



RURAL PROSPERITY NEBRASKA

BEING A HOST COMMUNITY FOR THE RURAL FELLOWS PROGRAM

Rural Fellows is designed to connect college students to rural Nebraska communities. Student pairs move into the rural community for a 10-week period during the summer and complete community-identified projects. (In some cases, Communities of Practice host Fellows virtually.) Past projects have ranged in areas from economic development, workforce development, tourism, community planning, education, mental health, and more.

Research has demonstrated that, like the rest of the country, Nebraska is becoming more diverse. Therefore, in 2019, this program was elevated to become a Fellows opportunity focusing on building the inclusive leadership capacities of community leaders (Community Fellows) as well as the student Fellows placed in those communities. Inclusive leaders bring diverse groups together to innovate and accomplish goals that enhance the lives of all community participants.

Prior to arriving in the community, student and Community Fellows participate in a brief training and development program that enhances the leader/student team's ability to work together. One Community Fellow stated, "This is the best onboarding I've ever been involved in. Our team was able to hit the ground running from day one, which is why we accomplished so much more than we could have dreamt possible."

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Pre-Academy: an online, asynchronous series of lessons for student and Community Fellows to be completed at your own pace over a two-week period. Total time is approximately eight to 10 hours. Topics include inclusive leadership, strengths, entrepreneurship, community building and more.

Academy: a synchronous interactive team-building experience for students and Community Fellows. Academy is scheduled in Mid-to-late May. More information will follow in the new year. Upon completion of Academy, students move to their placement community to live, work and serve.

LEADERSHIP COACHING

Both student and Community Fellows will have the opportunity to engage in leadership coaching sessions with certified coaches during this experience. These coaching sessions are provided free of charge.

COMMUNITY VISIT

At least once per summer, Dr. Helen Fagan and her team visit each community (either in-person or virtually) to evaluate success, assess goals, and provide support.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

Student and Community Fellows showcase their accomplishments and highlight their progress at the conclusion of the program with a public presentation. These presentations are coordinated through Rural Prosperity Nebraska's main office, and participants are encouraged to utilize their public relations networks to maximize the impact and reach of their project accomplishments and participation in this program.

COMMUNITY COMMITMENT

By applying to host student Fellows, you will essentially bring on two new employees. With this comes the responsibility of day-to-day staff management. Student Fellows come to the program with varied levels of professional work experience, requiring varied levels of guidance in navigating projects and tasks in the workplace.

It is important to evaluate your capacity to assume this responsibility, among other obligations. As a Community Fellow, you and/or those who complete the Pre-Academy and Academy trainings have established a relationship with the student Fellows, and managing the student Fellows remains a commitment throughout the summer-long experience.

COST/APPLICATION

Communities are responsible for funding their Student Fellows—a total of approximately \$12,000 for the 10 weeks (\$5,000 per Fellow, plus \$2,000 for housing). Completing the application ensures we match you with qualified students who share the same interests in community development and have the appropriate experiences to bring your projects to fruition.