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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Photo Caption:

From left: Kara Weander-Gaster, Sarah Dittmer, Lesley Hanson, Tammy Day and Betty Froehlich of the Philanthropy Council of Northeast Nebraska accept the 2012 Outstanding Youth Philanthropy Award presented by the Nebraska Chapter of the Association of Professional Fundraisers. The award is a framed collection of stamps representative of the Council's Youth Philanthropy Contest.

Philanthropy Council recognized for Outstanding Youth Philanthropy

Lincoln, Nebr. – The Philanthropy Council of Northeast Nebraska has been honored with the 2012 Outstanding Youth Philanthropy Award presented by the Association of Professional Fundraisers – Nebraska Chapter. This award recognizes efforts to involve young people in charitable programs and volunteerism in their community. The Council was nominated by the Nebraska Community Foundation and was recognized at a celebration of National Philanthropy Day in Lincoln on Tuesday, November 13.

Chairwoman Tammy Day accepted the award on behalf of the Council. “We realized that young people were the next generation of givers, so we wanted to know how they wanted to make a difference,” said Day.

The Council launched its first Youth Philanthropy Contest in February 2012. The plan was to award eight \$1,000 grants to individuals and groups, ages kindergarten through 25, for the design and implementation of charitable projects in their communities. Funding would be provided by the Connie Fund, a donor-advised fund of the Nebraska Community Foundation, which benefits young people in northeast Nebraska.

The Council received proposals from 33 contestants who presented their charitable project ideas for judging. “The project ideas were amazing, and we could see that the kids were really getting into this,” Day said.

Proposed projects addressed a wide range of community needs: intergenerational learning, a diabetic support group for youth, a youth art auction, a gardening project for needy families, support for veterans, the humane society and more. It was difficult to choose only eight deserving projects.

Following the contest, the Council hosted its first “Celebrate Giving!” banquet to honor generous donors and volunteers throughout northeast Nebraska, and to celebrate the winners of the Youth Philanthropy Contest. The event drew an overflow crowd, and pulled at the heartstrings of many in attendance. As the young people and their projects were introduced, many in the audience were moved to donate additional funds so that more youth projects could be done. The result: six additional projects were funded for a total of 14 youth philanthropy projects, involving dozens of area youths.

“We estimate that at least 1,000 people were directly and positively impacted by these 14 projects. But just as important, we believe that there will be a long-lasting effect,” Day said. “Kids will remember this experience and what their community meant to them. As Ella Smith, a third grader said, ‘It doesn’t matter how old or young you are. Everyone can make a difference’.”

The Philanthropy Council of Northeast Nebraska was formally established in 2010 with a mission to create a culture of giving in northeast Nebraska. Partnering with the Norfolk Area Community Foundation Fund, the Council includes more than 30 area nonprofits that come together to share knowledge and resources.

Plans for the next Youth Philanthropy Contest are now underway. Proposals are due by February 1, 2013. For more information go to <http://philanthropycouncilne.org/youth-contest>.