For the sixth consecutive year, Nebraska Methodist College has been placed on the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll. This acknowledgement recognizes the significant commitment that the members of NMC have to the community both in and around Nebraska. Through the ongoing partnerships, community education and community driven efforts, we are making an impact and fulfilling our mission to promote healthy communities. This issue of the newsletter highlights the many individuals and programs that have contributed to our success.

Overwhelmingly Broken

On Tuesday, January 29th, the Center for Health Partnerships collaborated with Film Streams, a non-profit cinema, to present a sold-out screening and discussion of director Peter Nicks’ acclaimed health care documentary, *The Waiting Room*. The film is an un-narrated, behind-the-scenes look at the emergency department at a public hospital in Oakland, California. Weaving together the stories of multiple people who need a variety of services from an overtaxed and remarkably compassionate hospital staff, the film provides a host of insights into health and health care in American society. This collaboration was part of Film Streams’ Community Development Program.

Following the film showing, a panel, made up of representatives from the two trauma hospitals in Omaha, worked to unpack insights the film provided into health and health care in Omaha. Panelists included: MJ Egan, staff nurse, The Nebraska Medical Center; Dr. William Gossman, Associate Professor of Emergency Medicine, Creighton University School of Medicine; Rosanna Morris, Sr. Vice President, Patient Care Service/Chief Nursing Officer, The Nebraska Medical Center and Dr. Robert Muelleman, Chair, UNMC Department of Emergency Medicine. The discussion was moderated by Dr. Richard O’Brien, professor at Creighton Center for Health Policy and Ethics.

The discussion that ensued was audience driven and focused on particular challenges faced in providing Omaha emergency and trauma care. It was particularly timely as Omaha works to understand the effects that the Alegent/Creighton merger and the implementation of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act will have on health care in our community. The audience included representatives of a broad array of healthcare related entities in Omaha and a substantial number of NMC students and faculty.

Visit http://www.whatruwaitingfor.com/film to view the film’s trailer.
**Mobile Diabetes Center Update**

The innovative partnership that sponsors the Mobile Diabetes Center (MDC) between Center for Health Partnerships at Nebraska Methodist College and Cosmopolitan International is entering its third year! The relationship began in January of 2011.

The MDC has provided new learning opportunities for students with a focus on prevention of diabetes and diabetes related illness in the community.

The Cosmopolitan International civic service organization principal effort is directed at the fight against diabetes. The thirteen Cosmo Clubs of the Cornbelt Federation provide a mobile clinic, driver and the supplies and equipment for free non-diagnostic, diabetes related health screenings. The MDC travels throughout Nebraska and Eastern Iowa.

The Cosmopolitan International values of unity, service and action compliment NMC’s core values of, caring, excellence, holism, learning and respect.

The CfHP sponsors the partnership for the College with an MSN faculty member acting as the Mobile Diabetes Coordinator. Faculty supervise students as they conduct non-diagnostic, diabetes related health screenings and relevant education in the community.

The CfHP is looking forward to expanding services once again along with the opportunity for students to participate in interdisciplinary collaboration in 2013. Sonography students will begin offering peripheral vascular Ankle Brachial Index (ABI) screening during the second half of this year. The concept of glucose regulation is being leveled across the curriculum to coincide with student experiences in the community with the MDC. Nursing students at the sophomore, junior and senior level have been able to practice assessment, and communication skills in a variety of community settings. The skill level of assessment and health screenings increased proportionately with the level of the student.

Students reported feeling that they were empowered to make a difference in the lives of the screening participants. Faculty reported that students were engaged in this aspect of community nursing as well as the topic of diabetes prevention and education.

The Cosmopolitans have very exciting news; they are actively working to raise funds for a new mobile clinic! The current MDC was originally an RV that was remodeled into a clinic. With input from faculty and students a new mobile clinic will be designed and built as a mobile clinic. They plan to introduce the new unit in 2014.

This collaborative partnership has effectively engaged students in the community and offers an alternative to traditional community clinical sites with the benefit of focusing on diabetes prevention and diabetes related health issues.

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**CfHP Welcomes its Newest AmeriCorps Service Scholar**

I’m Amberley Proctor: a traditional BSN student here at Nebraska Methodist College. I transferred to NMC this past year from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where I studied biochemistry. I plan on becoming a pediatric nurse practitioner because of my love for children. While attending nursing school, I serve as a waitress and a nanny. I have also been on the position as the AmeriCorps Service Scholar for the Mobile Diabetes Center! In this position I will attend screenings to help collect and organize client information, help recruit volunteers for screenings and clinics, maintain a working inventory of all the supplies on the Mobile Diabetes Center, and most importantly, serve our surrounding communities and make an impact on their lives. I am very excited for this opportunity to make a difference and give back!
NMC Upward Bound Update

It is hard to believe we are already half way through the 3rd quarter and nearing spring break in the Upward Bound program! The fall semester was full of activities, and we started off the new year with lots of exciting opportunities for our students. Also, our Upward Bound seniors have been busy with college applications and scholarship essays! Here is a recap of the past semester.

Our after-school tutoring program was in full swing and Upward Bound students totaled up over 1,700 hours of tutoring in the first semester. We welcomed a new AmeriCorps volunteer and several volunteers from St. Luke to assist the Burke teachers with providing academic support to our students. One of the most exciting additions this past semester was Nadira Ford-Robbins. Nadira joined the Upward Bound team as Program Coordinator in November and has hit the ground running. She is an outstanding addition to the staff and has done a great job of building relationships with the students and planning some great events!

At the end of October, a group of six students headed to St. Charles, Illinois for a Leadership Conference. They had a great time learning about leadership styles and skills, as well as some swimming and shopping! In November, we had our second annual Family Fun Night during Parent/Teacher Conferences which was a great success. The Mobile Diabetes Unit provided free flu shots and blood pressure checks to families. The semester ended with our annual Thanksgiving Dinner, Bell Ringing for the Salvation Army, and our Finals Study Session.

After a short break for the holiday, our students were back at it in January. We had an Alumni Dinner to catch up with our students who are now in college, volunteered at Open Door Mission on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, and held our third annual Prom Dress Event.

February was full with a group of 30 students attending the Drum Line Live event at the Orpheum theatre, Tax/FAFSA Night for Seniors and Alums, and participation in the One Billion Rising Event at NMC. We also have students participating in the poetry competition, “Louder than a Bomb” and weekly ACT Prep classes. Needless to say, it has been busy!

In the coming weeks, we have visits to UNL and Northwest Missouri State planned, a Sharing our Traditions Party, eleven students attending the Black College Tour, and a Saturday College field trip to Winnebago Native American Reservation. Meanwhile, we are busy planning for the 2013 Summer Program and have lots of exciting activities planned for the summer!

Staff Continues to Grow by Leaps & Bounds

Nadira Ford-Robbins joined the NMC Upward Bound team in the fall semester. Nadira writes:

I was born and raised in Staten Island, NY until I moved to Omaha, NE at the age of 9, and I’ve been here ever since. I come from a very big family with seven other siblings. I am married to my wonderful husband of five years, Terrell, and we have three kids: Kalila, 8, Keyonu, 5, and Israel 18 mos. I attended UNO for my undergraduate career as a Goodrich Scholar, and received my Bachelor of Science in Speech Communication with a minor in Psychology in 2006. I received my Master in Organizational Leadership from College of Saint Mary in 2010. I am a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc, and I chair a mentoring committee within that organization. I love to be around people, I love to dance, and I love animal print (especially zebra and leopard). I also collect elephants.

I love working in Upward Bound because it allows me to give back to the demographic of students that I once was in. I too was a first-generation, low-income college student, and I know what it is like to be one of the first in your family to further your education; uncharted territory of sorts. Working in Upward Bound, I am able to assist Burke High students with preparing for college through academic advising, ACT preparation, financial aid assistance, college visits, and cultural enrichment activities. I plan and coordinate many of the programming activities for the students, along with the others on the Upward Bound and College Challenge teams.

Nadira has worked with NMC and the Center in her previous roles before joining our Upward Bound team. We are excited to have her officially be a part of our CfHP family!
**Louder Than a Bomb Explodes in Omaha**

If you are around the Great Room at St. Luke United Methodist Church on Wednesdays after 3:45, you’ll hear some teenagers repeating “toy boat” and “I wish to wash my Irish wristwatch” as quickly and precisely as possible. It’s part of their warm up for a poetry workshop, preparing them to represent St. Luke’s Teen Center in the Louder Than a Bomb poetry festival/competition on March 20th and 27th. The students have been working on their poems, now they have to work on performing them.

Their coach, Nicholas, isn’t easy on them. Alicia* stands on a chair while reading her poem because she has to stay focused and balanced, rather than swaying and slowly backing away from everyone. All of them get flustered as they have to expound on “If I was a sound it would be ...” because “boom” isn’t descriptive enough. Nicholas encourages the students to dig deeper and be more expressive. When they read their poems though, there is no question; they are expressive. Alicia’s poem, about a girl who feels she’s not pretty enough to be popular and not smart enough for her studies, has such mature rhythm, structure, and wording that it’s hard to imagine it could be autobiographical.

They still have a lot of work ahead of them. Louder Than a Bomb (LTaB) is a high energy and serious poetry competition. You can’t just get up with your poem and read it off the paper you wrote it on. Performing the memorized poem is as important as the words. LTaB, started in Chicago by Young Chicago Authors, is one of the largest team-based, youth poetry slams and has spread nationwide. “Poetry slams” have their detractors, but the bottom line is that these kids work hard on their writing and they perform with their hearts. How could that be bad? You can see a trailer of the critically acclaimed documentary about LTaB on its website www.louderthanabombfilm.com

LTaBOmaha is sponsored by The Nebraska Writer’s Collective and runs March 17 through April 20 at different venues around Omaha. St. Luke’s will compete Wednesday, March 20 at 6:30pm at Metropolitan Community College: South Campus and Wednesday, March 27 at 6:30pm at Metropolitan Community College: Fort Campus.

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**Giving Tree Supports Upward Bound**

Following Thanksgiving, the Christmas and holiday decorations go up, and so does the NMC Giving Tree. Each year, the Center for Health Partnerships organizes a gift-giving tree that is sprinkled with names of individuals who have limited means for purchasing gifts for their family members during the holidays. For the second year in a row, the recipients of the gifts from the Giving Tree were individuals in our own NMC community. Students who are involved with NMC Upward Bound were able to submit a request for assistance. Individual ornaments were placed on a tree that identified two or three “wish list” items for each family member of participating Upward Bound students—winter outerwear items were in great demand this past year. Gifts and donations were collected in the Student Center and then wrapped by members of the NMC Student Ambassadors. Nearly 50 individuals were supported by the generosity of NMC and its people. By focusing our outreach efforts with an existing partner, we hope to have a greater impact on our community.
Academic Travel Abroad 2012: Italy

From December 9 through 18, eight Nebraska Methodist College students, traveling companions and I participated in a ten day academic travel abroad program with Clarkson College and Bryan College of Health Sciences. We visited the cities of Rome, Salerno, Sorrento, Naples, Paestum and Positano.

Our tour began immediately upon arrival in Rome at St. Paul's Basilica where Paul's remains are said to be buried. We then had a glimpse of ancient Roman life on our walking tour of the Roman Forum and Colosseum. We also saw the best preserved building from the Roman era, the Pantheon. The Pantheon was originally built as a place of pagan worship but later transformed into a Catholic church. Within walking distance of the Pantheon was the Trevi Fountain where many tourists throw coins for good luck and to wish for a second trip back to Rome. We continued our walking tour in Piazza Navona where we quickly walked past vendors trying to sell us trinkets at their Christmas market.

The following day we spent our morning at the Vatican learning the history of the Catholic Church and its influences on Roman art and culture. The most spectacular sites within the Vatican were St. Peter's Basilica and Square, and the Sistine Chapel, as the beauty of the painting and architecture take your breath away. Following our tour, we toured the city on our own. Many students chose to visit other piazzas, churches and museums, while others spent time visiting the shops and sampling the local gelato flavors.

We continued our tour south of Rome along the Amalfi Coast where our tour bus drove us through the rain to Naples where the National Archeological Museum resides. The museum is home to many artifacts found within the ruins of Pompeii, the city that was destroyed by a devastating volcano in 79 AD.

We then followed the coast down to Sorrento, the home of the first medical school of the west. While there, we visited the University of Salerno and were welcomed by students and faculty who shared how students are educated in Italy to become nurses. They told us that acceptance into the university is very competitive as only one out of every ten students are accepted. Italian taxes however pay the full tuition for this select group of students to attend public universities within Italy. Discussions about socialism continued at the Salerno Hospital where we learned more about Italy’s socialized medical practices. The university students and faculty told us that patients in Italy do not pay for their care at public hospitals, but that patients receive better care at private hospitals where they do pay. They added that they pay 50% of their salaries to taxes and 80% of that goes toward health care; however, they eluded that because of governmental corruption that money is not always well spent. Both topics created much debate among the
The Community Based Participatory Research Faculty Fellows program continues to make great progress, working together with Our Families’ Health and Upward Bound to assess barriers that individuals within these programs face to good nutrition. During the month of February, surveys were mailed to 50 Upward Bound families and 50 Our Families’ Health families. The survey asked them for a self-assessment of their families’ nutritional status and habits. These surveys have been collected and were analyzed at a March 1st Faculty Fellows meeting. The Fellows used the data collected from these surveys to design focus group questions which will allow researchers to better understand the barriers faced by individuals within these programs. Focus groups will be held throughout the month of March.

Erika served as the NMC liaison on this Academic Travel Abroad experience. She was chosen to represent the College as the recipient of the Spirit of Service Award. An award that recognizes an individual’s commitment and demonstration of service to the College and the community.

Faculty Fellows Progress

Italy Continued
NMC, Clarkson College, and Bryan students on the bus ride to our next destination.

We spent the next few days traveling from town to town along the Amalfi Coast, where in almost every piazza, stood a large Christmas tree and crowds of Italians strolling through the streets. We were given time to visit Positano where there are mountain top views of the sea and many charming boutiques that line the streets. Within this region we were lucky to sample the local seafood, and seasonal oranges and lemons. While in this region we also visited Paestum, home to three golden stone temples and an archaeological museum with Roman and Greek artifact. Before arriving back in Rome for our departure, we stopped at Montecassino Abbey, which is settled above the clouds on a peaceful mountain top. The abbey was home to St. Benedictine and was nearly destroyed by Ally bombers in World War II, but was later rebuilt to its original architecture ten years later.

Once the data is collected from the focus groups, Fellows will work to fine tune the Center’s diabetes prevention efforts to better reflect and accommodate the perspectives and needs of our community partners. The request for proposals for the International Association for Research on Service-learning and Community Engagement was just recently released. The Fellows will be submitting a proposal to present at this conference, November 6-8, 2013 in Omaha.
The Center for Health Partnerships’ Our Families’ Health (OFH) Internal Advisory Committee has been working hard to meet their goals, including the positive progress with the NMC and OneWorld Community Health Center, Inc. Minority Health Initiative Diabetes Prevention Program.

One of the community contributions of the Our Families’ Health promotoras (community health workers) participated in was the Heartland Latino Leadership Conference 2012. The Heartland Latino Leadership Conference strives to meet both community and business needs as well as to be innovative in developing programs and products that are consistent with the values of our constituent communities. Each year the conference is held in Omaha. As a member of the Board of Directors, Dr. Jose Villegas was asked to have the OFH community health workers provide health-related education and screenings during the conference. On November 9, the promotoras, along side NMC students impressed Latino leaders with their enthusiasm as they screened a total of 85 people; of which 17% were overweight, 7% had high blood pressure, and 12 were pre-diabetic. People in need were referred to the OneWorld clinic.

On November 17, the OFH promotoras and NMC students provided various health-related education and assessments to combat health disparities at the OFH community satellite location in Fremont, Nebraska. Evaluations done included blood pressure, BMI, and glucose testing. In addition, flu vaccination education and vaccinations were provided. Within four hours 65 people were seen; of which 22% were overweight, 5% had high blood pressure, and 15% had pre-diabetes. People again, were referred to OneWorld clinic.

The Our Families’ Health Community Champions’ Awards Dinner and Celebration 2012 was held on December 1 in honor of the 75 health promoters who successfully completed the NMC and OneWorld Minority Health Initiative Diabetes Prevention Program. Families and friends were present to witness the awarding of certificates. Along with other NMC faculty, Dr. MaryLee Lusby and Dr. Kristin Mattson assisted with the NMC tradition of “Starfish Pinning”. The evening was highlighted with traditional Mexican foods, and folklore dances from various regions of Mexico. The children of the health promoters surprised their parents with their “New Generation” dance group routines. The evening of fun brought the OFH Alumni and current community students together, and reinforced the power their work has had on their own families’ health.
Community Scholars Updates

Community Scholars are senior level nursing students who collaborate with community agencies to effect change on a public health issue which concerns them. The Community Scholars identify this public health issue during their junior year, and are connected with a community agency addressing that issue. Scholars work with the agency during their senior year on a project agreed upon between the Scholar and the community partner. Currently, Halley Commers, Nicole Dempsey, Devon Wilhelm-McMullen and Areial Thompson serve as the College’s four Community Scholars.

Halley Commers writes:

I am thrilled to be back working with the wonderful members of the Center for Health Partnerships again! I’m so excited to begin working with Dr. Jose Villegas and Professor Tim Landolt on their amazing community project Our Families’ Health. I’ve been blessed with opportunities to work with these two individuals in past service opportunities and health fairs throughout the Omaha area, however; I was rarely ever able to help with Our Families’ Health. This year I will be helping Dr. Villegas organize class agendas, information into handouts for participants, and participant knowledge assessments. Additionally, I will be working with contacts and Our Families’ Health class instructors from all over Omaha. I will also be helping Dr. Villegas organize photographs from past Our Families’ Health events into a photo album, which will include information on the program, goals, and past outcomes. This is a population very near and dear to my heart; I’m so grateful for this wonderful scholarship and opportunity to be able to spend more time working with and caring for this amazing group of individuals.

Nicole Dempsey writes:

For my Community Scholars project I am still in the process of getting my agencies lined up. I have been in contact with the Open Door Mission/Lydia House in the hopes of working within their programs. I would like to focus on our more vulnerable populations in our community and bring about some positive change. It is a great honor to be allowed this opportunity.

Devon Wilhelm-McMullen writes:

As a Community Scholar scholarship recipient I have had the opportunity to come up with a project that will benefit the community in and around NMC. At this time I have started the ground work of creating a school organization called SAFE (Student Advocates for Equality). I intend for this group to help educate students, faculty and staff about the issues effecting the Lesbian Gay Bi-sexual and Transgender (LGBT) community and students identifying as LGBT. Things I am currently working on include, preparing volunteer work for Omaha PRIDE festivities in June, education on campus, and teaming up with UNMC Center for Health Disparities and their LGBT initiatives.

Areial Thompson, who was the first student to receive the scholarship continues her work with the implementation of a behavior rewards program and health education at Holy Name School.

We are eager to see the continued progress of these great initiatives!
An Exploratory Approach to Health Professions

Through a series of four visits, ten area students from Omaha Central High School were able to explore the varied health careers that are offered by Nebraska Methodist College with hands-on experience through a program called Careers in Science. Careers in Science is a collaboration with Omaha Central High School and the Central High School Foundation and is designed to introduce high school students to health careers and the college preparation necessary to pursue them.

During their exploratory visits scheduled from October through February, the students had the opportunity to visit NMC's labs and received practical experience in each of the fields of study. A visit to the Nursing Arts Center introduced students to simulated patients and an overview of the scope of practice of a nurse. Students also participated in a lecture over organ and tissue donation in the Anatomy and Physiology lab led by Professor Mary Sinclair and Dr. Mary Lee Lusby. Following the lecture, students were able to visit the cadavers for hands-on learning about the tissues and organs that were discussed throughout the lecture. The third and fourth visits permitted the students to step foot in our Surgical Technology lab, Radiologic Technology lab, Sonography lab, and experience various modalities used by our Physical Therapist Assistants. The students also received a tour of NMC’s campus including NMC’s housing in Josie’s Village apartments.

Laredo, TX: Community Health Workers in Action

In early January, a group of Nebraska Methodist College students traveled to Laredo, Texas, for the Winter Break Service Immersion.

Laredo is located along the United States border with Mexico about 200 miles from the southern tip of Texas. During the week-long immersion, students from NMC worked with Habitat for Humanity building a home in the area and worked alongside community health workers—promotoras.

Promotoras are community members trained to provide basic health education in the community. Though they are not professional healthcare workers, promotoras play a vital role in educating their Latino communities about health issues and providing guidance in accessing community resources associated with healthcare.

NMC was able to make connections to promotoras in Laredo through a longstanding partnership with the Sisters of Mercy, an international organization that serves people who suffer from poverty, sickness or lack of education. Through the experience, NMC students were exposed to cultural barriers and issues related to immigration. In the process, students learned ways to use community resources for the benefit of their own patients and clients.

The trip was also a chance for NMC’s Center for Health Partnerships to further develop its own community health worker program in Omaha called Our Families’ Health. Members of Our Families’ Health also participated in the immersion. Working alongside the promotoras in Laredo created an opportunity to discuss and observe best practices that could brought back to Omaha.
March 20th
Louder Than a Bomb Poetry Slam

March 23rd
Black Family Health & Wellness Fair

March 25th
Academic Travel Abroad All College Presentation

March 25th
Ronald McDonald House Dinner

March 27th
Louder Than a Bomb Poetry Slam

April 13
Mobile Diabetes Screen—Sioux City
Three Rivers Club

April 20
Mobile Diabetes Screen—Grand Island

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

C/HP 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.

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

The C/HP will be synonymous with excellence in diabetes education and prevention efforts.

The C/HP will be synonymous with excellence in educational advancement for at risk individuals.