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Academic Affairs Update, March 2017

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March Academic Affairs Update



Presidential Honor for Community Service Awarded to UNI

By Julianne Gassman, School of Kinesiology, Allied Health & Human Services; UNI Fellow for Community Engagement

Since its launch a decade ago, The President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll has recognized UNI every year; however, in 2015 the university won the Presidential Award in the Honor Roll's Economic Opportunity category.

UNI was one of only four institutions to be awarded in this category, out of 16 finalists. A total of 766 higher education institutions were named to the 2015 Honor Roll.

The Honor Roll is the highest federal recognition given to institutions for their community, service learning, and civic engagement efforts. It is a collaboration among the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the American Council on Education, Campus Compact, and the Interfaith Youth Core, and is administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service.

As described on the Honor Roll website, the Economic Opportunity category "recognizes institutions with service programs that build economic independence, increase family stability, and create more sustainable and resilient communities."

Among UNI's projects, since 1997 UNI's Local Food Program has promoted economic opportunity and strengthened the local food economy in Northeast Iowa. In 2011-14 alone, 17 institutional food buyers purchased nearly \$3 million in local foods, supporting the region's food and farm business.

Other efforts include UNI's outreach to low-income Waterloo neighborhoods, focusing on resident education and public decision-making as means for commercial revitalization, entrepreneurship, creation of job opportunities, and improved quality of life.

In addition, UNI has partnered with numerous local and area organizations to provide assistance, training, and unique prospects for existing businesses and young, aspiring business owners. One program, the "Be Your Own Boss" Lemonade Stand Camp, taught students a variety of entrepreneurial fundamentals, which they put into action to launch their own lemonade stands. This program continues today.

Students and faculty at UNI believe community engagement is both a high-impact learning method and a powerful tool to strengthen the community. Since 2008, UNI students have volunteered almost 2.8 million hours.

UNI will continue to look forward in enhancing programming and supporting all involved in community engagement, both on campus and throughout the greater community.

[Click here](#) for information on UNI's community engagement efforts.

[Click here](#) to read about The President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll.

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Academic Affairs Update is edited by *Dr. Adrienne Lamberti (Languages & Literatures)*

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