugees and Immigrants
- Child Saving Institute
- Team Jack Foundation, Inc.
- Bluebird Cultural Initiative
- Rejuvenating Women
- Nebraska Coalition for Lifesaving Cures (Nebraska Cures)
- OPS Foundation

**1 in 9 families in Nebraska don't know where their next meal is coming from.**

**An estimated 42,000 children live in concentrated poverty**

**There are higher rates of poverty within minority populations.**

**12% of individuals living in Nebraska are living beneath the poverty line.**



# HONING THEIR CRAFT RECOGNIZING THE D2 CENTER STAFF

By: John Wiemer



In a partnership new to the Service Learning Academy this fall, UNO students in Kersten Borer's *Social Work and Civic Engagement* course partnered with Amy Cerra's Omaha South High School *Pottery* class to help encourage and appreciate staff from the D2 Center. The D2 Center works with youth in the community to help them earn a high school diploma and prepare for post-secondary opportunities and a career. The purpose of this service learning project was to convey to D2 Center staff how much their work with out-of-school and disengaged youth is appreciated. Executive Director of the D2 Center Carolyn Miller stated, "Our organization works with high school students (including some at South High), and the work our staff does has much in common with social work concepts, so this project brought these themes together perfectly."

UNO students began their project by interviewing D2 staff members to learn about their roles at the D2 Center. UNO students then visited Omaha South for the first time to share the information with Amy Cerra's pottery students. During the first visit, UNO students helped the Omaha South students to brainstorm ideas for what pottery piece to make each D2 staff member, as well. These pottery pieces would later be given to D2 staff members as a surprise to show appreciation for their work. During their second visit to Omaha South, UNO students shared a presentation on the importance of encouraging others before they worked with the Omaha

South students on their pottery. During a third and final visit to Omaha South, the UNO students spent additional time working on the art pieces with the Omaha South students as the pieces for the D2 staff were being finished.

The pottery pieces were then presented at the D2 Center Staff Recognition Event designed and hosted by the UNO students to encourage and appreciate the D2 staff. To prepare for the event, UNO students researched ways to prevent employee burnout and then incorporated that knowledge into the event. In addition, UNO students created a resource guide for the D2 Center staff for self-care and self-awareness as well as filled goodie bags that they gave out to the D2 staff and Omaha South students to show appreciation. The Omaha South staff and students also attended the event with the Omaha South students presenting their completed artwork to the D2 staff. Miller said of this final event, "[the D2 staff] truly felt appreciated; we all learned a lot and had fun as well."

This project allowed UNO students to research and apply their social work skills by assisting a community organization in its journey to further the health and wellness of its employees. Further, UNO students enhanced their collaboration skills by working with the Omaha South students. By participating in this service learning project, the Omaha South Pottery students were able to utilize and continue to refine their pottery skills by each of them creating at least one piece of art for each D2 employee.



Carolyn Miller | D2 Center Executive Director

"The D2 Center has participated in a few UNO SLA projects with UNO students over the years and this project was our first time partnering with a high school class on a larger-scale project. Instructor Kersten Borer's idea for this project was so creative and brought together her social work class, South High pottery students, and the D2 Center staff in a really compelling way. Our organization works with high school students (including some at South High), and the work our staff does has much in common with social work concepts, so this project brought these themes together perfectly."



# CREATING COUNSELORS

By: Brittany Sullivan



In a project new to the Service Learning Academy this fall, graduate students in Elizabeth Tolliver's *School Counseling Groups* course worked with Omaha-area students by facilitating small group counseling sessions. This semester, UNO students partnered with either Millard North Middle School or Completely Kids. At Millard North Middle, three UNO students implemented a counseling group for 6th graders and a counseling group for 7th graders. In partnering with Completely Kids, UNO students were split between two locations. Four UNO students led an Expressive Arts group for 2nd and 3rd graders at Field Club Elementary and two UNO students led an Expressive Arts group for 3rd through 6th graders at Jackson Elementary. Between the three locations, the small group counseling sessions lasted for 4 to 6 weeks.

Tolliver, a faculty member with UNO's Counseling Department, was relatively new to working with the Service Learning Academy. Tolliver said, "The Service Learning Academy allows me to walk the walk when it comes to bridging the gap between content and experience." By participating in this service learning project, UNO students were prepared on how to effectively incorporate small group design, implementation, and assessment as a part of their school counseling program.

Kendall Schroer, a UNO student that facilitated an Expressive Arts group at Jackson Elementary, said, "To be able to share time with students in a relaxed environment that promotes inclusion along with self-expression is extremely gratifying." Schroer also noted that by focusing on different mediums such as music, drawing, and reading, the elementary students were able to unwind while engaging in meaningful activities. Lulu Rangel, the Clinical Director for Completely Kids, also expressed her pleasure in watching the Expressive Arts group unfold over the course of several weeks. Rangel said, "The kids were especially engaged in the bead keychain activity that incorporates deep breathing skills to be used outside of group."

As this service learning project was nearing its end, Eric Depue, the school social worker at Millard North Middle School, also offered insights on the efforts of UNO students. Depue said, "The eagerness and professionalism of our UNO partners has been superb. They are on time, have developed super positive relationships, and are making a great impact on our students. This partnership has allowed our department to fill a need that we sometimes struggle to fill with how busy we are. It is also nice to have a fresh set of faces and ideas for our students to benefit from!"



# LEADERSHIP IN SERVICE LEARNING

By: Mazin Al Rahbi



The UNO Teacher Scholars Academy (TSA) is comprised of future teachers who exemplify leadership qualities and commitment to their communities. Gerry Huber, a UNO faculty member and the Director of the UNO Teacher Scholars Academy, has experience incor-

porating service learning components into TSA program courses. Huber stated that the service learning courses allow scholars to "increase their self- and social-awareness, cultural and relational skills, communications, and collaboration of effective leadership."

these skills and strengths, the students enhance their ability to address the real-world issues that are facing individuals in the community. A UNO student, Amaya Brodine, said, "Through our service learning project, we were able to integrate the leadership skills that we learned in class into a real-life scenario."

UNO Teacher Scholars worked individually and in small groups with 11 community partners whose missions are to address the areas of redlining impacts, such as education, health, housing, and transportation. For example, UNO students Amaya, Kapri, and Lauren collaborated with The Center for Holistic Development (CHD). In their work with CHD, these students developed and facilitated two tables with activities highlighting social awareness and self-management for CHD's Project Power event. The Center of Holistic Development's primary goal is to provide holistic behavioral healthcare services and educational programs to individuals, families, and groups. Project Power was a community event, hosted by CHD at Girls Inc. of Omaha, meant to engage with the North Omaha Community through educating youth and their parents about mental wellness and substance use prevention.

At the end of the semester, students shared in class their service learning experiences and how they felt they supported their community partner's needs. Based on community partners' needs shared by students in class, UNO students collaborated to vote on where to allocate a \$1,000 grant.

get a medical exam might mean walking to the bus stop in the cold temperatures of winter. It might also mean basing their schedule around the public transportation system and making sure their appointment ends before the bus begins a different route. Yet, despite the transportation difficulties that many individuals face, they continue to persevere. UNO students from three of Jodeane Newcomb Brownlee's journalism courses (*Applied Journalism*, *Advanced Practicum*, and *Independent Study*) paired

UNO Teacher Scholars from Huber's *Fundamentals of Leadership* course experienced all the philanthropy-focused project had to offer. This service learning project offered students an opportunity to share their time, talents, and treasure through engaging in a new Maverick Philanthropy Initiative (MPI) service learning course. The primary goal of this project was to allow the Teacher Scholars to apply their leadership skills and their individual strengths. By applying



## OMAHA IN TRANSIT

By: Selene Castaneda Marin



Transportation is more than a means of getting around the city. It is also a system with the power to limit or expand the connection an individual or a community has to places and resources. These resources might include education, health services, or food pantries. While some individuals have the privilege to turn on the engine of their vehicle, others are not as fortunate. For someone without personal transportation, going to the hospital to

up with Craig Howell from the nonprofit organization, Together, to create a podcast that highlights the challenges of public transportation. This service learning project allowed journalism students to use what they had learned inside the classroom by applying their newfound knowledge to investigating, collecting data, and presenting their findings as a news story. The journalism students made a three-part series to underline why Omaha, a city considered exceptional in hospitals, arts, and technology, falls short when it comes to providing a more efficient transportation system. In their news story, students call attention to the history of redlining and our nation's current climate on police brutality and structural racism. The students discuss, in depth, the struggles of public transportation through the lens of Jazmin Pineda, a UNO student who relies on the public bus system to get to school, work, and the grocery store. Jazmin describes how she faces a 45- to 60-minute commute on a good day. She looks forward to bus conditions in Omaha improving. One

change she hopes to see is estimated arrival times posted at bus stop waiting stations. In their podcast, the journalism students discuss MetroNext which is a five-year plan to build a transportation system on 24th street. MetroNext aims to shape the future of transit in Omaha. Overall, the journalism students are hopeful for a better tomorrow, but they note in order for our communities to see positive changes, it must start with bills at a legislative level.



## WEAR BLACK, GIVE BACK

By: Stef Prieto Pinilla

The Service Learning Academy participated in Wear Black, Give Back for the first time this year! UNO Associate Vice Chancellor Deb Smith-Howell matched, dollar for dollar, the first \$1,000 in gifts made to the Service Learning Academy. A total of \$2,886 was raised through gifts to facilitate the development of high impact Service Learning experiences that transform both our students and community. Overall, the Service Learning Academy placed 13th in the event! This is an impressive accomplishment considering Wear Black, Give Back had 62 organizations participating in the event.

The Wear Black, Give Back fundraising event invites UNO alumni, faculty, staff, students, and friends to wear their



black Maverick gear and make a gift of \$5 or more. This year's 24-hour event collected more than \$360,000 worth of gifts coming from almost every state in the country. These gifts will be used to support student scholarships, student organizations, colleges, departments, athletic teams, and more — all collectively benefiting the more than 15,300 students who attend UNO.

The Wear Black, Give Back event was also featured on all social media sites. The hashtag #WearBlackGiveBack collected hundreds of photos, videos, and messages from UNO supporters expressing their Maverick pride. Additionally, Maverick supporters took part in many social media challenges held by the University of Nebraska at Omaha fund. These challenges created high social media engagement while remaining a fun space where participants could compete for different prizes.

The Service Learning Academy could not thank our donors enough for believing in our mission to support student and community growth. We want to extend our appreciation to all who participated during Wear Black, Give Back as well as all those involved in planning and promoting the event. The Service Learning Academy is looking forward to seeing the impact that Wear Black, Give Back will have in 2022!



## MEET NHAN LE

WEITZ FELLOW



Nhan Le graduated from Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota this past June with a degree in geology. She currently serves as the Weitz Fellow for the service learning academy this year at UNO. In this position,

she has various responsibilities such as assisting in the development of traditional service learning projects between UNO faculty and community partners. She also co-facilitates the Stephenson-Harrington Internship seminar, where she meets with 10 Goodrich Scholars every week to support their professional and personal development. She also focuses on some larger projects throughout the year, such as the planning and coordination of CultureFest and Showcase.

There are many aspects that Nhan enjoys about being a Weitz Fellow. She especially enjoys being able to work with a wide range of people and organizations such as the Service Learning Academy's graduate assistants and various nonprofits in Nebraska. Nhan has also enjoyed connecting with the Goodrich Scholars to learn more about their internship experiences and future goals. Finally, an exciting part of her job is attending different Service Learning projects and seeing them come to fruition!

Nhan has already learned so much as a Weitz Fellow, and she is excited for all of the opportunities to come. This year, Nhan hopes to continue making connections both at the Service Learning Academy, UNO, and in Omaha in general. In Omaha, she has enjoyed exploring the city, learning how to cook new things, and playing with her pet cat.

## MEET LOURIANN NIEMAN

AMERICORPS MEMBER, CAMPUS COMPACT VISTA PROGRAM



Lourianne Nieman is the Service Learning Academy's 2021-2022 AmeriCorps member serving with the Campus Compact Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) Program. Being in service on the UNO campus has given her

a platform to learn more about higher education and the local Omaha community while teaching others about anti-poverty efforts. Lourianne's passion for learning and supporting others through education is further encouraged as she earns her Master's degree in Instructional Design from Northeastern University.

In the Campus Compact VISTA program, members across the country serve organizations that support the eradication of poverty and promote anti-poverty initiatives.

By engaging with community members to identify and utilize local assets, AmeriCorps members work to meet the area's most pressing challenges through capacity building efforts. Being new to the Service Learning Academy and to UNO, Lourianne brings a fresh perspective on current training practices, resource organization, and accessible methods for sharing anti-poverty knowledge. These training practices and resources are shared with UNO faculty, staff, and students that are interested in anti-poverty service learning.

Last year, the Campus Compact VISTA project emphasized the development of sustainable anti-poverty resources and planning service learning projects. As she continues with the Service Learning Academy in the spring, Lourianne plans to utilize past and current VISTA anti-poverty research through accessible trainings. In addition, she plans to develop a sustainable framework for future Service Learning Academy anti-poverty educational sessions.

## FACULTY FELLOWS AMPLIFY SERVICE LEARNING

By: Office of University Communications

As an urban, metropolitan university, UNO's engagement with the community is a vital aspect of what it means to be a Maverick.

Helping lead the charge in the marriage of community impact with classroom learning is UNO's Service Learning Academy, which helps support faculty as they explore and implement ideas on how students can not only learn coursework through application, but also have a significant community impact.

Last year, the Service Learning Academy expanded its Faculty Fellows program to all of UNO's academic colleges as well as UNL's College of Engineering, identifying dedicated faculty who can help answer service learning questions and provide access to support for their college or cross-college unit from the Service Learning Academy.

With the guidance of their deans, these Service Learning Faculty Fellows were able to identify college-specific goals to increase service learning and community engagement teaching and research efforts within their respective colleges.

Here are the 2020-2021 Faculty Fellows who, through their work and leadership, are helping other faculty members get started on their own service learning path or advance their service learning offerings to the next level.



Andrea Weare Ph.D.



Cecile Toomrees Ph.D.



Dhundy Bastala Ph.D.



George Hunt Ph.D.



Joeli Benenson Ph.D.



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UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA  
SERVICE LEARNING ACADEMY  
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## SERVICE LEARNING SEMINAR 2022

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