



## NEWS RELEASE

**Contact:** Jason Keese, (402) 471-0023, Jason.Keese@nebraska.gov  
**For Immediate Release**

### **Commission awards more than \$1 million for groups to make college more accessible for Nebraska children**

**LINCOLN, Neb.** (Aug. 6, 2010 ) – Nebraska's Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education this week approved the distribution of more than \$1 million to school districts and non-profit groups across the state who will use the money to make college more accessible for low-income and other underrepresented student populations.

The funding is available through the federal College Access Challenge Grant (CACG) program. The U.S. Department of Education has designated these grant funds for states to undertake projects that increase the number of underrepresented students who enter and remain in postsecondary education. Gov. Dave Heineman chose the Coordinating Commission to administer the CACG program for Nebraska.

The Coordinating Commission expects to award grants totaling approximately \$1.1 million each year for a five-year period beginning in 2010-11. All public and non-profit, private institutions of higher education, K-12 public and private schools or districts, non-profit educational organizations, and philanthropic organizations based in Nebraska were encouraged to apply for CACG funds earlier this summer. The Coordinating Commission received 27 proposals; eight were chosen to receive funds this year and next year, with a ninth organization only applying for and receiving funds this year.

The nine grant recipients are: Central Plains Center for Services in western Nebraska; Grand Island Public Schools and Central Community College, in partnership; Omaha Public Schools; EducationQuest Foundation, based in Lincoln; Ho-Chunk Community Development Corp., which is affiliated with the Winnebago Tribe; Mid-Plains Community College; Nebraska Methodist College; Grace University; and the Bright Futures Foundation, in Omaha. *(Please see second attachment for a complete listing of sub-grantees, their approved funding levels, and a description of their programs.)*

-more-

As with other grants, the Coordinating Commission formed an advisory panel to select the sub-grantees, or grant recipients. Panel members were: Bill Pile of Gurley, former Commissioner with the Coordinating Commission and a retired school superintendent from western Nebraska; Cheryl Wolff of Lincoln, education policy advisor in the governor's Policy Research Office; Mike Bossard of Lincoln, former director of special education at Lincoln Public Schools; Phil Hovis of Lincoln, legislative analyst for the Nebraska Legislature; Tami Buffalohead-McGill of Omaha, director of student support services at Creighton University; and Linda Mannering of Omaha, director of institutional research at the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

Panel members reviewed and scored submitted proposals. All of those recommended for funding were asked to either amend their budget requests or create a specific partnership in order to receive funding; all groups were agreeable to those changes, with updated proposals due to the Coordinating Commission by Aug. 15.

The Coordinating Commission's governing board, at its Aug. 5 meeting at College of St. Mary, voted unanimously to approve the sub-grantees chosen by the panel, contingent on the Commission's receipt of the necessary updated proposals.

### **About Nebraska's Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education**

Nebraska's Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education (CCPE) is a state constitutional agency that serves as an independent voice within Nebraska's higher education system. It serves to promote sound policies that apply to the best interests of taxpayers, students and Nebraska's postsecondary institutions. The CCPE recommends policy to the legislative and executive branches to improve and support postsecondary education. The CCPE also reviews and recommends operating budgets, administers the Nebraska State Grant program, approves academic degree programs, and reviews for approval new tax-funded building projects proposed by Nebraska's public institutions. The CCPE is governed by 11 commissioners appointed by the governor and confirmed by the Nebraska State Legislature. For more information about the CCPE, please visit [www.ccpe.state.ne.us](http://www.ccpe.state.ne.us).

###