

## News Release

For Immediate Release

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## National Safety Council Announces 2009 Community Safety Champions

(OMAHA, Neb., April 16, 2009) Unintentional injuries are the most common cause of fatality for individuals ages 1 to 44 and the fifth overall cause. To succeed in reducing these injuries and fatalities, the National Safety Council, Greater Omaha Chapter encourages individuals and organizations to engage themselves in education and programs for the prevention of unintentional injuries and the safety of others, individually or as groups. It takes everyone's efforts to promote safe living in our homes and communities.

We are pleased to announce the following 7 Community Safety Champions to be recognized at the Safety and Health Summit, Annual 'Awards and Sustenance' on May 13, 11:30 a.m. at the Qwest Center Omaha. Each award provides a grant of \$500 to encourage recipients to continue their fine work.

These are our SAFETY CHAMPIONS!

The **OPPD Service to Community Safety Award** to encourage effective action in the area of community safety by a not-for-profit organization will be presented to the **Omaha Coalition of Citizen Patrols (OCCP) Rapid Response Team** and **Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska**.

**Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska** will receive the award for their programs RTA, Parents United, and RSAFE for leadership in the treatment of families impacted by sexual abuse. Ruth Henrichs, President, will accept the award. Nominated by Jane Simpson, Director of Public Relations, Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska,

**OCCP Rapid Response Team** is most often utilized as a "force multiplier" to provide extra eyes and ears on the street when searching for missing children or endangered adults. The Rapid Response Team has aided in increasing community safety by assisting the police in finding persons when time may be of the essence. Chris Costantakos, President, will accept the award. Nominated by Lt. Scott Gray

**Jean Armstrong R.N., Manager of Family and Community Health Resources for Jennie Edmundson Memorial Hospital** will receive the **B'nai B'rith Award**, presented by the Henry Monsky Lodge of B'nai B'rith to citizens who have given service to community safety. With few resources and no budget, Jean Armstrong responded to

community concerns by pulling together individuals representing 20 different local organizations to form the Shaken Baby Task Force. Her relentless efforts brought grants and other funds to develop curriculum, a conference and public service campaign and production of a video which has been distributed nationwide. Since 1997 and the development of the task force and interventions, there has been only one death in Council Bluffs from Shaken Baby Syndrome. Nominated by J.C. Moore, Safety Officer, Methodist Health System

The **Mayor's Trophy** established to recognize an area business that has made a contribution to safety in the greater Omaha area will be presented to **Kohl's Department Stores** for their encouragement of and unrelenting belief in community services by their employees . More than 650 volunteers through Kohl's A-Teams have given over 2,275 hours of community service to community child safety programs in the past 3 years. Store managers led by Pat Prince (Oakview) and A Team managers led by Jill Vieregger (Oakview) will accept the award. Nominated by Tim Tichy, Community Safety Manager, National Safety Council, Greater Omaha Chapter

**Stacy Henry, Crime Prevention Specialist with the Omaha Police Department** will receive the **Public Servant Award** for her leadership with the Northeast Precinct Advisory Committee (members of the Northeast community). Through her work the Halloween Safety Program has been developed which allows children in the northeast precinct to safely enjoy the Halloween tradition. In addition to providing a safe alternative to nighttime trick or treating, the program gives children a chance to interact one-on-one with officers, helping to establish a good relationship for the future. This event is one of several events in which she demonstrates strong leadership and her sense of duty to the citizens of Omaha. Nominated by Chief Eric Buske

The **Lorraine Giles School Safety Award** recognizing outstanding leadership in the area of school safety will be presented to **Linda Frey**. Linda has trained and supervised the Safety Patrol at Cather Elementary School in the Millard Public Schools for over 15 years. But more than that, the safety of the Safety Patrol and the safety of all students is her paramount concern. The lessons she teaches children in the program about safety and about life will not be forgotten and those lessons help forge these future leaders. Nominated by Christopher E. Martin

The **City of LaVista** will receive the **Safe Communities Award** recognizing their collaborations with numerous organizations addressing safety and the safety risks in their community. Collaborations with their community have been forged through many programs created, supported or developed by the LaVista Recreation Department, the Library, the Police Department, Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department, and Public Works Department. LaVista Mayor Doug Kindig will accept the award. Nominated by Robert Perry, League Association of Risk Management.

#### **About the National Safety Council, Greater Omaha Chapter**

Founded in 1924, the National Safety Council, Greater Omaha Chapter, is a private non-profit, community based organization that promotes safety and health by providing

programs, resource services and education to individuals and organizations to prevent both the personal and economic loss associated with injuries, accidents and health hazards wherever they exist. Under the leadership of the National Safety Council, Greater Omaha Chapter, the greater Omaha metro area was recently designated a Safe Community by the United Nation's World Health Organization (WHO). For more information, visit [www.safenebraska.org](http://www.safenebraska.org).