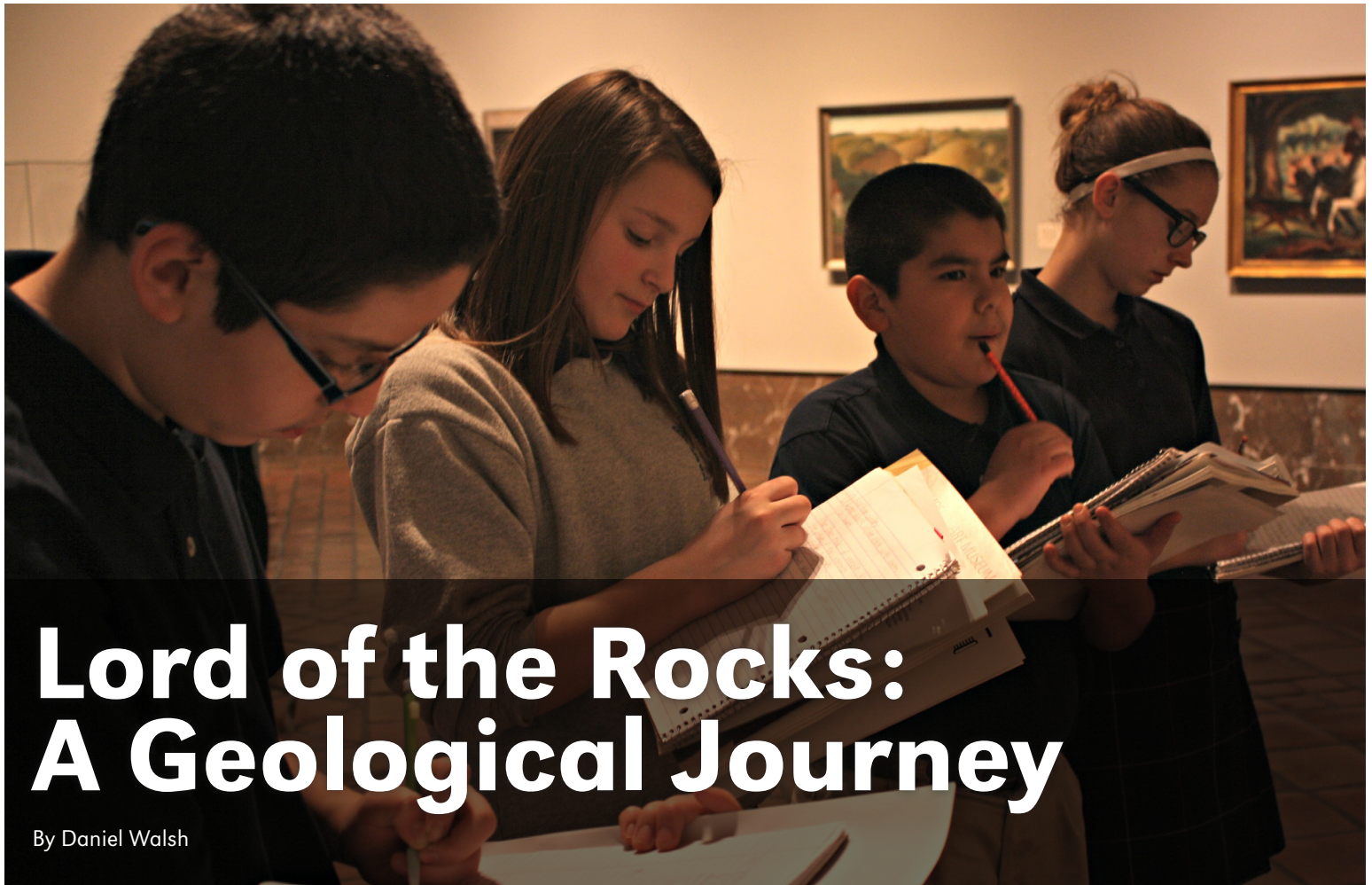




P-16 INITIATIVE

VOLUME 5 | ISSUE 2

SPRING 2015



Lord of the Rocks: A Geological Journey

By Daniel Walsh

A group of students embarked on an epic geological journey this spring at the Joslyn Art Museum. *The Lord of the Rocks* service learning project was a P-16 collaboration between Ms. Shelley Brown's Our Lady of Lourdes 7th graders, Dr. Harmon Maher's UNO Geology students, and the Joslyn Art Museum.

The students created educational tools for future students and visitors by researching the geology behind the architecture of the Joslyn Art Museum. Max,

an OLL student, reflected, "I learned that the Joslyn building is art itself with all the different rocks." The students created an updated ArtPack and an interactive scavenger hunt through the Green Door Labs' EdVenture mobile app.

Student voice was an essential piece in the project: "I like that we have a say in what we do," said Ryan, who, along with his OLL peers, worked with UNO students to develop the ArtPack and the EdVentures.

The students incorporated geological concepts, functions of architecture, and rock selection strategies. They also met with Bruce Carpenter, an HDR architect who worked on the most recent addition to the Joslyn building. Mr. Carpenter presented on the various types of rocks used in the architecture, the reasons for rock selection, and how they arrived in Omaha. Some rocks traveled all the way from Brazil and Italy!

These peer-educational tools will hopefully inspire more

students to make connections between art and science. Through the development of self-efficacy, teamwork, and civic engagement, the project has already had an impact.

"The students become the teachers,"

said Dr. Maher, "and through their efforts the eyes of visitors to this magnificent Joslyn Art Museum can be further opened to the both the science and beauty of this small bit of the earth."



Meet the 2015 Student Service Award Winner

By Angeela Shrestha

Shaylea Valentine, UNO Civil Engineering student, is the 2015 Outstanding Service Learning Student award winner. "She epitomizes the value of service learning through not only her own academic successes and growth but also her willingness to jump into community engagement while still a student herself," remarked Steven Rodie, UNO professor of Biology and Environmental Studies.

Shay's exposure to service learning began during her time at Omaha South High School in the *Characters in Action* student leadership group, where she addressed immigration, voting, and health concerns in collaboration with UNO students. During one of the several service learning projects in which she

participated at UNO, Shay worked as a part of a student team to develop a rainwater harvesting system for City Sprouts, a local community gardening organization. According to Dr. Shannon L. Bartelt-Hunt, "Shay has a genuine interest in the goals and mission of the organizations she works with and is committed to the project even after the class has concluded."

Shay is a founding member of Echo, a UNO student organization focused on STEM education outreach and connecting UNO students to volunteer opportunities in the community. She also founded Girl Power, a weekly group at Gomez Elementary that introduces 3rd and 4th grade girls to STEM careers.



AFROTC Drill Meet

By Tiffany Kelly

On Saturday, February 21st, the UNO Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps (AFROTC) Detachment 470 hosted its 52nd Annual Drill Meet Event at the UNO Sapp Fieldhouse. The AFROTC brought together JROTC cadets from eight local high schools. In addition to drill competitions, the students developed leadership skills and crafted fleece blankets for residents of the Stephen Center Emergency Shelter.

"The highlight for me was delivering our hand-made blankets to the welcoming and grateful hands of the folks at the Stephen's Center," said Captain Joshua Haack, who, along with his colonel and student cadets, visited the Stephen Center's new facility to present the organization with 46 fleece blankets and a monetary donation gathered from the event.

"Truly an enjoyable experience from start to finish!" Captain Haack concluded.



Community Voice

By Ali Baum

This academic year UNO social work students, Monroe Middle School Art Club students, and guests at Siena Francis House explored how to interpret stories into a creative art form.

The P-16 collaboration continued this semester with the group photographing each other's hands and writing photo narratives. The Monroe Middle School Art Club visited UNO Criss Library's new Creative Production Lab where they edited photos for their exhibit at Joslyn Art Museum, became familiar with resources available in the lab space, and witnessed the wonder of 3-D printing. The project culminated on Thursday, May 7th at the Joslyn Art Museum, where members of the community gathered for a celebration and exhibition of the work. The artwork can be found in the Community Gallery. Stop and check it out!

Service Learning is an experiential, collaborative method of teaching using projects that promote academic learning and are tightly linked to course content while meeting the need of the community.



Meet the New SLA Staff

By Rachel Johnson

With the scope of Service Learning at UNO expanding, so too is the Service Learning Academy team! By providing additional project support, these four motivated undergraduate students are blazing a trail for enduring collaboration and success. Meet the newest members of the SLA team!

Amanda Anderson is a junior at UNO majoring in Communication Studies with a minor in Public Relations and Advertising. Her interests include coffee, creating things, and photography. She loves the “family atmosphere of the SLA.” In the future, she hopes to work for TOMS Shoe Company.

Raul Aguilera is a freshman planning to major in Business Administration. His interests include reading, Zumba, and canvas painting. Raul says that working for the SLA has been a great learning experience, and that he is “so very thankful for the amazing staff he gets to work with!” He has big aspirations for the banking world someday.

Allison James is a junior majoring in Elementary Education. Allison enjoys reading, hiking, yoga, and

DIY projects. She loves working for the SLA because of the team’s “dedication to community service, growth, and the comedy that sometimes accompanies our work!” She hopes to pursue a career in teaching—either in a traditional classroom or as a Gifted and Talented Coordinator.

Richard Larson is a senior majoring in Public Relations and Advertising. His interests include travel and making people laugh. Richard says that he loves the collaboration involved in service learning; working in the SLA office has introduced him to “so many people and different organizations that you don’t normally hear about.” He hopes to one day earn an MPA, go back to work for Disney, and eventually star in his own talk show.



Making Connections through Music

By Jodi Korth

The melodious sounds of woodwinds, brass, and percussion could be heard filtering out the doors of the Strauss Performing Arts Center as Millard West High School Spanish students, UNO Music students, and families from the South Omaha Learning Community Center (LCC) explored the community aspects of music. After lunch and an instrument petting zoo, Millard West and LCC families joined UNO students for a rehearsal led by Dr. Karen Fannin, UNO Assistant Professor and Director of Bands.

“I feel privileged to have the opportunity to lead musicians in rehearsals and performances in my role as a conductor and teacher. The interactions between musicians is special, and

I enjoy bringing people in to our rehearsals to witness this interaction and learn about how we make music in an ensemble. Music touches people and resonates with them,” Dr. Fannin reflected.

Younger children in the group participated in music-learning activities led by Millard West Spanish students and their teacher, Ms. Kirsten Ehrke, and Dr. Melissa Berke, UNO Music Department Chair and Coordinator of Music Education. Echoes of newly-learned refrains, guided by the beat of maracas, were heard throughout the afternoon from the group of younger children.

Millard West students shared that the experience was eye opening and provided numerous lessons. “I not only learned about my ability to communicate with others using my Spanish but also about the universal culture of language. It’s amazing how much you can communicate through music even if sometimes there is that language barrier,” remarked Lyanda D.

Dr. Fannin concluded that the event achieved its purpose. “Sometimes music students find themselves most often performing for other musicians or family members and friends. One special aspect of our project was the interaction between ESL speakers and musicians. Forging connections with a community of people through music is a powerful thing!”

CONTACT US:

Paul Sather
Director, 554.6019

Julie Dierberger
P-16 Coordinator, 554.3268

Laura Krueger
Service Learning Associate,
554.2712

Lucy Garza Westbrook
Community Liaison,
554.3055

GRADUATE ASSISTANTS:

Ali Baum 554-4461
Rachel Johnson, 554-4464
Tiffany Kelly, 554-4466

Jodi Korth, 554.4467
Carol Redwing, 554.4463
Angeela Shrestha, 554.4462
Deibi Sibrian, 554.4470
Olivia Tarry, 554.4465
Daniel Walsh, 554.4468
Olga Zeisler, 554.4469

UNDERGRADUATE ASSISTANTS:

Allison James
Amanda Anderson
Raul Aguilera

Visit us at:
unomaha.edu/servicelearning



CultureFest 2015

By Angeela Shrestha

On February 22nd, students from UNO, Beveridge Magnet Middle School and Omaha South High Magnet School, as well as the Omaha community, came together to celebrate and showcase the diversity of cultures in Omaha through performances, exhibits, hands-on activities, ethnic food, and dancing. The Fourth Annual

CultureFest, held at the Barbara Weitz Community Engagement Center (CEC), featured 12 musical and dance performances and 26 exhibition stalls, where different international organizations, cultural groups, and clubs showcased their culture and heritage.

The performances included traditional Mexican, Japanese, Irish, and Polish dances to compliment the many exhibitor tables, which included representatives from such places as Lithuania, Czech Republic, Nepal, and Bangladesh. Ms. Sheila McCauley, Magnet Coordinator at Beveridge, reported that her students look forward to this event, where they can perform dances from South America, drum on African drums, taste food from European countries, learn about henna art, and so much more.

The activities immersed participants in other cultures and broadened Omaha's understanding of the global community. Ms. McCauley credits "a brilliant collaboration between Beveridge, South High School, and UNO P-16 Service Learning."



Living Histories

By Deibi Sibrian

"I believe people should be educated about the history of Latinos; America is populated with many Latinos," said Dalila, a UNO student in Dr. Maria Arbelaez's *Introduction to Chicano/Latino Studies* class. The service learning project was a partnership between Mr. Andrew Brooks' Omaha South High Magnet School Mexican American History class, Dr. Arbelaez's Chicano/Latino Studies students, and El Museo Latino.

"I came in thinking that I was going to show the benefits of being bilingual, and when I left, I found out that I was more of a role model," said Chris, a UNO student. The students collaborated on creating materials for El Museo Latino's educational history trunks that will be used by elementary and high school students in the Omaha area. The students researched such topics as Cinco de Mayo, food, art, culture, and Mexican American history.

The trunks were presented at the Cinco de Mayo Youth Education Conference at UNO and at a reception at El Museo Latino. "The most important topic that I think students should be educated about is immigration. I come from a family who has been through this. It is important to know about the obstacles and conflicts immigrants overcome to have a better life," said Dalila.



Seed to Salad

By Carol Redwing

Seed to Salad, a semester-long artistic cultural exchange project, partnered international relations with biology, botany, and art in a way that engaged students to serve the local Omaha area. Professor Stephanie Lynam's and Professor Linda Hanzek's Intensive Language at UNO

(ILUNO) students collaborated with Ms. Rachel Burn's *Botany and Plants* students from Omaha Northwest High School on a project highlighting the need around the world for fresh, local, and nutritious food to be available to all.

"Around the World" culture presentations at Northwest High School gave students an informative glimpse into the customs, foods, and languages of university students from various nations. Later, Northwest High School students gave American culture presentations to ILUNO students about customs and hobbies popular in the United States. Guest speakers from Why Arts?, a nonprofit dedicated to promoting access to the arts for every age and ability, and the City of Omaha's Adams Park Community Center, a public recreation center that also houses a

community greenhouse, presented to students on UNO's campus. Students then painted two acrylic images of a world focused on building bridges between different nations, which will hang in the Adams Park Community Center's greenhouse.

The last event showcased the importance of greenhouses and gardens. With the help of the nonprofit, Big Gardens, students gathered at Northwest High School to build garden boxes to be housed on the grounds of the high school. Mahra Al Zadjali stated, "In the Seed to Salad project, we got to be in touch with high school students and practiced our English skills. The other side is that being a volunteer in planting is worth the hard work because at the end, it will draw a smile on someone's face."



Addressing Hunger in Omaha

By Olga Zeisler

UNO Thompson Learning Community (TLC) scholars and Partnership 4 Kids students from Lewis & Clark, McMillan, Marrs, Monroe, and Norris Middle Schools were challenged with an ambitious task—end hunger in Omaha. Together, the students explored their strengths through the Gallup *StrengthsFinder Assessment*, toured the partnering Hunger Collaborative food pantry facilities (Together Inc., Heartland Hope Mission, Heart Ministry), and brainstormed action plans to use their strengths to address this goal.

The youth began at full speed by presenting and promoting their ideas, crafting specific goals and schedules, and fine-tuning their action plans. These plans were implemented during the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service events.

At Heartland Hope Mission, the youth created a Twitter campaign for milk donations and dairy advocacy. The students also designed a website for Hunger Collaborative, and organized the pantry.

At Heart Ministry, the students organized furniture, straightened shelves, and filled them with donations. They also sorted pantry donations collected during their school drives, picked up trash, and cleaned the center's community garden.

At Together, Inc., the youth cooked pancakes for a Pancake Feed Drive and collected almost \$900 towards building an Aquaponics system. Mr. Dusten Crichton, the TLC director, shared: "The TLC students are all abuzz! I think they truly found the joy of service and learned much from this experience."

Finally, students led food drives at local HyVee locations. The students campaigned to raise awareness of hunger and collected five barrels of food and about \$300 in cash between two HyVee locations.

With the ambitious goals and innovative approaches to end hunger in Omaha, Hunger Collaborative Coordinator Mr. Craig Howell, said that he couldn't wait for these students to be in charge of the world, "because they get it."



Hope and Health Fair

By Deibi Sibrian

"This project has really opened my eyes to the homeless in Omaha. I'm very excited to work with people at the Open Door Mission," said Ariana, a Burke High School student in Ms. Lee Ann Stover's *Anatomy & Physiology* class.

The Burke students, who began the planning stages of the project in the Fall 2014 semester, worked with UNO's Anatomy Academic Assistants (AAA) students, under the direction of Dr. Karen Murch-Shafer, to host a "Hope and Health Fair" at the Open Door Mission in April.

"It is also a great experience for us. We get to plan and fix all of this and show that we've learned something," said Kristin, a Burke student.

There were stations for all ages, including learning stations geared specifically for kids, led by Burke High School students. Likewise, the UNO AAA

students recruited professionals from the community to donate their time for health stations targeted for adults.

"I really have enjoyed not only learning about these issues in our community, but also getting involved. I hope this program continues on, because it is great!"

said Monica, a Burke student. The instructors hope to turn this project into an annual event.



Milk 4 Kids

By Olivia Tarry

UNO students from Dr. Jeremy Lipschultz's *Social Media Metrics* class, along with students from Skutt Catholic High, Omaha South High Magnet, and Norris Middle School partnered with the Hunger Collaborative to research and advocate on behalf of families in need.

The Hunger Collaborative represents three local food pantries (Together Inc., Heartland Hope Mission, and Heart Ministry Center) that serve thousands of families daily.

According to the Great American Milk Drive, 12 million families across the nation rely on food pantries, especially for milk. However, extreme shortages in milk donations persist. The *Milk 4 Kids* project served the food pantries by collecting money for milk and advocating for families to receive the nutrition they need.

In February, the UNO and K-12 students hosted milk drives at five Baker's Supermarket locations in Omaha and Bellevue, in collaboration with the Great American Milk Drive.

The students passed out informational flyers, spoke with customers about their research, and used social media to recruit donors. These marketing skills encouraged customers to add \$3 to their bill at checkout, the estimated amount for a gallon of milk. All the proceeds of the milk drive supported Hunger Collaborative pantries.

UNO students in the *Social Media Metrics* course measured the impact of social media during the drive. In four hours during the Baker's milk drive, students raised \$1,701—more than 560 gallons of milk! Craig Howell, Coordinator of the Hunger Collaborative, stated, "The campaign educated and advocated about hunger and put in place a social media communication model and collaborative model that can make a lasting change and greatly increase nutritious choices in our city food pantries. The kids became change agents and we were changed for the better."



Learning Kindness through Service

By Ali Baum

In order to address challenges facing dogs and cats in Omaha, students from Professor Jacqueline Reiser's *Social Work and Civic Engagement* class and the Completely KIDS shelter program collaborated with the Nebraska Humane Society in a campaign to "Be Kind to Animals." At the beginning of the semester, students visited the Nebraska Humane Society to interact with animals and receive a tour of the facility, where they learned about the needs of the animals and available services that the shelter offers. Students also experienced the calming effects that a physical connection can have for dogs and cats.

Lulu Rangel, Program Coordinator for Completely KIDS, offered her insight on the project: "It's amazing to see even the little kids realize the importance of finding a home for these animals. It doesn't take these kids very long to understand the importance of the project we're doing. I've had kids say to me 'We have moms to help us find a home, but these cats and dogs don't have anyone!' To see these kids put their all into the projects we do really warms my heart."

Throughout the remainder of the semester, students created a variety of necessities for dogs and cats at the shelter, including adoption signs, rope toys, and blankets. At the end of the semester, students proudly presented approximately 150 gifts to the animals.

Letter from the Program Coordinator

This year the Service Learning Academy celebrates its 15th birthday! We happily look back and celebrate the future as we celebrate with our partners on this milestone:

- Our new office in the Barbara Weitz Community Engagement Center has allowed for invigorating access to space, campus, and community partners excited to collaborate on new service learning partnerships and deepen existing ones. Each semester UNO has over 100 service learning designated courses that represent all six colleges.
- The third annual Service Learning Seminar Alumni event showcased transformative service learning partnerships, service learning impacts on attendance, and best practices in service learning pedagogy. Dr. Barbara Holland, UNO Distinguished Community Engagement Professor, applauded the innovative service learning employed in Omaha and encouraged continued growth and development.
- The seventh Service Learning Seminar is scheduled for July 13-17, 2015, and we have a record number of participants registered. If your school is interested in service learning professional development opportunities, please contact me at jdierberger@unomaha.edu.
- Best practices in service learning have been shared at conferences around the country. This year a P-16 team attended the Improving University Teaching conference in Vancouver and provided a workshop session to raving reviews. Another group attended the National Service Learning Conference in Washington, DC, and provided a roundtable and showcase of service learning in Omaha. I authored a book chapter on P-16 Service Learning Partnerships in the Sage publication, *Service Learning and Civic Engagement*. If you want to share your scholarship and best practices, please contact us!

As we blow out the candles and make a wish for a new academic year, we hope for continued partnership with our treasured community partners and instructors around the city. Through service learning, students are engaged in their learning, their communities, and see college as a welcoming place. Thank you for being a part of it!

Sincerely,

Julie Dierberger, P-16 Coordinator

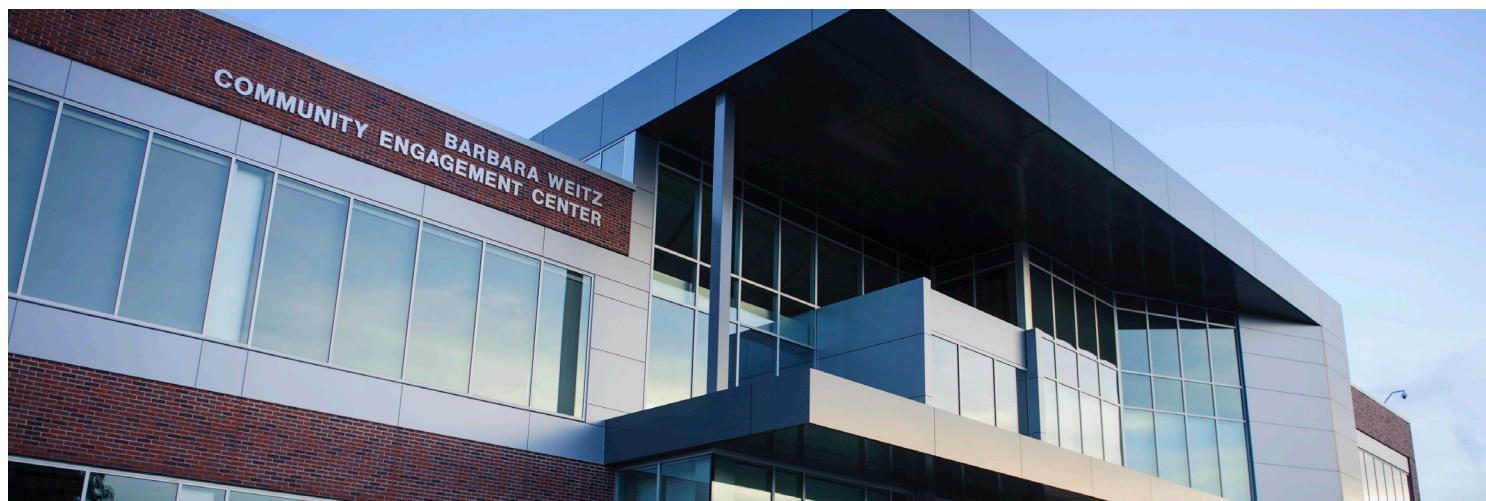
UNO is the recipient of the Presidential Award for the Economic Opportunity category of the 2014 President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll. This award recognizes institutions with service programs that build economic independence, increase family stability, and create more sustainable and resilient communities. Institutions in this category are engaged in service that improves the financial well-being and security of economically disadvantaged individuals.



UNIVERSITY OF
Nebraska
Omaha

The University of Nebraska at Omaha does not discriminate based on gender, age, disability, race, color, religion, marital status, veteran's status, national or ethnic origin, genetic information, political affiliation or sexual orientation.

Barbara Weitz Community Engagement Center 216
6001 Dodge Street
Omaha, NE 68182



SERVICE LEARNING ACADEMY
P-16 INITIATIVE

Save the Date
2016 SERVICE LEARNING SEMINAR

July 11-15, 2016

Registration available September 2015

unomaha.edu/servicelearning