In recognition for its commitment to the community, Nebraska Methodist College has been the recipient of numerous awards and grants. These recognitions reinforce the intentional efforts of the Center, which works to eliminate health disparity by increasing access to education and healthcare to underserved populations.

The Corporation for National and Community Service honored NMC and the Center for Health Partnerships with a place on the 2011 President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll – With Distinction. NMC is one of only three schools in Nebraska, and one of 110 colleges and universities nationwide to receive an award With Distinction. This is the fifth straight year by which NMC has been named to the Honor Roll.

The Center received the traditional Upward Bound grant in the amount of $1.25 million for a five year period which began on June 1. Additionally, in collaboration with the Teen Center at St. Luke United Methodist Church, the Center was awarded the College Access Challenge Grant from the State of Nebraska in the amount of $100,000 over a period of three years for the Upward Bound program. These two grants will allow for continued programming for NMC Upward Bound.

The Center also partnered with OneWorld Community Center for a Minority Health grant from the State of Nebraska. The Center received $44,000 to support the Our Families’ Health program. Our Families’ Health is a lay health worker training program and prepares individuals to be health promoters in the community. The grant, targeting the Latino population in Dodge and Sarpy counties, provides funding for continued diabetes education and prevention efforts.

With this increased funding and recognition, the Center will be able to expand its outreach into the community, developing new programming and establishing additional partnerships to deepen our impact on health.
Mobile Diabetes Center Update

The spring semester in 2012 once again proved to be an active one for the Mobile Diabetes Center (MDC) here at Nebraska Methodist College. Faculty, staff and students have worked hard to build a viable community outreach program during the inaugural year of Center for Health Partnerships’ collaboration with Cosmopolitan International. The MDC continues to focus on health prevention and education, as it relates to diabetes prevention and recognition in Nebraska and Iowa.

Services offered to the community this past spring continued to include blood pressure, height/weight/BMI screenings, diabetes risk assessment, foot care and cholesterol screenings. Education explaining the importance of each of the health screens is provided to all screening participants. Late in the spring semester an instrument to provide a non-diagnostic HbA1c for people already diagnosed with diabetes was added to the list of available screenings offered by the MDC.

Nursing students across the curriculum are given the opportunity to take part providing screenings with the MDC. The NRS 450 nursing course continued to visit Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging (ENOA) Senior Centers both here in the metropolitan area and in surrounding rural towns, providing much needed foot care and diabetes related health screenings. The NRS 350 nursing course continued their visits to Macy, Winnebago and the Intercultural Senior Center. Students and faculty in this course also helped host a successful health screening at Community Alliance in Omaha. NRS 340 students and the MDC successfully worked with the Families in Action program and NRS 220 students continued to provide screenings at the Benson Baptist Food Pantry every fourth Saturday of the month in January, February, March and April. The Accelerated Nursing Program (ACE) has also been actively involved in community outreach with the MDC at the Somali Bantu Center and the GI Forum this past spring.

The MDC has continued to be busy throughout the summer months with Cosmopolitan International Club screenings in Sioux City, Council Bluffs, Blair and Fremont. In addition, the CFHP once again worked with Congressman Lee Terry and the MDC to provide screenings at an OHA Senior Tower and the Center Mall.

In the fall, MDC services will expand to include Sonography students providing free, non-diagnostic peripheral vascular screenings called Ankle Brachial Indexes (ABI). Free flu shots will be offered to underinsured and uninsured community members in conjunction with Nebraska Methodist Health System Community Benefits.

The number of people served January to April totaled 427, as compared to 351 people served February through July of last year. The MDC outreach program in partnership with Cosmopolitan International continues to grow and provide practical experiences for NMC students and meaningful services to our community.
**NMC Upward Bound Update**

It doesn’t seem possible that Upward Bound just completed its fourth summer program! Nebraska Methodist College Upward Bound has been providing great opportunities for students during the summer since 2009 and each summer just keeps getting better. Here is an overview of all of the great happenings this summer, and some other exciting updates!

We kicked off the summer program with an Amazing Race in downtown Omaha. Three teams of students competed to complete 15 tasks in a scavenger-style hunt through the city. To celebrate their hard work, we headed to Old Chicago for a pizza buffet lunch. Afterwards, we cruised around Heartland of America Park on a gondola. It was a great kick off to our Summer Program!

Meanwhile, our graduated seniors were starting their first college classes at Nebraska Methodist College. Eleven seniors lived on campus and took English Composition or the Nursing Assistant course. They also were able to live in the apartments at Josie’s Village...they had a great time!

Once the retreat was over, it was back to work at NMC. Our students took math, science, and English classes each morning. In the afternoons, students selected two electives based on their interest. Throughout the summer program, the students worked on a team project based around the theme, C.E.O: Creating Educational Opportunities. Students created their own businesses that created and sold hand lotion. In the science lab, students experimented with many different concoctions until they found the perfect lotion. In math, they figured out the cost and profit margins. In English, they created their written business plan and marketing strategies. At the end of the Summer Program, our students got to present their projects to a group of panelists. All three teams did great work!

Students also participated in Community Service Days by volunteering at the Salvation Army, Open Door Mission, Omaha Housing Authority, and Habitat for Humanity. After all their hard work, students rounded out the summer with several Field Trip Days. We visited Skate Daze, Mahoney State Park, and the zoo! Finally, after six great weeks of work and play, students and staff headed to Des Moines for three days to celebrate. We visited the Iowa State Capitol, Grandview University, Adventureland Amusement Park, took in a professional soccer game, and of course, the mall! Our kids (and staff!) had a blast!

In other great happenings, 100% of our Upward Bound Seniors graduated from high school this past May, and five Upward Bound Seniors received college scholarships through a grant we received. Additionally, two of our students earned the Buffett Scholarship and one earned the prestigious Gates Millennium scholarship. We are very proud of our Upward Bound seniors! Our underclassman also had a great year, with the average cumulative GPA rising above 3.0.

The most exciting news this summer was our notification of renewed funding for five more years for the Upward Bound program. Additionally, in partnership with St Luke United Methodist Church, we received the College Access Challenge Grant for an additional three years. We are very excited about continuing to serve our students!

If you are interested in learning more about the program, or volunteering in any capacity, please contact Allison Kinney-walker at Allison.kinney-walker@methodistcollege.edu, or (402)354-7121.
The impact of Our Families’ Health (OFH) continues to expand in the Spanish-speaking communities of Nebraska and Iowa. In February 2012 Our Families’ Health entered a long-term grant partnership with OneWorld Community Health Centers, Inc. with funds provided by the Office of Minority Health. The overall purpose of the grant is to establish a community outreach diabetes program to include diabetes testing, education and ongoing care to Spanish-speaking communities residing in Western Sarpy and Dodge Counties of Nebraska through June 2013.

From February through March 2012 forty community health promoters completed the five scheduled in-class sessions occurring at NMC. The practicum hours, targeting diabetes, began in May at a community neighborhood block party near 19th and Vinton St. in Omaha that emphasized family health. Our Families’ Health worked with NMC faculty and 15 nursing students, as well as the Mobile Diabetes Center. Over 200 community members received screenings for glucose and cholesterol, blood pressure, and BMI. Our Families’ Health participants educated attendees regarding diabetes, hypertension, obesity, physical activity and nutrition.

The children of the community health promoters are actively participating in the OFH program as well, by promoting the increase of activity levels among children through dance. The group, called the Our Families’ Health Dancin’ Divas performed on May 12. In recognition for their contributions, the OFH Dancin’ Divas were honored as guests of the CHP for a visit to the Henry Doorly Zoo and lunch with Upward Bound Director, Allison Kinney-Walker and the NMC Upward Bound students.

In an ongoing partnership with the Intercultural Senior Center, OFH has also been providing health-related education to senior citizens in attendance at the center. These presentations occur every month.

Additionally, Our Families’ Health has responded to the increasing NMC online learning needs of students by seeking service-learning and community engagement activities to accommodate distant learners and communities in areas they live. Recently NMC students were able to contribute over 60 service-learning hours with El Centro de las Américas, located in Lincoln, by assisting with a GED in Spanish and Citizenship mentoring program.
Center Officially Welcomes Its Newest Member

The Center for Health Partnerships is excited to welcome Dr. Jose Villegas to the CfHP staff effective July 1, 2012. As faculty within the Center for Health Partnerships, Dr. Villegas will be responsible for the Our Families’ Health program, coordinating community outreach initiatives locally, nationally and internationally, with a focus on Spanish-speaking populations. Our Families Health prepares individuals to engage as health promoters in underserved communities.

Dr Villegas piloted the Our Families’ Health program in the Spring of 2011. Currently, he is working with OneWorld Community Health Center, Inc. on a Minority Health grant which funds the Our Families’ Health outreach. As Our Families’ Health Coordinator for the CfHP, Dr. Villegas will develop additional partnerships in order to expand this lay healthcare worker program. Currently, Dr. Villegas is exploring partnering locally with the Mayan community and the Somali Bantu.

Dr. Villegas, a licensed physician in Mexico, graduated from NMC in 2002 with a Master of Science in Health Promotion. He has coordinated Binational Health Week since its inception in 2005, and helped to establish the Health Window at the Mexican Consulate, where many NMC students have completed community clinical hours. Dr. Villegas arranged the visit of the Secretary of Health to NMC in May 2011, and has been working to develop opportunities for collaboration and exchange with Xalapa Mexico.

In his successful application for the 2012 Spirit of Service Award, Dr. Villegas wrote, “Since my introduction to NMC, prior to my employment, I have considered this organization an avenue for me to serve others. In this mind-set, enthusiastically, I have developed a network of NMC community partners and coordinated community outreach initiatives locally, nationally and internationally.” We are very pleased to welcome Dr. Villegas as CfHP staff in order that he may continue this important work.

CfHP Welcomes Community Scholar

Areial Thompson

CfHP is proud to welcome Areial Thompson as the first Community Scholar in our Community Scholars program. The Community Scholars program is designed to offer senior nursing students, who are interested in public health, an opportunity to further explore those interests and develop skills for effective health care provision and promotion in the community. As Community Scholars, students identify a public health issue on which to concentrate and then work with community health agency addressing that issue throughout their senior year. Areial has chosen the issue of children’s mental health and has been conducting interviews over the summer to find the right placement with a community organization. We are very excited to hear more about Areial’s work as her senior year progresses.
School Health Data and Child Obesity Policy

Dr. Rauner has been working with Lincoln Public Schools to gather data regarding trends in BMI for students enrolled in Lincoln Public Schools. With the support of the Superintendent, Partnership for a Healthy Lincoln has been able to gather a substantial amount of data which it has analyzed and is using in its attempt to drive policy change in the State of Nebraska.

Recognizing that a push to change school policies would be most successful if the changes were linked to improved academic performance, Dr. Rauner first looked for a connection between BMI and academic performance. Analysis of the data, however, revealed none. Data analysis did, however, uncover a substantial link between physical fitness and academic performance. Staff at Partnership for a Healthy Lincoln are now using this data to push for changes in school and education policy which will help to get kids moving more and increase their physical fitness level.

Much can be learned from the model employed by Dr. Rauner and Partnership for a Healthy Lincoln. We need to be working with our community partners to gather good data on the problems we face together. We need to be willing to follow that data where it leads us, being open to new ways of seeing old problems. Building our capacity to gather and analyze data will put us in a strong position to advocate for the policy changes necessary to truly improve the health and well being of our community. At CfHP, we believe that the development of our Community-Based Participatory Research Faculty Fellows Program is an important step toward building this capacity at NMC.

Spirit of Service Award Recipient Announced

A new award has been created in an effort to recognize and acknowledge the community contributions of NMC’s faculty and staff. The recipient receives an invitation to participate in the Academic Travel Abroad trip in December. This year, the recipient will have the opportunity to travel to Italy.

The first Spirit of Service Award, which is administered through the Center for Health Partnerships, was awarded to Jose Villegas during the College-wide Forum on May 8th. Villegas has been an active member in the Omaha community, specifically with the Latino population, in promoting healthy lifestyles. His collaborative outreach efforts are directly in line with the mission of the Center.

Due to unforeseen circumstances, Villegas will not be able to participate in the 2012 ATA trip to Italy, but is guaranteed a position for the 2013 destination. Erika Pritchard of Student Developmental Services will be going in his place. Pritchard is recognized for her efforts in the community as an ESL tutor, and because of her active role with her church.

Please join us in congratulating both Jose and Erika for their well-deserved recognition!
Omaha Tribe Graduates Nurse Aides

A celebratory reception was held for four students of the Omaha Tribe in Macy, NE for the successful completion of NMC’s Nurse Aide program. The event, held on May 11 at Nebraska Indian Community College (NICC), commenced with an opening prayer in the native Omaha language. Students received a certificate of completion from course instructor Amme Melegrito, and congratulatory remarks from Dawne Price, Dean of Students at NICC. The efforts of the students were also acknowledged by several family members, friends of the graduates and Dr. Micheal Oltrogge, president of NICC. At the close of the ceremony, the students were blessed by an Omaha council tribal member with a special Omaha tribal blessing.

Through the efforts of NICC and partnering organization, Carl T. Curtis Health Center in Macy, the students are hopeful to find positions as nurse aides at the nursing home.

The course was offered through collaborative efforts by NMC and NICC. This is the first cohort of students to have completed the program from the Omaha Tribe.

Community-based participatory research is a "collaborative approach to research that equitably involves all partners in the research process and recognizes the unique strengths that each brings. CBPR begins with a research topic of importance to the community, has the aim of combining knowledge with action and achieving social change to improve health outcomes and eliminate health disparities."

WK Kellogg Foundation Community Health Scholars Program

Faculty Fellows Program at NMC

We need to document all the great work NMC does to impact the health and well being of the community. Recognizing this need to disseminate and deepen our impact, The Center for Health Partnerships is developing a Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) Faculty Fellows Program, beginning in Fall 2012. At this point, 13 faculty members from across NMC divisions are signed up to be part of this important project.

In the fall semester 2012, faculty members will begin meeting once a month to learn more about CBPR. After Fall Break, participants will form teams to identify potential community partners and develop research proposals. In January 2013, these teams (including community partners) will present research proposals to other Fellows. Fellows will critique each other’s proposals and assist teams in refining research plans in light of CBPR best practices.

After revising research proposals, faculty and community partners will conduct research projects during the Spring and Summer Semesters, 2013. Teams will submit their research for publication or presentation in the Fall of 2013. CFHP will assist with identifying journals for publication and conferences for presentation. UNO is hosting the International Association for Research on Service-learning and Community Engagement (IARSLCE) in the Fall of 2013. This would be an excellent conference at which research teams could present.
Azaleas and pearl bushes in full bloom, Rainbow Row and shrimp and grits were just a few of the elements that welcomed six members of the NMC community during spring break in March of this year. From March 11 through March 17, five nursing students and one nursing faculty immersed themselves in the hospitality of the South by visiting Charleston, SC. The student participants, Tiffany Dobson, Desiree Hudgins, Monica Ognissanti, Lexy Quandt, Ashley Tonniges and nursing faculty, Corlis Hayden received a history lesson at Fort Sumter, listened to ghost stories at the historic Old Charleston Jail, and revered at the many churches of Charleston, but their time in the Low Country was not all about tourism. These six individuals spent the week working in the community and making a difference with their knowledge and skills.

Through an agreement made with the Charleston County District Schools, the students were able to assist with hearing tests and health screens for students enrolled in the Head Start program at the elementary schools. Additionally, the participants were able to shadow the school nurses and mental health therapists during the day, exposing our students to a “day in the life” of each profession. The NMC students also had the opportunity to present their own research on a variety of topics including breastfeeding, childhood nutrition, postpartum depression and diabetes management to the staff at the school.

On the third day, the group spent the day on site of a Habitat for Humanity house-build on St. John’s Island. The team worked alongside students from other colleges and universities to build a deck and side the home. The final two days were spent assisting at the LowCountry Food Bank. The students met with an onsite nutritionist and learned about many of the factors that contribute to the high numbers of individuals who receive assistance from the food bank. The students came prepared with questions about the underlying causes of hunger and poverty in the Charleston community. After their discussion, the group arranged over 200 Emergency Preparedness kids in preparation for hurricane season. On the second day at the food bank, the group completed 400 meal boxes that were then distributed in the local schools. These meal boxes provided nourishment over the weekend for children and their families after it was determined that several of the children were not eating any meals until school began again the following week.

When not working or touring, the group found themselves relaxing at the Youth Center at Bethel United Methodist Church, which adjoined the College of Charleston campus. They also were treated to dinner at the home of one of the student participants’ sister who lives in Charleston.

Four of the five students participated in spring break immersion as a fulfillment of their non-clinical nursing elective. The research and public student reflections upon their return to Omaha were part of the course requirements.

“It was a great experience that touched my heart... I am excited to take the information I have learned on this journey and apply it to my nursing practice back in the Midwest.”
Rosebud Winter Clothing Drive

In October of 2011, two vans pulled up to a red broken-down building located on Rosebud Indian Reservation which would be called “home” for nine Methodist nursing students and two instructors for the next week. Given that the average minimum temperature on the reservation for that month was 37°C and that it was raining, it was no wonder that we were freezing while unloading the vans in the dark of night. Throughout the week, we had the opportunity to participate in nursing activities in the areas of home health, emergency, and school nursing, among others. Although significant nursing skills were developed during our time on the Reservation, I benefited most from gaining cultural competence.

While on the reservation I observed poverty, homelessness, alcoholism, teenage pregnancy, and the prevalence of suicide. I learned how years of oppression and degradation of the native population by the government and surrounding counties continues the cycle of maladaptive behaviors and perhaps even self-hating. Upon returning home, I recognized that despite struggling financially due to tuition, a mortgage, and providing for two children, that I still have a warm, safe and secure home filled with essentials to keep me and my family comfortable.

One day in December, I was at a local retail store where there was a sale on winter gloves with each pair priced at $0.69 each. It was such a bargain that I bought five pairs. It later occurred to me that I had no need for so many gloves. That is when the idea of putting together a clothing drive for Rosebud Reservation came to mind.

The need for a clothing drive was evident to me based on my observations made on the reservation. Allow me to paint a picture for you: The estimated income in 2009 was $11,697 per capita and 48.8% of residents live below the poverty line. Being located in South Dakota, snow and frigid temperatures are a guarantee come winter.

I sent out emails and posted fliers on campus to notify students and staff that I would be collecting winter apparel until spring break of 2012. The response was heartwarming. I took home boxes and bags of clothing and coats on a daily basis. At a point, I received so much apparel that it was too much to box it all up and send to Rosebud with the fall 2012 immersion trip. I boxed up the maximum amount that could fit on the van. The remaining items were donated to the Stephen Center located in South Omaha which provides guidance and support for individuals who are homeless or who struggle with addiction and poverty.

The idea of the clothing drive was mine, but the success of the drive can be attributed to the generosity of the students and staff at Nebraska Methodist College. Thank you.

Article Submitted by Kerry Wedel, BSN Student

Introducing College at an Early Age

The halls of NMC were not exactly quiet at the end of the spring semester this year. On May 14 and 15, more than 120 fourth graders from Spring Lake Magnet filed through the corridors of NMC learning about the various health professions that we offer at NMC. The students participated in activities in the Nursing, Physical Therapist Assistant Radiologic Technology and Respiratory Care labs. More importantly though, the fourth graders learned about what it takes to be a college student. Current NMC students toured the fourth graders and their teachers around the campus and discussed everything from study habits, to what it is like to live on campus, to how much money it costs for a college education.

Fourth Grade Learning Day has been a tradition at NMC for several years, but CFHP has recently acquired the role of coordinating the efforts because of its vision to provide college preparation for at risk individuals. CFHP is optimistic about maintaining the relationship with Spring Lake Magnet for future programming efforts.
The Center for Health Partnerships

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"Impacting the Community through Education and Service"

Important Dates

Tuesday, August 14th
Faculty Service-Learning Immersion on Refugee Integration

Wednesday, August 22nd
11:00am—1:00pm
Involvement Fair in the Hood Lobby
Learn how to get involved with CFHP

Monday, September 10th
5:30—7:30pm
Ronald McDonald House Dinner

Tuesday, September 11th
9/11 National Day of Service

October 8th—12th
Fall Break Service Immersion to Rosebud Reservation

Tuesday, October 23rd
5:30—7:30pm
Ronald McDonald House Dinner

Saturday, October 27th
Make a Difference Day

Mission Driven:
Nebraska Methodist College educates health care professionals who positively influence the health and wellbeing of the community.

CFHP Mission
The Center for Health Partnerships, a division of Nebraska Methodist College, promotes healthy communities through partnerships that focus on providing basic health care, health care education, and related learning opportunities to underserved populations.

CFHP Vision
The Center for Health Partnerships actively eliminates health disparities through health care access and education.

The CHP will be synonymous with excellence in diabetes education and prevention efforts.

The CHP will be synonymous with excellence in educational advancement for at risk individuals.