

# **SPECIAL PROJECT AWARDS NOMINATION FORM**

**Name of Community or Multi-Community:** Bassett

**Population:** 636

**Name of Project:** Rock County Youth Leadership Class

**Project Contact Person:** Debbie Seberger

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**Category:** Leadership Development

**Subcategory:** Youth Involvement & Leadership Development

**Please identify which projects are also nominated for Special Project Awards:** Sandhills Ranch EXPO, Rock County Youth Leadership Class and History DVDs

**Date Project Started (mo./yr)** 7/09    **Date Completed (mo./yr.)** Ongoing

**Is the project Annual/Ongoing?** Yes \_\_\_X\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

**Volunteer Hours :** 100+

**Number of Volunteers:** 2 sponsors and 7 students

## **1) Please provide a brief description of the project.**

In fall of 2009, the NCIP committee developed the Nebraska Community Leadership Challenge and Bassett was privileged to be selected as one of the first communities to participate and complete the program. Using the Nebraska Community Leadership Challenge curriculum, the Bassett Economic Development Coordinator and the Vo-Ag teacher at the Rock County High School, developed a youth leadership program for the school. The top seven (7) candidates were selected from a group of students that applied to participate in the leadership class.

Throughout the year, the class completed educational sessions, such as learning how to work with individuals with personalities other than our own and how to work effectively with people from different generations. The class wrote letters to State Senators regarding bills that would impact their lives. The students were also required to complete 10 hours of volunteer service in the community and attend at least one local organizational meeting to gain perspective on how an effective meeting is conducted. The seven students completed their required classes and a graduation ceremony was held. Their keynote speaker at their leadership graduation was none other than Governor Heineman.

The capstone project is the main educational aspect of the leadership curriculum. The students selected a project that they wanted to see completed in Bassett. The class chose to upgrade the playground equipment at the city park. The obsolete equipment that is in the park will be removed and replaced with new and safer equipment. The students also want to place a layer of shredded rubber mulch under all the playground equipment to make a safer environment for the children using the park.

## **2) Identify the planning and implementation of the project.**

Within this leadership program, the sponsors and the youth worked together to make it a successful endeavor. The Economic Development Coordinator applied for the opportunity to participate. Then she and the Vo-Ag teacher worked on compiling a curriculum that they felt would benefit the youth the most.

Throughout the year, the youth would have input on the next month's educational session. The program was built around the youth and with the youth.

The community had conducted a needs assessment survey in the summer of 2007. A priority that came out of that survey was the need for a leadership program. So, the community was very supportive of this effort. Different organizations in town were contacted about providing a supper for the leadership class. So, during a leadership session, local organizations would sponsor a supper and then would provide information about their organization to the youth while they were eating. Since the students needed to attend a meeting to critique it, this gave them an opportunity to know more about the organizations of the meeting they may attend. Having food provided cut down on any financial strain this program may have seen.

### **3) Describe volunteer involvement in planning and implementing the project.**

Throughout the year, the youth's leadership classes led up to their selection of a capstone project. They brainstormed on different projects that they would like to see happen in the community. They selected to update the obsolete, unsafe equipment that is located in the city park. In order for this project to be successful, there were and are many steps to be taken. Two students volunteered to contact the different companies about rubber mulch and playground equipment to get information and price quotes. Two more students volunteered to present our idea to city council and get approval. Fundraising ideas were compiled to two other students. So, everyone was getting involved in some aspect of the project.

Three fundraisers have been held by the youth. Letters have also been written to various foundations across the state asking for support. The youth have currently raised over \$5000 since late April. The equipment is almost paid for and they will be applying for a DEQ grant that could possibly cover 50% of the cost for the rubber mulch. The students are currently planning to attend a city council meeting, Bassett Foundation meeting and Chamber meeting to ask for financial support, as well as hold a walking taco feed fundraiser at the first home football game. They also will be holding two carwashes throughout the summer at the local Farmers Market on Saturdays in downtown Bassett. For these fundraisers all the students participate. 100% involvement is required and enjoyed. The youth get excited when thinking about fun ways to raise money. They also have fun doing the fundraisers!

### **4) Identify Project Outcomes.**

After the community needs survey, it became clear that we needed to get the youth more involved in the community. When the opportunity to apply for the Nebraska Leadership Challenge came available, the Economic Development Coordinator thought this was a good way to get the youth involved and educated about our community and being a leader.

The first step was to get city council approval to support the city applying for the project. The city council was behind it right from the word go. Next, the Economic Development Coordinator and Vo-Ag teacher asked the various organizations in town if they would be willing to sponsor a supper and talk to the students about their organization. Every single one we asked very enthusiastically said yes. Then when it came time to have a nice lunch for the Governor's visit our own NCIP committee stepped up and voiced that they wanted to be the ones to organize it. Also, through fundraising the community members, personal and business wide, have really showed their support by helping us raise the needed funds.

The leadership class has sparked an interest in the students to become more involved in the community. One member has already started to regularly attend the monthly Chamber meetings. Organizations in town have started to ask if the youth can help with various community projects and the students have been very willing to get involved and help out. The goal is to remove and install the new equipment this fall. The fundraising is still currently happening. So, the students continue to put time and effort towards completing their project.

**5) Describe how resources were identified and used to successfully implement the project.**

In the beginning, the sponsors were planning the class and thinking of how to conduct the class without costing any one entity much money. Asking different organizations for support really helped to spread out the financial burden of providing food. Any other expenses that we experienced, the FFA covered and then we reimbursed them out of our fundraising funds. The materials (textbooks) were provided by DED for all the students and sponsors. For the playground equipment project, the students have held three fundraisers in the community. As well as writing several project proposals to foundations across the state. Also, they will be applying for the DEQ rubber mulch grant in February. The children put their own time and commitment to the project and the sponsors did as well. They donated their time to work with the class.

**6) Future Plans**

This project has been very worthwhile to the community. The sponsors have decided that it would need to be a project that is only held every three to four years. As to catch new high school students to participate in the project. However, as mentioned above, different organization have already been asking if the leadership students could help out in different capacities around town, so the class will stay active throughout the coming years until another one is held. Also, the playground equipment project will not be completed until next spring, so the students will need to follow through and make sure to stay involved through completion.

The city of Bassett has learned that youth involvement is so important, and that there is a continuous need for it in our community. Coming out of this project is the realization that we need to involve them more in the decision process for various projects and ask them to be help in the carrying out of that project.

**7) Please describe what aspects (if any) of the project were especially unique or creative?**

We feel our Youth Leadership Class was unique in taking the DED curriculum and adapting it to fit the youth program. Our students attended an hour class once a month for eight months, putting in their own time and commitment to the project. And also selecting a solid community project that will help to improve our community, and following through with it is a unique aspect.

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SERVICE

## Gov. Heineman will be speaking to students



Last fall, Bassett was awarded the opportunity to participate in the NCIP Community Leadership Challenge. Ann Dvorak and Debbie Seberger are the sponsors for the program. Seven high school students, Taylor Hart, Harlee Hollenbeck, MaKenzie Krieger, Tiara Krieger, Marty Kreitman, Fee Nahrstedt, Jaci Badura were selected to take part in the Leadership class curriculum. They have met once a month since September. During this time they have had speakers come and talk about how to effectively work with people who have different personalities than their own. Different organizations in town have come and spoken about the ins and outs of their organizations. They also have learned about and discussed how to efficiently work with people from different generations.

The class has completed 10 hours each of community service as well as wrote a letter to a state senator about an issue that impacts their lives.

The main aspect to their leadership class is the capstone project. The class has selected to improve the city park as their project. They will remove the older, unsafe equipment and replace it with new equipment, as well as lay down rubber mulch in the whole playground area.

Rock County Leader, Bassett, Neb., Wednesday, April 14, 2010

The class will be holding fundraisers throughout the coming months. The first fundraiser will be held in conjunction with the FFA Hired Hand auction on April 30.

They will be auctioning off baskets of goodies, donated by local businesses, through a silent auction.

The class will be graduating from the Leadership Challenge Program on April 20. Gov. Heineman will be giving the graduation address to all the students of Rock County at the Rock County High school that day. He will be speaking about the importance of being an effective leader. Following their graduation, the seven students will be having lunch with Gov. Heineman.



Rock County Leader, Bassett, Neb., Wednesday, April 28, 2010



**Friday, April 30 - 6:30 p.m.**

Rock County High School Gym  
**The Community Leadership Class is raising money for their community project, purchasing a new swing & slide for the Bassett City Park with a**

## **Basket Silent Auction**

**During The FFA Banquet**

**Please Come To The Event & Support Their Project**

## **Fundraiser for playground**

The Rock County Youth Leadership class is holding a fundraising for new playground equipment for the Bassett City Park project.

Items they will be selling are cookie dough, pies, coffee, cobblers, mini tacos, enchiladas, hot cheddar poppers, cinnamon rolls, breakfast burritos, and candles.

Contact one of these members of the class if interested in supporting their project, Jaci Badura, Taylor Hart, Harlee Hollenbeck, MacKenzie Kreiger, Tiara Krieger, Marty Kreitman, Fee Nahrstedt, Ann Dvorak, Debbie Seberger. The sales will end June 11.



## **RC Youth Leadership Class Playground Equipment Fundraiser For The Bassett City Park Project**

They are selling cookie dough, pies, coffee, cobblers, mini tacos, enchiladas, hot cheddar poppers, cinnamon rolls, breakfast burritos, & candles.



Contact a member of the class if interested in supporting their project -- Jaci Badura, Taylor Hart, Harlee Hollenbeck, MacKenzie Kreiger, Tiara Krieger, Marty Kreitman, Fee Nahrstedt, Ann Dvorak, Debbie Seberger -- Sales end Friday, June 11th

COOKIES

TACOS