

Network Nebraska-Education Recognized as 2015 Harvard Ash Center Bright Idea in Government

[Lincoln, NE] – March 17, 2015 – The Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, recently recognized **Network Nebraska-Education** as part of the 2015 *Bright Ideas* program. This year’s cohort includes 124 programs from all levels of government—school districts; county, city, state, and federal agencies; as well as public-private partnerships—that are at the forefront in innovative government action. Network Nebraska-Education began in 2006 as a Legislative initiative to interconnect the Nebraska schools and colleges on a single statewide network. Cooperatively managed by the State of Nebraska and University of Nebraska, membership has grown dramatically since its inception, the cost of telecommunications has decreased, and the project is now fully self-funded.

“The Bright Ideas program demonstrates that often seemingly intractable problems can be creatively and capably tackled by small groups of dedicated, civic-minded individuals,” said Stephen Goldsmith, director of the Innovations in Government Program at the Ash Center. “As exemplified by this year’s Bright Ideas, making government work better doesn’t always require massive reforms and huge budgets. Indeed, we are seeing that, in many ways, an emphasis on efficiency and adaptability can have further-reaching effects than large-scale reforms.”

This is the fourth cohort recognized through the Bright Ideas program, an initiative of the broader Innovations in American Government Awards program. For consideration as a Bright Idea, programs must currently be in operation or in the process of launching and have sufficient operational resources and must be administered by one or more governmental entities; nonprofit, private sector, and union initiatives are eligible if operating in partnership with a governmental organization. Bright Ideas are showcased on the Ash Center’s [Government Innovators Network](#), an online platform for practitioners and policymakers to share innovative public policy solutions.

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About the Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation

The Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation advances excellence in governance and strengthens democratic institutions worldwide. Through its research, education, international programs, and government innovations awards, the Center fosters creative and effective government problem solving and serves as a catalyst for addressing many of the most pressing needs of the world's citizens. For more information, visit www.ash.harvard.edu.

About Network Nebraska-Education

Network Nebraska-Education is a collaborative statewide networking effort under the auspices of the Nebraska Information Technology Commission (NITC) to share telecommunications resources, network services, and applications among 274 K-12 and higher education participants. Network Nebraska refers to the statewide multipurpose telecommunications backbone and all of its associated service offerings and support. Network Nebraska is made possible through a consortium of public entities working together to provide a scalable, reliable and affordable infrastructure capable of carrying a spectrum of services and applications.