

OAKLAND

Swedish Capital
of Nebraska

INDEPENDENT

NEF to Join Citi Foundation-funded Project; Funds Will Support Summer Internship

Nebraska Enterprise Fund (NEF) will get some valuable help collecting information about clients' needs, experiences and accomplishments thanks to a grant from the Citi Foundation to hire a summer intern. Recruitment of a graduate student for the internship will begin immediately.

Selected through a competitive process, Nebraska Enterprise Fund will join 14 other programs nationwide in the Citi Aspen Intern Program, an initiative that is expected to result in one of the largest national data sets on microenterprise owners, while also introducing college students to potential career opportunities in the microenterprise field.

Microenterprises are defined as very small businesses capitalized with \$35,000 or less and employing five or fewer people.

NEF is a statewide mi-

croenterprise intermediary, providing services to microenterprise development organizations (MDO's) that work with micro businesses across the state. These MDO's provide loans, training and technical assistance to micro businesses. Evaluation of the performance of each program and the outcomes are an important part of the services NEF provides.

Interns in the 12-week program will receive \$7,000 stipends funded by the Citi Foundation, and data-collection training provided by FIELD, the microenterprise Fund for Innovation, Effectiveness, Learning and Dissemination, a research project housed at the Aspen Institute in Washington D.C. FIELD has been funded by the Foundation to manage the program. The interns will travel to Washington D.C. twice; in June to receive training and at the end of the sum-

mer to review their findings and experiences.

The Citi Aspen Intern Program grew out of recognition that many nonprofits providing help to small businesses in their community do not have the capacity to collect data that can then be used to improve or add services, fund-raise or advocate for entrepreneurship.

"Nebraska Enterprise Fund is part of a select group of programs nationally that have been chosen for this award from the Citi Foundation," said Tamra Thetford, who will manage the project at FIELD. "The data collected on clients not only will help drive program performance, it will contribute to an important national database on micro-entrepreneurs."

The Citi Foundation is committed to enhancing economic opportunities for underserved individuals and families in the

communities where it works throughout the world. Globally, it focuses its giving on microfinance and microentrepreneurship, which helps individuals become economically self-sufficient, small and growing businesses leading to economic expansion and job creation; education, which prepares young people for personal and professional success; financial education, which helps individuals make informed financial decisions, and the environment with a focus on sustainable enterprises that generate jobs and stimulate economic growth while preserving the environment.

Please contact Jane Olson, 402-685-5500 for information on how to apply for this internship. Additional information about Nebraska Enterprise Fund is available at: www.nebbiz.org.

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