

Peru State Grant Will Aid Nemaha County Children

(KLZA) -- Peru State College's Children's Health, Activity, & Nutrition Community Engagement Initiative (CHANCE) has received a \$9,500 wellness grant from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska (BCBSNE) to promote physical activity among area students and reduce childhood obesity.

Developed by Associate Professor of Education Dr. Kyle Ryan and Associate Professor of Business Dr. Sheri Grotian-Ryan, the CHANCE Initiative is a grant-funded partnership between Peru State, Auburn Public Schools, Johnson Brock Public Schools, the Auburn Chamber of Commerce and Auburn Family Health Center, P.C. The goal is to encourage healthier lifestyles among area children and their families by creating awareness and educating them about better choices.

The BCBSNE grant will help fund after-school programs for grade school children in Nemaha County, including grades K-5 at Calvert Elementary in Auburn and K-6 at Johnson-Brock Elementary.

Peru State students will carry out the program, in its third year, by engaging the elementary students in 20-30 minutes of activities two days a week throughout the school year. Activities will be aimed specifically at examining and offsetting pediatric obesity in rural southeast Nebraska.

Three Peru State students and AmeriCorps scholars will work with the children, including Allie Buesing a sophomore business administration & sport and exercise science major from Cozad; Lindsey Toman, a junior elementary education major from Lincoln; and Preston Sunneberg, a junior marketing major from Burchard. They will design and implement nutritional lesson plans, research and study step count differences (using pedometers) between genders and grade levels. It's recommended that females reach 11,000 steps per day and males 13,000.

Rob Trebilcock, BCBSNE's director of community engagement, said, "We applaud Peru State College for its efforts in building healthier communities in southeast Nebraska. We view this grant award as an investment in the health and well-being of our children and our state."

Only eight of 55 grant applications were awarded.

Many Signals Communications