October 11th, 8 am - Noon

TRI-CITY AREA ECONOMIC FORUM

Promoting Engaged Communities
Schedule

8:00 – 8:30  Registration / Check In
8:30 – 8:45  Welcome & Meet UNK CBT Dean, Tim Jares, Ph.D.
8:45 – 9:45  Keynote Address - Promoting Engaged Communities
              Ron Drake of Flip this Town
9:45 – 9:55  BREAK
9:55 – 10:05 Crafting Compelling Narrative in Community Building
              Daniel Chaffin, Ph.D.
10:05 – 11:05 Nebraska Thriving Index
              Bree Dority, Ph.D. & Mitch Herian, Ph.D.
11:05 – 11:15 Emerging Talent Survey Data - two-year study
              Lisa Tschauner, CERD Director
11:15 – 12:00 Recording of Live Podcast: Flip this Town
              Hosted by Ron Drake, with guests Amos Anson of Grand Island, Megan Arrington-Williams of Hastings and Patrick Moore of Kearney.
Ron Drake is a downtown revitalization expert and community connector focused on restoring the heart of America, one downtown at a time. In his community of Siloam Springs, Arkansas, he purchased and sold over 45 homes, specializing in historic neighborhoods. Subsequently, Ron made the shift to the core downtown and restored 17 historic buildings, revitalizing over 75,000 square feet of downtown space and helped turn the unlively downtown of Siloam Springs, Arkansas into a vibrant cultural center, and was instrumental in their listing as Number 14 in Smithsonian Magazine’s Best Small Towns in America. In 2014, Parade Magazine listed Siloam Springs as the Fourth Best Main Street in America.

Main Street Arkansas awarded Ron the Main Street Hero award, an extremely high honor. Other accolades include: Best Renovation Project for Buildings Over 5,000SF; Outstanding Personal Project for the restoration of the Connelly-Harrington House; Best Adaptive Re-use project for Oklahoma Main Street; Citation of Merit by Oklahoma State Historical Society; Chamber Business of the Year; Main Street Volunteer of the Year; and a past honoree of the 40 Under 40 by the Northwest Arkansas Business Journal. Ron’s projects are visible in multiple news, TV and magazine stories, and he shares his practical approach to preservation on his Flip This Town National Podcast, available at iTunes or your favorite podcast location.

Ron shares his story in his book, Flip This Town- Preservation Made Practical on Main Street USA, giving inspiration to small towns all across America. Ron speaks, teaches and consults all across the country about how infusing lives into a downtown core attracts new life to a community, focusing on the overall quality of life. Teaching through his own experiences to inspire, equip and restore, Ron is uniquely qualified to guide any organization through the process of accomplishing their vision of having a vital, thriving downtown.

Ron believes that restoration is possible in every community, with a simple idea that the best way to bring life downtown is to bring lives downtown, and this belief has created a downtown renaissance in communities across the country.
Presenters

Tim Jares, Ph.D. - Dean of the College of Business and Technology, UNK

Tim Jares joined UNK in summer 2019 as dean of the College of Business and Technology. He was previously chair and a professor of finance at the University of Northern Colorado’s Kenneth W. Monfort College of Business. Jares joined Northern Colorado in 2001 and progressed through the ranks in the Department of Finance in the Monfort College. He served as assistant, then associate dean in 2002-07, with budgetary oversight as a primary responsibility, and was the college’s interim dean in 2007-08. Jares earned a Chartered Financial Analyst designation from the CFA Institute, Ph.D. and Master of Business Administration from UNL and Bachelor of Science in mathematics and computer science from the University of South Dakota.

Daniel Chaffin, Ph.D. - Asst. Professor of Management and Co-Founder of the Tri-City Area Economic Forum

Daniel Chaffin is a professor at UNK, leading students through their academic journey with innovative course work and applied practices in entrepreneurship. He earned his Ph.D. in Strategic Management at Michigan State University. He conducts research on strategy, education and technology. Professionally, he worked as a Strategic Marketing Manager for Pulte Homes in Colorado Springs and earned his MBA from the University of Colorado in Colorado Springs.

Lisa Tschauner, MSOM - Director of the Center for Entrepreneurship and Rural Development

Lisa leads the entrepreneurial activity of the center and also serves as an adjunct business instructor. For the past sixteen years, she has been a leader in entrepreneurship education and advocacy as an educator, consultant and community member. She is the owner and co-founder of Open for Business magazine. She holds a Master of Science Degree in Organizational Management with an emphasis on Entrepreneurship & Economic Development. Lisa started her career in entrepreneurial education at Central Community College. She is a certified NxLevel EDGE Instructor, Certified Community Development Block Grant Administrator, a licensed real estate agent and Certified Growth Wheel Coach. In 2011 she published a book on Customer Service and Business Relationships.
Presenters

Bree Dority, Ph.D. - Associate Dean of the College of Business and Technology, UNK
Assistant Professor of Finance and Co-Founder of the Tri-City Area Economic Forum

Dr. Dority has done extensive work on issues that directly affect the stakeholders of the University of Nebraska at Kearney and the people of Nebraska. She has conducted economic impact, labor availability, and community revitalization studies, and has presented and published research on school consolidation and tobacco free laws. Prior to joining the University of Nebraska at Kearney, she was an Associate at Analysis Group, an economic consulting firm in Denver, Colorado. There she worked on projects involving health outcomes and cost analysis, transfer pricing disputes, and valuation of economic damages. Dr. Dority received her Ph.D. in economics from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln in 2008. Her research interests are in the area of applied economics and policy at the local and regional levels. Her research has been published in Energy Economics, Contemporary Economic Policy, and the Journal of Public Policy and Marketing.

Mitch Herian, Ph.D. - Project Director, Bureau of Business Research, UNL

Dr. Mitchel Herian is the Project Director at the Bureau of Business Research. Dr. Herian also serves as a faculty fellow at the University of Nebraska Public Policy Center, and an adjunct professor in the Political Science department at UNL. Dr. Herian has conducted applied research for agencies such as the U.S. Army, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the Nebraska Supreme Court, the Nebraska Department of Education, and the Kansas Department of Corrections. His research has received support from agencies including the National Science Foundation and the National Institute of Justice. Dr. Herian’s research has been published in a variety of peer reviewed journals including the Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, American Review of Public Administration, Policy Studies Journal, State and Local Government.
Presenters

Amos Anson - Grand Island, NE

Amos Anson graduated from Grand Island Senior High in 2001 and entered into the Construction Program at SCC Milford. Upon graduating in 2003 with an Associates of Applied Science in Building Construction, he started his first business FAmos Construction Inc. After several years of constructing single family homes the opportunity to redevelop buildings in the historic downtown core arose and out of that was born Empire Development. Amos has become the go-to when it comes to renovating downtown properties and navigating the politics and financing involved with all aspects of renovations. Amos has served as the Construction Manager for Habitat for Humanity since 2005. He is an entrepreneur to his core and loves mentoring others who want to become entrepreneurs as well.

Megan Arrington - Williams, Hastings, NE

Megan has been deeply involved in her community since she moved to Hastings for college. She graduated from Hastings College with a degree in Mass Communications. Since then she has helped numerous small businesses get started, and started two of her own, Prairie Interactive and Open for Business Magazine. Today she finds herself in the role of Director of Operations and Marketing for First Street Brewing Company. She has served as the DTCA president, an alternate planning and zoning commissioner for the City of Hastings on the Hastings Arts Council where she currently serves as president, is involved with the Do the Brew Volunteer Team, and is the president of the Pink Boots Society. She was also one of the founders of Junk Street, a street-fair style event bringing hundreds of people to downtown Hastings each fall. Megan is a certified yoga instructor bringing value to her community through teaching classes on a regular basis in downtown Hastings.

Patrick Moore - Kearney, NE

Patrick is a Kearney-based architect and (re)developer who has been involved in transformative adaptive-reuse and urban infill projects in Omaha, Oklahoma City, Portland, Seattle and Los Angeles. He believes in preserving the contextual history of a place by prominently featuring areas of a building or neighborhood’s pre-renewal entropic decay as a design element. After hours, Patrick leads Upstairs Downtown, an informal downtown building owners redevelopment interest group, serves on the board of directors for Kearney’s historic World Theater, and attends Cub Scout events with his children.
Nebraska Thriving Index

Bree Dority
UNK, College of Business & Technology
Mitch Herian
UNL, Bureau of Business Research
Eric Thompson
UNL, Bureau of Business Research
Outline

Project Contributors & Context

A Tool for a Thriving Rural Future

Nebraska Regions & Comparison Regions

Regional Results – Advantages & Concerns

Results by Region

Summary and Website Info

ruralfutures.nebraska.edu
Project Contributors

(Pi) Eric Thompson
Director of the Bureau of Business Research and Professor of Economics, College of Business, UNL

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CVI Program Leader, Nebraska Extension, UNL; Co-Director, Center for Rural Entrepreneurship

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Director of Communications and PR, Rural Futures Institute

Kim Peterson
Director of Competitive Awards and Finance, Rural Futures Institute

UNL Bureau Scholars (students)

UNK research assistant

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Nebraska Thriving Index

Context: “The Barometer”

An economic scorecard of the Omaha region. Gauges eight key economic and performance-related areas:

- Growth
- Human Capital
- Quality of Life
- Entrepreneurship
- Innovation
- Infrastructure Capacity
- Business Cost
- Private Capital
Nebraska Thriving Index

A Tool for a Thriving Rural Future
Nebraska Thriving Index

**Purpose:** Benchmarking tool for the non-metropolitan and small metropolitan regions of Nebraska

Eight Nebraska regions are compared on economic and quality of life indicators with peer regions located around the northern Plains

**Value:** Will help to identify areas of economic strength in Nebraska’s regions and areas where Nebraska regions lag

Allows community and state leaders to develop future-focused strategies to build on regional advantages and address areas of concern

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Nebraska Thriving Index
Compared according to three indexes of economic prosperity.

**Growth Index**
Measures total employment growth, private employment, private wage growth, growth in households with children, and growth in dividend, interest and rent income.
(5 variables)

**Economic Opportunity & Diversity Index**
Measures entrepreneurial activity, industry diversity, occupation diversity and share of telecommuters.
(7 variables)

**Other Prosperity Index**
Measures non-farm proprietor personal income, total personal income stability, life span, percent in poverty and share of income from dividends, interest and rent.
(5 variables)

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Nebraska Thriving Index

Compared according to five indexes of economic conditions.

- **Demographic Growth & Renewal Index**
  Measures long-term population growth, dependency ratio, median age, millennial and Gen Z balance, and population diversity (6 variables)

- **Quality of Life Index**
  Measures the appeal of living and working in a region including commute times, housing, relative wages, public safety, climate and recreational amenities, access to health care, day care, parks, and arts and cultural activity (10 variables)

- **Education & Skill Index**
  Measures high school and college education attainment, labor force participation and employment in knowledge-based occupations (4 variables)

- **Social Capital Index**
  Measures involvement with volunteer organizations, programs to build the community environment, and voter participation (5 variables)

- **Infrastructure & Cost of Doing Business Index**
  Measures access to broadband, interstate highways and universities as well as wage rates, marginal tax rates and the presence of opportunity zones (6 variables)

[Link to ruralfutures.nebraska.edu]
Nebraska Regions

Selected in an iterative process which considered

- Nebraska Extension’s Community Vitality Initiative Accountability Regions
- Nebraska Economic Development Regions
- Nebraska Economic Development Districts
- Information from the Nebraska Department of Labor
- Expertise of project participants
Nebraska Thriving Index
Nebraska Thriving Index

Nebraska Regions

North 81
Madison, Pierce, Platte and Stanton

Northeast
Antelope, Boone, Burt, Cedar, Colfax, Cuming, Dodge, Knox, Nance, Thurston and Wayne

Panhandle
Banner, Box Butte, Cheyenne, Dawes, Deuel, Garden, Kimball, Morrill, Scottsbluff, Sheridan and Sioux

Sandhills
Blaine, Boyd, Brown, Cherry, Custer, Garfield, Grant, Greeley, Holt, Hooker, Keya Paha, Loup, Rock, Thomas, Valley and Wheeler

Siouxland
Dakota and Dixon

Southeast
Butler, Fillmore, Gage, Jefferson, Johnson, Nemaha, Otoe, Pawnee, Polk, Richardson, Saline, Thayer and York

Southwest
Arthur, Chase, Dawson, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Gosper, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keith, Lincoln, Logan, McPherson, Perkins and Red Willow

Tri-Cities
Adams, Buffalo, Clay, Franklin, Hall, Hamilton, Harlan, Howard, Kearney, Merrick, Nuckolls, Phelps, Sherman and Webster

Note: Douglas, Sarpy, Cass, Saunders, Washington, Lancaster and Seward counties are not included in any of the eight regions

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Nebraska Thriving Index

Comparison Regions

Either other Nebraska regions or U.S. Economic Development Administration regions located in another northern Plains state:

- Iowa, South Dakota, Kansas, Minnesota, (western) Illinois, (eastern) Colorado and (eastern) Wyoming

Used the Mahalanobis matching technique to identify comparison regions based on the fundamental economic characteristics of the region:

- **Total population**
- **Economic structure**: farming share of income, ranching share of income, and manufacturing share of employment
- **Urban orientation**: percent of population in a micropolitan area, distance to a small MSA (population <250,000) and distance to a large MSA (population > 250,000)

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Nebraska Thriving Index

Regional Results
Nebraska Thriving Index: Value & Rank within Peer Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Southwest (1st of 7)</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panhandle (2nd of 7)</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast (3rd of 6)</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slouland (3rd of 6)</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandhills (2nd of 6)</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast (3rd of 9)</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tri-Cities (1st of 7)</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North (2nd of 6)</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interpreting an Index Value

100 means that the Nebraska region is at the average value of its peers
0 means that a Nebraska region is one standard deviation behind its peers
200 means that a Nebraska region is one standard deviation ahead of its peers

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Regional Patterns: Advantage #1

Economic Growth Index Rank by Region

Rank vs. Comparison Regions, Value

1st | 2nd | 3rd | 1st | 2nd | 4th | 1st
--- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | ---
203 | 151 | 104 | 228 | 160 | 85 | 161

North 61 | Northeast | Panhandle | Sandhills | Siouxland | Southeast | Southwest | Tri-Cities

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Regional Patterns: Advantage #2

Quality of Life Index Rank by Region

Rank vs. Comparison Regions, Value

North 81: 162
Northeast: 90
Panhandle: 101
Sandhills: 37
Siouxland: 163
Southeast: 106
Southwest: 142
Tri-Cities: 187

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Regional Patterns: Advantage #3

Social Capital Index Rank by Region

Rank vs. Comparison Regions, Value

North 81: 2nd
Northeast: 2nd
Panhandle: 4th
Sandhills: 1st
Souloand: 2nd
Southeast: 3rd
Southwest: 2nd
Tri-Cities: 3rd

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Regional Patterns: Concern

Education & Skill Index Rank by Region

*Rank vs. Comparison Regions, Value*

North 81: 181
Northeast: 89
Panhandle: 112
Sandhills: 165
Siouxland: 22
Southeast: 96
Southwest: 13
Tri-Cities: 81

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Results by Region: TRI-CITIES
Nebraska Thriving Index

Tri-Cities Region & Comparison Regions

Region Key
1. NEBRASKA: Tri-Cities Region
2. MINNESOTA: Region Nine Development Commission
3. IOWA: East Central Intergovernmental Association
4. IOWA: Mid-Iowa Development Association
5. KANSAS: Flint Hills Economic Development District
6. IOWA: Region 6 Planning Commission
7. MINNESOTA: Minnesota West Central Initiative
Nebraska Thriving Index

Neb. Thriving Index: 136
Ranks 1st Among Peers

1st Growth
1st Economic Opportunity & Diversity
1st Quality of Life

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Using the Results

Use the 1st place rankings and underlying variables to tell the region’s story better

Address weakness by prioritizing workforce development initiatives such as:

- **Enhancing** awareness about innovative recruitment and retention practices in non-metro and small metro areas
- **Facilitating** collaboration among strategic partners to address education, training, and workforce development needs of the regional business community

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Results by Region: SOUTHWEST
Nebraska Thriving Index

Southwest Region & Comparison Regions

Region Key
1. NEBRASKA: Southwest Region
2. IOWA: Northwest Iowa Planning & Development Commission
3. NEBRASKA: Panhandle Region
4. NEBRASKA: Northeast Region
5. IOWA: Region XII Council of Governments
6. MINNESOTA: Southwest Regional Development Commission
7. IOWA: Mid-Iowa Development Association Council of Governments
Nebraska Thriving Index

Neb. Thriving Index: 95
Ranks 5th Among Peers

1st  Quality of Life
2nd  Social Capital
2nd  Infrastructure & Cost of Doing Business

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Using the Results

Use the 1st place rankings and underlying variables to tell the region’s story better

Address weakness by prioritizing workforce development initiatives such as:

- **Enhancing** awareness about innovative recruitment and retention practices in non-metro and small metro areas
- **Facilitating** collaboration among strategic partners to address education, training, and workforce development needs of the regional business community
- **Identifying** and reducing barriers to full labor participation

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Nebraska Thriving Index

**Uses**

**Benchmarking:** To help identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the region

**Prioritization:** To help identify areas that are important and urgent from those that are important but less urgent

**Data/Evidence:** To help motivate/justify current and/or sought after initiatives (e.g., targeted recruitment of tech workers)

**Evaluation:** Could be used as direct measures to evaluate the effectiveness of strategic goals/objectives

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Questions?

ruralfutures.nebraska.edu/nethrivingindex

Where you can find the Nebraska Thriving Index data for all regions

Share feedback with us and find our upcoming in-person presentations and webinars

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The data collected through this survey is part of a longitudinal study of the UNK student population. The original purpose of the study was for the Kearney Downtown Improvement Board and initiated in the summer of 2017. The members of this group wanted to understand the housing preferences of Kearney area citizens ages 19-25. As the study developed, the Center for Entrepreneurship and Rural Development (CERD) worked with area stakeholders to identify other measures that would garner useful information about this population and result in valuable data that can be used for the purpose of economic development. The survey administered had specifically designed questions regarding the preferences of housing, employment, and community as emerging talent enters their professional lives after college. As of this date, the CERD has collected two years of data with results in the following pages.
Total responses for the two-year study = 664

**2018**
- Michigan - 1
- Iowa - 6
- Wisconsin - 1
- Minnesota - 1
- South Dakota - 2
- Texas - 3
- Utah - 2
- California - 1

Montana - 2
Illinois - 1
Missouri - 4
Kansas - 6
Oklahoma - 2
Colorado - 9
Arizona - 2
Hawaii - 1

**2019**
- Iowa - 1
- Illinois - 1
- Kansas - 2
- Colorado - 2
- Arizona - 1
- California - 1

**2018**
- 472

**2019**
- 133
As you think about starting your professional career, please consider where you wish to live or where you have chosen to live based on employment, education and healthcare opportunities.

- **Job Opportunities**
  - 2019: 3.7
  - 2018: 3.68

- **Quality of Healthcare Services**
  - 2019: 3.37
  - 2018: 3.35

- **Educational Opportunities for Children**
  - 2019: 3.02
  - 2018: 3.22

- **Educational Opportunities for Adults**
  - 2019: 2.7
  - 2018: 2.63

**Scoring Key:**
1 = Not important at all
2 = Not very important
3 = Somewhat important
4 = Very important
As you think about starting your professional career, please consider where you wish to live or where you have chosen to live based on proximity of resources, family and friends and housing options.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Affordable Housing</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>3.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable Housing</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>3.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location of Spouse or Significant Other</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>3.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close to Family &amp; Friends</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>3.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreational Activities</td>
<td>2.87</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography/Climate/Landscape</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>2.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts and Entertainment</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>2.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proximity to Shopping</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proximity to Transportation</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>2.24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 = Not important at all  
2 = Not very important  
3 = Somewhat important  
4 = Very important
As you think about starting your professional career, please consider where you wish to live or where you have chosen to live based on the community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crime Rates</th>
<th>Population and Size of Community</th>
<th>State Laws and Policies</th>
<th>City Laws and Policies</th>
<th>Political Culture of Community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>2.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>3.22</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>3.49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to attract a vibrant workforce, we want to know what elements are most important when choosing to apply for a job based on workplace setting and opportunities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advancement Opportunities</th>
<th>Responsibilities and Expectations</th>
<th>On-the-Job Training</th>
<th>Ability for Collaboration/Teamwork</th>
<th>Modern Management Structure</th>
<th>Position Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>2.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>2.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to attract a vibrant workforce, we want to know what elements are most important when choosing to apply for a job based on wages and benefits.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pay/Salary</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Flexible Schedule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>3.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>3.43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 = Not important at all  
2 = Not very important  
3 = Somewhat important  
4 = Very important
Emerging Talent Survey

Do you plan on living in Kearney after graduation?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Yes (%)</th>
<th>No (%)</th>
<th>Not Sure (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Would you like to eventually return to the Kearney area to live and work?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Yes (%)</th>
<th>No (%)</th>
<th>Maybe (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Emerging Talent Survey

There is a lot of opportunity in Kearney for young professionals to connect with the community.

There is a lot of opportunity in Kearney for young professionals to meet friends and socialize.

Kearney is a safe community.

I want to live and work professionally in Kearney.
Emerging Talent Survey

I have the desire to someday start or own a business.

My college experience adequately introduced me to the Kearney community.

Which description best describes your perspective on the economy in Kearney.

What type of neighborhood do you want to live in?
Center for Entrepreneurship and Rural Development

The mission of the Center for Entrepreneurship and Rural Development is to promote strong and sustained business growth by fostering creative entrepreneurial initiatives in central Nebraska and to establish a competitive economic edge through applied academic research and community outreach.

EDUCATION
A primary focus for the Center is creating and supporting valuable educational experiences for UNK students, while also bringing educational opportunities to the business community and entrepreneurs. We serve as advisors for the UNK student entrepreneurship organization.

OUTREACH
Bringing engaging activities and relevant information to the public is a key step that allows our team to add value to the regional and rural ecosystem. The Center works to network community stakeholders, organizations and UNK students for successful opportunities.

RESEARCH
The Center works across campus to include all disciplines, and across the University of Nebraska system. Through these partnerships, CERD provides research supporting business development, reliable planning, and organizational strategy for both public and private entities.

Contact us today to schedule a consultation for your organization or community.
emailcerd@unk.edu    |     308.865.8199