

# RFI Fellows Impact Report

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT | CUSTER COUNTY, NEB. | 2019



For 10 weeks in summer 2019 students from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln worked, served and lived in Custer County, Neb., (population 10,939) through Rural Futures Institute Fellows.

Led by RFI Community Innovation Fellows Andrew Ambriz and Amber Ross of Custer Economic Development Corporation, the students had an amazing opportunity to choose from a diverse pool of community initiatives in the areas of marketing and workforce development.

► [ruralfutures.nebraska.edu/2019fellows](http://ruralfutures.nebraska.edu/2019fellows)



**Top:** Angela Beltran, International Business  
Hometown: Columbus, Neb.

**Left:** Megan Coan, Agriculture Education & Leadership  
Hometown: Platte Center, Neb.

**Right:** Hailey Walmsley, Agricultural Education  
Hometown: Norfolk, Neb.

**Bottom:** Alyssa Ehler, Political Science & Agricultural Economics  
Hometown: Elkhorn, Neb.

“The county is always open to new ideas, and they never want to say, ‘no’ and stop growing. We definitely took pride in our time there.”

*Megan Coan, RFI Student Fellow*

## TOTAL MARKET VALUE\*

Total value of RFI Fellows Program to Custer County

► **\$34,246**

## AVERAGE INVESTMENT

2 Students Stipends \$10,000 | Approximate Housing \$2,500

► **\$12,500**

\*This report estimates the market value, the price it would have cost Custer County to hire professional services in the marketplace to complete the outcomes delivered by RFI Fellows and the Rural Futures Institute.

# ESTIMATED MARKET VALUE OF DELIVERABLES

DELIVERABLES	ESTIMATED MARKET VALUE	CALCULATION NOTES
 <b>PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT</b> RFI Student Fellows helped develop a “Builders Program” designed to teach entrepreneurial skills to high school students in the county. They also developed a “passport” program to supplement the Nebraska Passport program, which will be used to generate increased tourism in Custer County.	\$10,962	Estimated average hourly rate for meeting, convention and event planners in Nebraska (\$21.89) (Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)).
 <b>EVENT PLANNING</b> The Sandhills Journey Scenic Byway Interpretive Center (AKA the Red Barn) held a 10-Year Anniversary Celebration, and RFI Student Fellows were instrumental in organizing the event, which included a petting zoo and a pie-making contest. The event led to several substantial donations to the Barn.	\$7,034	Estimated average hourly wage for training and development specialists (\$28.24) and marketing research analyst and marketing specialists (\$26.15) in Nebraska (BLS).
 <b>ENGAGEMENT CAMPAIGN EXECUTION</b> RFI Student Fellows identified students who were interning with businesses in Custer County and engaged with them by organizing several meetings and networking opportunities to enrich their experience in Custer County.	\$4,518	Estimated average hourly wage for training and development specialists in Nebraska (\$28.24) (BLS).
 <b>DATA COLLECTION</b> RFI Student Fellows conducted community interviews with new residents in Calloway, Neb. In Arnold, Neb., Fellows conducted a housing inventory and windshield assessment.	\$1,877	Estimated average hourly wage for social science research analysts in Nebraska (\$23.46) (BLS).
 <b>PHOTOGRAPHY</b> RFI Student Fellows took approximately 50 photos that the Custer Economic Development Corporation and other organizations can use in promotional materials.	\$1,375	Estimated average hourly wage for photographers in Nebraska (\$17.19) (BLS).
 <b>VOLUNTEERED IN THE COMMUNITY</b> RFI Student Fellows are committed to volunteering for 10 hours per summer, beyond their typical duties.	\$480	Estimated value of a volunteer hour in Nebraska is \$24.01 (independentsector.org).
 <b>INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP TRAINING</b> RFI Community Innovation Fellows received 20 hours of Inclusive Leadership training from experts at the Rural Futures Institute.	\$8,000	Estimated market value of Inclusive Leadership Training.

“RFI Fellows are always qualified, motivated and autonomous. I highly encourage every community to consider being part of this program.”

Andrew Ambriz

Executive Director, Custer County Economic Development

## REPORT CONSTRUCT

Researchers at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln Bureau of Business Research (BBR) conducted background research with Community Fellows located in Custer County, Neb. The Community Fellows provided detailed information about the community tasks in which Student Fellows engaged. To estimate economic impact, the BBR estimated the market value of the labor put toward completing tasks in Custer County, Neb.