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N E W S R E L E A S E

For release: Aug. 15, 2008

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Teachers statewide chosen for 11th Capitol Forum

LINCOLN—Twenty-four high school teachers from schools across the state will participate in the 11th annual Nebraska Capitol Forum on America's Future. Through Capitol Forum the teachers and their students will engage in discussion of our nation's future in a changing international environment.

A program of the Choices for the 21st Century Project of Brown University's Watson Institute for International Studies, Capitol Forum seeks to develop a foundation for long-term civic engagement by giving students a voice in public consideration of current issues. Students study and discuss various positions on global concerns to better understand options and their consequences. Global issues to be discussed include terrorism, environment, nuclear weapons, immigration, and international trade.

Selected teachers represent rural, urban, public and private schools. Schools and teachers chosen for the 11th Capitol Forum are: Ashland-Greenwood High School (Brian Petermann); Bellevue West High School (Robin Kratina); Centura High School, Cairo (George Lytle); Dodge High School (Mitch Hoffer); Falls City High School (Lee Kurpgeweit and Lori Rech); Twin River High School, Genoa (Ryan Sidwell); Hampton High School (Patrick Alexander); Hastings High School (Robert Kerr); Hemingford High School (Dave Chatelain); Holdrege High School (Chad Bailey); Howells High School (Scott Polacek); Lincoln North Star High School (Mike Gillotti); Pius X High School, Lincoln (Tom Seib); Millard West High School (Tim Royers); Conestoga High School, Murray (Todd Wills); Norfolk Senior High School (Katherine Steinkamp); North Platte High School (N. Dennis Fornander); Benson High School, Omaha (Joe DiCostanzo); Platteview High School, Springfield (Jon Comine); Southeast Consolidated School, Stella (Peggy Williams); Sterling High School (Arlo Wusk); Sumner-Eddyville-Miller High School (Dee Thompson); Wilcox-Hildreth High School (Ken Meyers).

Six of the teachers and three of the schools are new to the program this year. One of the teachers, Tim Royers of Millard West High School, participated in Capitol Forum as a student in 2003. Robin Kratina of Bellevue West and Dennis Fornander of North Platte will participate as lead teachers. Together they have 11 years of combined Capitol Forum experience.

On Aug. 4, the selected teachers gathered at Bellevue West to discuss Capitol Forum curriculum and teaching strategies, and to learn more about international trade issues. Guest speaker Stan Garbacz, Nebraska's Agricultural Trade Representative, spoke of trade missions, the response to trade restrictions and the reception of Nebraska beef in Cuba, Japan, Taiwan, China, Vietnam and Guatemala.

When school begins this fall, students will study and discuss the Capitol Forum issues in preparation for a March 30 visit to the State Capitol, where class representatives will report on and deliberate the international concerns of their classmates and have the opportunity to discuss issues with elected officials.

The NHC presents Capitol Forum in collaboration with the office of Secretary of State John Gale and with funding support from the Cooper Foundation, the Milton and Miriam Waldbaum Family Foundation, the Nebraska Cultural Endowment, and private donations.

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