

AWARDS PROGRAM 2019



Outstanding Service Award

Samuel Nelson

*Director-Nebraska Center for Entrepreneurship
University of Nebraska—Lincoln*

The Outstanding Service Award is open to individuals or organizations that have demonstrated sustained and outstanding leadership and advocacy for entrepreneurship education and/or business development services in Nebraska. The leadership and advocacy has been at a level beyond a specific community or organization.

Dr. Samuel A. Nelson has been the Director for the Nebraska Center for Entrepreneurship since August, 2016. He earned his Ph.D. in management from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 2011 and joined CBA in 2012 as the Associate Director for the Nebraska Center for Entrepreneurship. His research interests include corporate persona, entrepreneurship education and psychological capital.

Nelson was integral in the design of the UNL entrepreneurship curriculum and taught many of the courses during the 2012-13 academic year. He has won the UNL Outstanding Contributions to Students Award 7 of his 9 years as a professor and his former students have secured over 3 million in seed funding for their startups in recent years.

Prior to his academic career, Nelson spent over 10 years in private sector as a manager at large technology and manufacturing firms (Intel and General Motors). In addition, he has consulted for multiple small to medium size firms and startups.

Outstanding Service Award



Surin Kim

Department of Textiles, Merchandising and Fashion Design / Nebraska Extension University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Recipients of this award have made significant contributions toward the organization, implementation, development or evaluation of entrepreneurship education in Nebraska. The educator's achievements may be from one or more of the following areas: classroom instruction, community-based learning, mentoring programs, internships, and/or student organization leadership.

Surin Kim's professional focus has been innovative and high-growth product development, which she has successfully launched in the tech industry for the past decade. While completing her MBA at Wharton Business School, Surin used her study of Entrepreneurial Management to spearhead Ma.Chef, a successful Seoul-based startup offering personal chef services through online platform. She also served as a strategist within Innovation Management and CEO's office at Korea Telecom; served as a consultant for Oracle; and excelled as a Senior Product Manager at Amazon.com, Inc.

Currently, Surin develops research-based entrepreneurship education programs as an Assistant Professor and Entrepreneurship Specialist at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and lead initiatives to build entrepreneurship ecosystems primarily for underserved communities, including Youth Entrepreneurship Clinics and Crafting Culture. She is also a global traveler, traveling 52 countries in 7 continents so far.

Gregg Christensen Nebraska Entrepreneurship Distinguished Service Hall of Fame Award



Nebraska Enterprise Partnership Fund

The Hall of Fame Award is the Nebraska Entrepreneurship Task Force's highest honor. This award recognizes and honors outstanding educators, community leaders, community volunteers/mentors, elected officials and entrepreneurs who have demonstrated a zeal and commitment to advance entrepreneurship and/or entrepreneurship education that has demonstrated significant impact in Nebraska. Hall of Fame recipients must have distinguished themselves for their advocacy of entrepreneurship as a key driver of local, state and national economic vitality and as a way to improve our quality of life and inspire creativity and innovation and entrepreneurship.

Nebraska Enterprise Fund is deserving of the Nebraska Entrepreneurship Gregg Christensen Distinguished Service Hall of Fame Award as they are leaders and supporters in the Nebraska entrepreneurship community. The team at Nebraska Enterprise Fund is always available and willing to help, support, and bring value to entrepreneurs in Nebraska. NEF, founded in 1994, is celebrating its 25th anniversary.

Access to small loans can create barriers for many students who are trying to start a business and build their credit. Nebraska Enterprise Fund addressed this obstacle by offering a microloan to students. Nebraska Enterprise Fund is a long-term supporter of the Big Idea Kearney competition hosted by the Center for Entrepreneurship and Rural Development at UNK. In addition to the financial support provided, Jim Reiff and April Myers give of their time to help the event run smoothly.

NEF can justifiably celebrate several areas of key accomplishment. NEF is working hard to ensure its ability to provide solid training, coaching, and mentoring services to diverse small and micro-businesses. NEF maintained a net outstanding portfolio to small and micro-businesses and other Micro Development Organizations at \$7.8 million. NEF grew its net assets by \$399,885, better positioning the organization for continue its portfolio growth.