



# LEADERSHIP LINCOLN

For immediate release April 2, 2018

## “Just Ask” Volunteer Fair for Seniors at Gateway Mall

Gateway Mall will be transformed into a Volunteer Fair to give senior citizens, retirees and their families an opportunity to learn more about volunteer activities on Tuesday, May 15 between 10:00 am and Noon. Participants will have a chance to explore opportunities to serve as volunteers in the community and talk with representatives of three-dozen organizations they could potentially serve.

During the Volunteer Fair, local non-profit organizations will be present at tables and booths near the Center Court of the Mall. This will give people in the community an opportunity to learn what the organizations do and the volunteer needs they have. The event is a civic service project coordinated and conducted by a team participating in the Leadership Lincoln Fellows program and is co-sponsored by Aging Partners, VolunteerLinc and Gateway Mall.

“Each year we challenge each of our classes to conceptualize and coordinate a service project,” noted Mick Hale, Executive Director of Leadership Lincoln. “In the past we’ve had teams create gardens, clean up parks and even make smart phone apps. We find it’s a great way to encourage our graduates to really get involved in the community.”

Team members working on the Just Ask Volunteer Fair are Amanda Barker of Civic Nebraska,; Kyle Cech with Crete Carrier; Denine Erlemeier from State Farm Insurance; Jeremy Gregg of Lincoln Fire and Rescue; Stacy Guevara with Ameritas; Martha Hakenkamp from Aging Partners; Emily Koenig of Lincoln Electric System; Len Sloup retired from the Nebraska Revenue Department and Scott Thayer with Budget Blinds of Lincoln. The diverse nature of the group illustrates one of the benefits of Leadership Lincoln, bringing people from all walks of life together to make Lincoln a better place.

“My team in the Leadership Lincoln Fellows class is working together as our service project to coordinate the Just Ask Volunteer Fair,” said Erlemeier. “Not only are we helping do something good in our community, but we’re learning a lot about team projects in the process.”

The Volunteer Fair is an idea that grew out of a survey of senior citizens the team conducted. Hakenkamp noted “Almost 80% of all respondents (of any age) were highly motivated to volunteer as a way of giving back. Additionally, respondents over the age of 60 indicated that volunteering is an opportunity for them to stay active in the community and meet new people. This suggests that although volunteering is ultimately an altruistic act for most local older adults, there is a strong component of personal gain in terms of health and socialization that is recognized and appreciated.”

“I’ve found a lot of people are reluctant to take the first step to volunteer for an organization,” Sloup said. “But if an organization asks them, they’d be glad to help. Conversely, we are also hoping to encourage retirees to ‘Just Ask’ organizations that they have an interest in about volunteer opportunities.”

Contact Randy Bretz at Leadership Lincoln with questions.

[rbretz@leadershiplincoln.org](mailto:rbretz@leadershiplincoln.org) 402-304-1229