



COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

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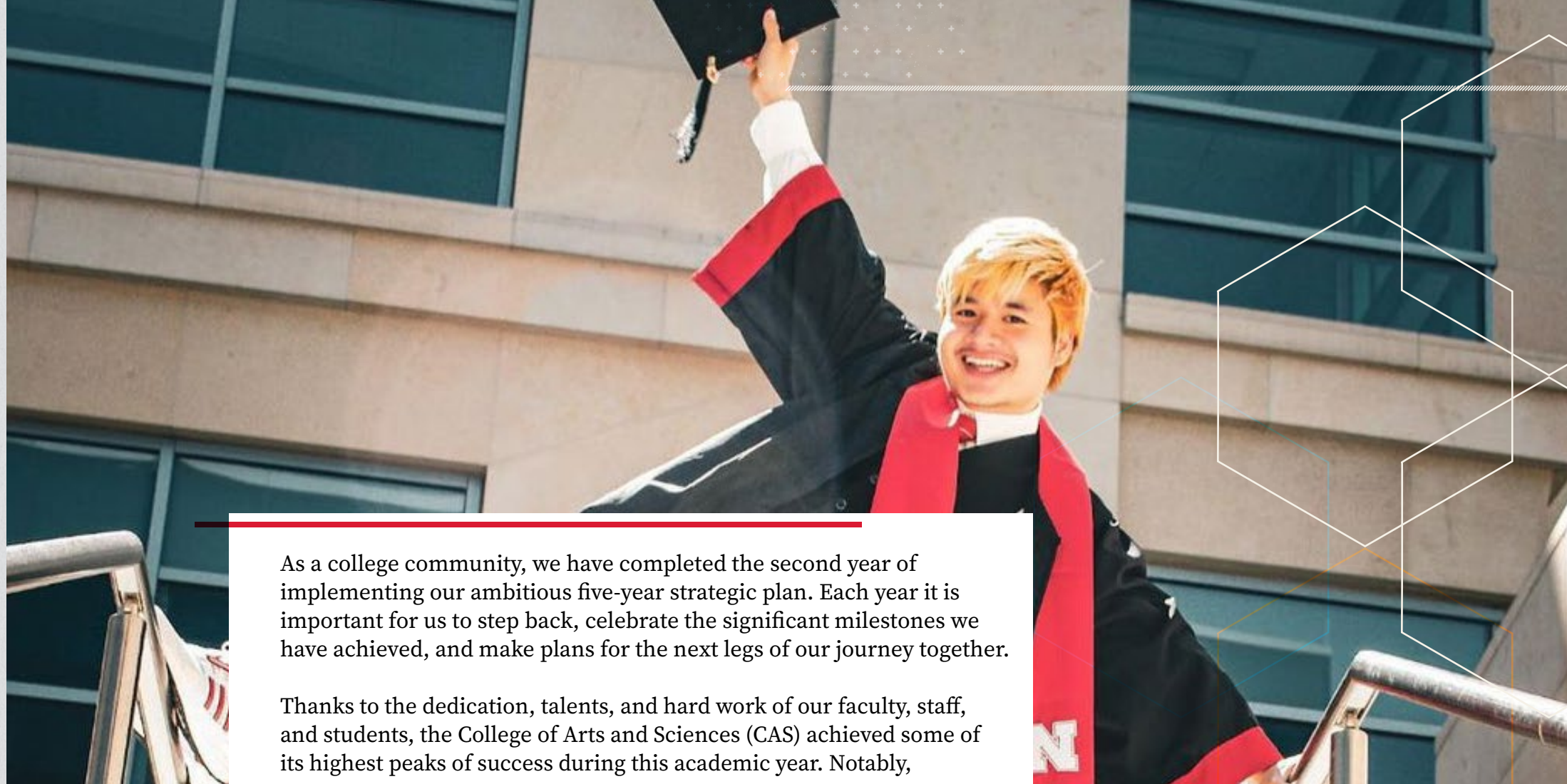
**CAS STRATEGIC**

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**PLAN**

**YEAR 2  
REPORT**

**2022-23**



As a college community, we have completed the second year of implementing our ambitious five-year strategic plan. Each year it is important for us to step back, celebrate the significant milestones we have achieved, and make plans for the next legs of our journey together.

Thanks to the dedication, talents, and hard work of our faculty, staff, and students, the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) achieved some of its highest peaks of success during this academic year. Notably,

- First-year retention has increased to 81.3%; recovering from pandemic decline of 6.4% for the fall 2020 cohort (78.6%).
- The CAS 4-year graduation rate has increased every year over the last 4 years, reaching an all-time high of 52.5% (a 2.8% increase) for students starting in fall 2019.
- The CAS 6-year graduation rate has also increased to 65.3% (a 1.5% increase).
- Equity gains in the six-year graduation rate have been made for the most recent graduating cohort of underrepresented-minority (4%), Pell eligible (3.6%), and first-generation (2.6%) students.
- The CAS Cares program has now helped over 100 students stay on track for timely degree completion.
- With a \$500,000 investment in competitive graduate student support alongside a new Dean's Fellowship program, graduate applications increased by 89% and total acceptances increased by 120% for the fall 2023 cohort.
- CAS faculty achieved a record amount of externally funded research awards: \$54.1 million in FY 23. This represents a new high mark,

surpassing last year's 10-year high of \$47M in FY 22. Research expenditures in FY 23 totaled \$45.9M – also a record high.

- We have added 17 new faculty to our college community and have increased the percentage of diverse and underrepresented faculty (tenure-line and practice) to 26.7%.

These accomplishments testify to the fact that committed and caring people pulling together with a shared vision can do big things. We will draw on this same spirit of creativity, innovation, and collaboration as we continue with the important work ahead of us.

As we enter the “middle years” of our five-year plan, we have updated our roadmap and added some new strategic initiatives that will help us meet our long-term goals. I hope you will take the time to review our refreshed CAS Strategic Plan and join us in our vision of transforming lives and improving our world.

Enjoy these additional highlights of the incredible ingenuity and collaborative spirit that is manifested every day in the College of Arts and Sciences.

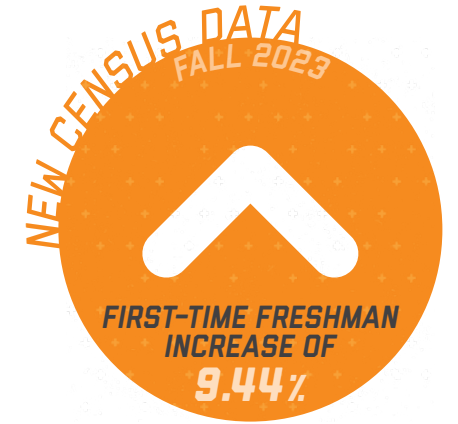


Mark E. Button  
DEAN



## RELLER PRAIRIE IMPROVEMENTS OPEN WEALTH OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

After a three-year cleanup aided by dozens of volunteers and a decade of limited use, the College of Arts and Sciences' **Reller Prairie Field Station** is ready to support a full range of experiential learning at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln.



“**MATH 435: Math in the City**” students collaborated with the Lancaster County Assessor’s Office to study the local housing market using methods from mathematical statistics, machine learning, and economics.



**26 UNL honors students** presented nuclear deterrence research in front of U.S. Strategic Command officials panel.



Husker Debate comes home with a **Repeat National Title**; up-and-coming Husker Speech grabs a top 10 performance, with a 9th-place finish.



**Seven CAS students** led by Dr. **Marianna Burks** and Dr. **Michael Herman** presented at one of the largest professional conferences for underrepresented scientists, the ABRCMS, hosted by the **American Society for Microbiology**. Supplemental funding from the support of donors in the CAS made it possible for six students to travel to this national conference in California.



Husker senior environmental studies majors worked collaboratively with Project Energy Nebraska through a summer internship aiming to help Nebraska communities save energy and money. Their projects include aims related to electric buses, veterans housing, and carbon sequestration.

**WITH THE AID OF SEA SLUGS,**

**University of Nebraska chemists** discovered that one of the smallest conceivable tweaks to a biomolecule can elicit one of the grandest consequences: **directing the activation of neurons.**



At the NUtech Venture's 2022 Innovator Celebration, **'The Bell Affair'** was named **Creative Work of the Year**. Shot and directed remotely, the documentary film was developed by Nebraska scholars Kwakiutl Dreher (English) and William Thomas (history) and Michael Burton of the College of Education and Human Sciences.

**STUDY SHOWS NEWS COVERAGE ON X (FORMERLY TWITTER) COMBINED CRIME, PANDEMIC IN DISJOINTED NARRATIVE**

Research from Husker sociologist **Lisa Kort-Butler** suggested that in the timeline of the COVID-19 pandemic, news combined crime and pandemic coverage in disjointed narratives, while still using similar language with both reports. These snapshot captions, 280 characters or less, likely increased the feeling of instability experienced by Americans.



Science literacy is a pervasive challenge, with understanding the complexity of quantum sciences being one example. Through "Quantum Business, Arts and Science for Society" (Q-BASS), associate professor of physics and astronomy **Cornelis "Kees" Uiterwaal** leads a team of artists, physicists, and education



**TEAM EARNS \$1M GRANT TO BRIDGE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN HISTORY, CIVIL RIGHTS**

A Husker team launched a curricular, research, and collaboration Hub made possible by the **largest arts and humanities research grant in Husker history**, from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. This hub, created by four Nebraska legal scholars, **Katrina Jagodinsky, William Thomas,**

**and Jeannette Eileen Jones**, with collaborators from the College of Law, is an academic program that teaches students how marginalized groups in American history have used the law to contest and advance their rights.



researchers to improve science communication through mixed reality — an interactive, computer-based experience that inserts three-dimensional objects into the viewer's field of vision.

ALL-TIME HIGH IN EXTERNAL GRANT AWARDS FOR CAS FACULTY:  
**\$54.1M**  
IN 22-23



Willa Cather, the world-renowned author and University of Nebraska alumna, was the **first Pulitzer Prize winner and the 12th woman represented** in the National Statuary Hall Collection in the United States Capitol in Washington, D.C. this past summer. CAS faculty members **Andrew Jewell**, advisory editor to the Cather Archive, and **Melissa Homestead**, director of the Cather Project praised Cather's selection as a representative of Nebraska history and culture.

## HUSKER SCIENTISTS CLOSING IN ON LONG-LASTING SWINE FLU VACCINE

A successful long-term experiment with live hogs indicates Nebraska scientists may be another step closer to achieving a safe, long-lasting, and potentially universal vaccine against swine flu.

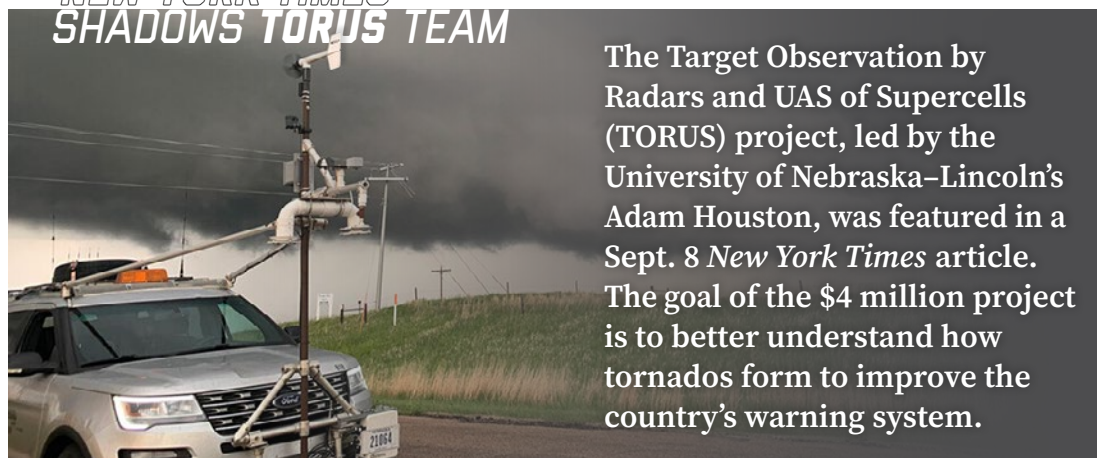


Prompted by malicious and concerning uses of technology, **Adam Thompson** (philosophy) and **Colton Harper** (graduate student) created an embedded ethics program for computer scientists and engineers at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. This program is supported by a CTT grant.

Husker psychologist, **Arthur “Trey” Andrews** added a new dimension to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln’s Clinical Psychology Training Program. Funded with a three-year, nearly \$700,000 grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration, this program enhances students’ ability to deliver high-quality mental health treatment to vulnerable populations, while simultaneously helping to alleviate Nebraska’s mental health care provider shortage.



## NEW YORK TIMES SHADOWS TORUS TEAM

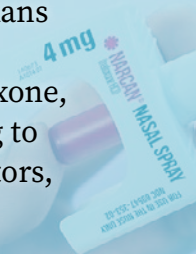


The Target Observation by Radars and UAS of Supercells (TORUS) project, led by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln’s Adam Houston, was featured in a Sept. 8 *New York Times* article. The goal of the \$4 million project is to better understand how tornados form to improve the country’s warning system.

## NEW DATA SHOW MOST NEBRASKANS ARE UNAWARE OF NARCAN

According to data from the Nebraska Annual Social Indicators Survey, only 10–20% of Nebraskans know where and how to obtain naloxone, a quick-acting drug to block opiate receptors, otherwise known as Narcan.

Any Nebraskan can go to one of the 94 pharmacies in the state to obtain Narcan free of charge and learn how to use it. Given that 75% of overdose deaths are caused by opioid abuse, increased awareness of Narcan could make a drastic difference.



A study led by Nebraska ecologist **John DeLong** was published in Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. His paper detailing his discovery of an aquatic virus-eater made a global splash.

Husker scientists, led by the University’s Nebraska-Lincoln **David Berkowitz** and **Stephany Ramos de Dios**, have recently revealed a technique capable of recording the enzyme in action, taking notes on its performance, and screening for inhibitors that could keep it from doing harm.

New research by social scientists **Philip Schwadel** (sociology) and **Christopher Garneau** (University of Oklahoma) shows that political affiliation and its relationship to political tolerance is more nuanced than the popular narrative of “us versus them.”



University Professor of physics and astronomy, **Evgeny Tsymbal**, in partnership with colleagues and a few alumni, has demonstrated how to construct, control, and explain the oxygen-deprived walls of nanoscopically thin material suited to next-gen electronics.

A new Nature Materials study, led by Nebraska’s **Xiaoshan Xu**, **Evgeny Tsymbal**, and **Alexei Gruverman** has shown that hafnium oxide has been misunderstood. This significant breakthrough in data-encoding material has demonstrated that growing a higher-quality, larger-grained crystal of hafnium oxide can actually generate higher polarization and potentially more reliable ferroelectricity.

### NEBRASKA MATH DAY 2022

returned to the University of Nebraska–Lincoln campus with **59 participating schools and nearly 500 students.** Math Day is designed to spark high school students’ interest in math, encourage them to pursue a career in mathematics, and to recognize outstanding mathematical ability.



### GLOBAL INTEGRATIVE STUDIES HOSTING ARCHAEOLOGY DAYS AT RELLER PRAIRIE

The University of Nebraska–Lincoln School of Global Integrative Studies’ Archaeological Field School hosted Archaeology Days at the Reller Prairie Field Station located South of Lincoln.

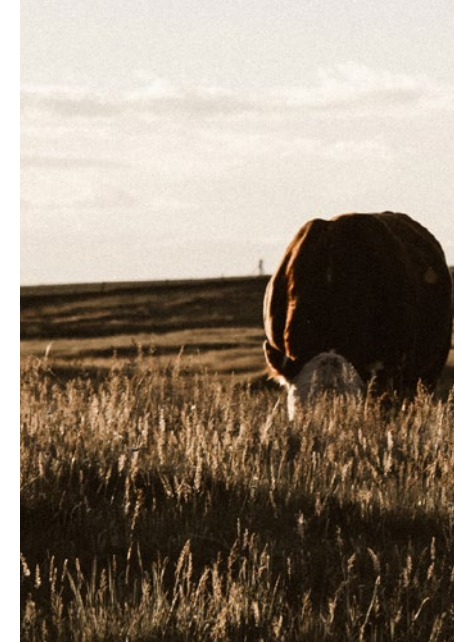


### ENGAGING AND AWARDING ALUMNI

In 2022–2023, the college recognized six outstanding alumni for their leadership, service, and strengthening the Nebraska tradition. **Nicholas Gordon** ('11) was honored as the CAS Multicultural Homecoming Alumni of Color and **Dr. Stuart Embury** ('66) received the CAS Alumni Master Medallion

### 2023 GREAT PLAINS CONFERENCE LOOKS AT FOOD THROUGH MULTIPLE LENSES

The **Center for Great Plains Studies** hosted its 48th annual interdisciplinary conference focused on regional issues April 18–20 at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln. The topic was “**Plant to Table: Food Production, Culture and Consequences on the Great Plains.**”



at events held in collaboration with the Nebraska Alumni Association. **William Banks** ('71), **John Else** ('61), **Jay Keasling** ('86), and **Jere McGaffey** ('57) were recognized at the college’s Celebration of Excellence event. Each received the Distinguished Alumni Award.

Political analyst **Amy Walter**, publisher and editor-in-chief of “**The Cook Political Report with Amy Walter**” presented her Hoagland Lecture on April 19 in the Nebraska Union’s Swanson Auditorium.



Walter’s presentation touched on the electoral process, congressional culture, the Washington political scene, and more.



CAS hosted six Inquire events with the theme of “**Searching for Common Ground in a Polarized World.**” This program builds around a college-wide series of public lectures centering on a new theme each year serving as a touchstone for the college, giving students, staff, and faculty a focal point and shared topic for conversations and further inquiry.



## MARKER CELEBRATES PROUD LEGACY OF NEBRASKA'S LOU CROMPTON

Louis Crompton, the late, openly gay professor English, who in 1970 taught the United States' **first full-fledged, for-credit course on LGBTQ studies** was celebrated on June 20 with a campus marker in his honor.



**Lara Garrido**, a Ph.D. candidate in Spanish in the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures, earned the College of Arts and Sciences



**Inclusive Excellence and Diversity Award** in recognition of her involvement in innovative or exemplary activities that have an impact on campus or in the community that promotes inclusive excellence and diversity.



## INCLUSIVE INSTRUCTION DRAWS FACULTY LEADERSHIP HONOR

Associate professor **Chad Brassil's** focus on inclusive instruction was recognized with the **Diversity Leadership Faculty** award, given by **Marco Barker**, vice chancellor of diversity and inclusion.

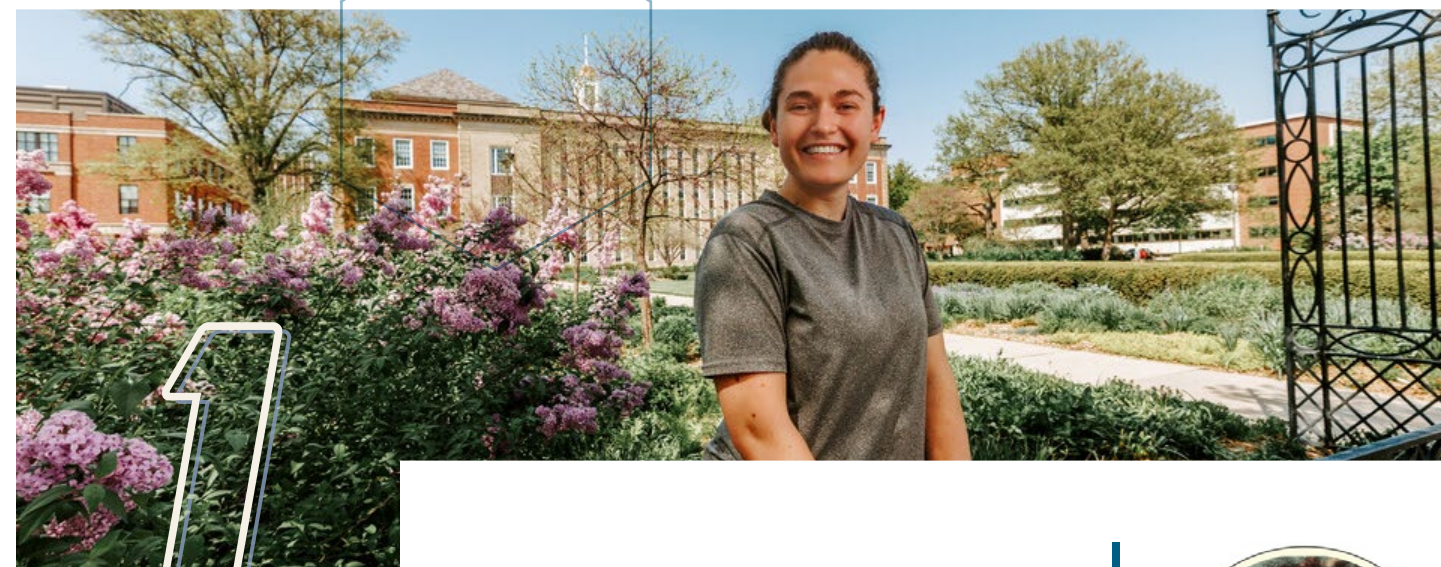


## DANCE EARNS MLK HONOR FOR DECADES OF SERVICE

Lory Dance's lifetime engagement in community organization and activism, especially efforts on campus in the city of Lincoln and beyond, has earned her the **2023 University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Community Fulfilling the Dream Award**. She also joined the CAS Dean's Office as DEI Coordinator.



Helen Palmer Howard, Dance's mentor and friend. COURTESY HELEN P. HOWARD FAMILY PHOTO COLLECTION



**Taylor Daum** instills **belonging in fellow first-gen Huskers** by leveraging on-campus resources, getting involved, and seeking out leadership positions. She uses her influence to ensure all students know they belong.

Nebraska U hosted the first-in-person conference of **The African Poetry Digital Portal** at the Sheldon Museum of Art during its Spring Conference from April 27-29. The conversation on contemporary African poetry featured acclaimed writers and scholars: **Patricia Jabbeh Wesley (Liberia), Tsitsi Jaji (Zimbabwe), and Mahtem Shiferra (Ethiopia/Eritrea).**



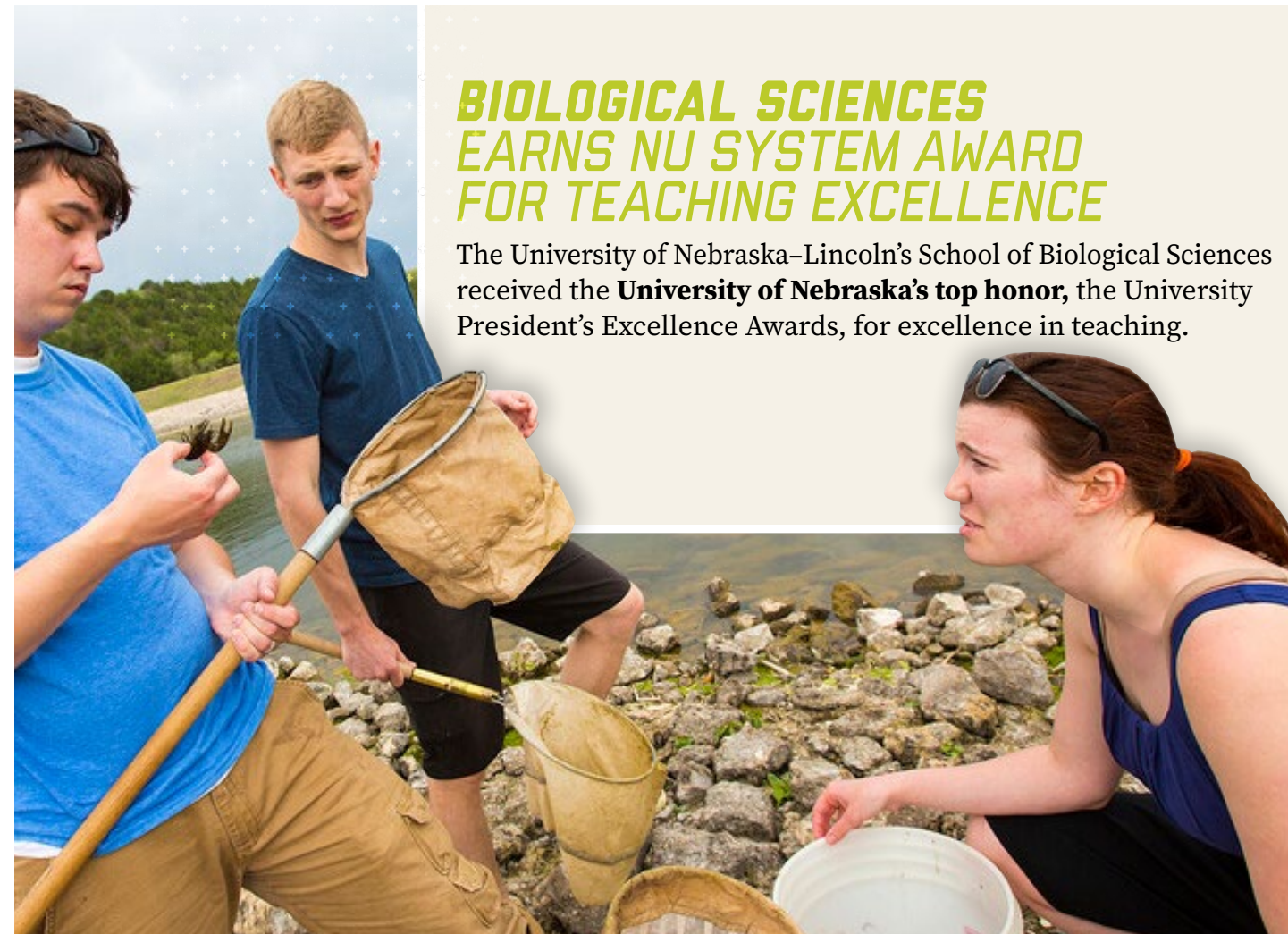


### UNIVERSITY KUDOS AWARD

The Board of Regents presented a KUDOS award to **Dodie Eveleth**, Business Manager in the Biology, Physics & Astronomy, and Chemistry Business Center for the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln.

### TEACHING ACADEMY NEW COHORT

**Anna Hiatt, Julia Reilly, and Shari Stenberg** were selected as Teaching Academy Fellows for 2022–2023. This initiative engages our faculty in local, national, and international conversations about higher education and recognizes and rewards exceptional teachers.



### BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES EARNS NU SYSTEM AWARD FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE

The University of Nebraska–Lincoln’s School of Biological Sciences received the **University of Nebraska’s top honor**, the University President’s Excellence Awards, for excellence in teaching.

INCREASED PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN 22-23.



**CAS Staff Council** held professional development and social networking events, including CAS Connections and the Summer Cooldown with Kona Ice. The opportunities allow staff in the college to collaborate and build their sense of belonging.



### BIG TEN LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS

**Kwame Dawes, Debra Hope, David DiLillo, and Anne Duncan** from the College of Arts and Sciences were among 11 selected by the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor to attend two Big Ten Academic Alliance leadership programs this year.





**COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES**

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