



# Horizons

The newsletter for Nebraska's 529 Direct and Advisor College Savings Plan account owners.

**SUMMER 2015**

## Message from the Nebraska State Treasurer

As a NEST account owner, you are acquainted with state-sponsored 529 college savings plans and the benefits of saving when children are young. But, did you know you are in fairly select company? Surprisingly, a recent survey by a national financial services firm found that two thirds of Americans still don't know what a 529 plan is.

Summer may be the perfect time to pass on what you have learned to family, friends, and neighbors—at backyard picnics, front porch gatherings, or across the fence. At family reunions, vacation getaways, or staycations right at home. Or, maybe on the bleachers at baseball or summer softball games across town. Direct them to [NEST529.com](http://NEST529.com) or [NEST529Advisor.com](http://NEST529Advisor.com) for more information about the plans.

When you explain the benefits of saving through 529 plans like NEST, mention that contributions make perfect gifts. While the gift-giving season of graduations and promotions may be past, there are plenty of opportunities this summer to make a contribution to a 529 plan for a young beneficiary.

The child's summer birthday or half birthday is a perfect occasion. You may have other special days to celebrate as well—anniversaries, baptisms, adoption days, dance recitals, and sports championships. You may want to reward a summer reader or the neighbor boy or girl who mows your lawn or waters your flowers. You also might want to check the NEST website for summer promotions that feature bonuses for new accounts for children eight and younger.

Whatever the occasion, make it special by making a contribution to a child's college savings account, or setting up your own account and naming a beloved child as beneficiary. And while you are at it, tell others about NEST, an important tool to help meet the cost of a college education.

Go to [NEST529.com](http://NEST529.com) or [NEST529Advisor.com](http://NEST529Advisor.com) to make a gift contribution today.

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## Making Summer Savings Fun

Summer is a great time to get the family involved in saving for college. We hear many creative ideas about how families save and earn money to contribute to their NEST accounts and want to share a few.



**Lemonade Stand**—Get in the entrepreneurial spirit and give neighbors a refreshing summer treat. With a little help from parents, young kids can set up a lemonade stand. Talk about the importance of spending, saving, and sharing money earned. Of course, some of the money will be for summer fun and a portion of it for college savings.



**Round-Up Jar**—Use cash for purchases to help stay within your family budget. Try using cash this summer and putting all remaining change in a "Round-Up Jar." At the end of the summer, count the money and contribute it to your college savings.



**Lights Out Experiment**—Take advantage of the extra summer sunlight. Work with your family on conserving energy and dollars by turning out the lights in your house when they're not needed.

Then, make a comparison between your energy bill this year and last, put the difference toward college savings.



**Summer Reading**—Fight summer brain drain by encouraging your kids to read every day. For each completed book, or pages read, provide a financial incentive. A little bit of money for fun and a little bit for college. At the end of the summer, make a summer reading deposit in your NEST account.

## Market Commentary



**Kurt Spieler, CFA**  
Vice President,  
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First National  
Wealth Management

In 2015, stock and bond investors have experienced positive returns, albeit at fairly low levels as compared to the last few years. Year to date, the S&P 500 return is +3.2% with the Barclay's Capital Intermediate Government/Credit Index return +1.4%.<sup>1</sup> The S&P 500 has closed at all-time highs 10 times so far in

2015, most recently on May 21.<sup>2</sup> Stock market breadth has improved with both international and U.S. small and mid-cap returns outperforming U.S. large-cap equities.

GDP was revised lower in the first quarter to reflect a U.S. economy that contracted 0.7%.<sup>3</sup> The impact of U.S.-dollar strength on exports, less investment in the energy sector, and subdued consumption as individuals increase their savings all contributed to the sluggish economy. However, the jobs report released in May and June showed nonfarm payrolls increased 223,000 and 280,000, respectively.<sup>4</sup> The improving labor market is one reason to remain optimistic for a modest

acceleration in the U.S. economy as 2015 progresses. Internationally, there has also been positive news flow as developed economies have responded favorably to central bank stimulus and weaker currencies.

Investors will continue to closely watch the Federal Reserve Bank to look for signals regarding changing monetary policy. Equity returns have mostly been driven by multiple expansion, stock buybacks, increased dividends, and M&A activity. Moving forward, equities will likely need sales and earnings acceleration to support current market valuations and a higher stock market. In fixed income, we are still experiencing historically low interest rates, but relative to other developed economies, our yields are comparatively high. This disparity should continue to suppress U.S. yields and prevent a sharp increase in interest rates.

1 FactSet, S&P 500, and Barclays Capital Intermediate Government/Credit Index, May 31st year-to-date returns

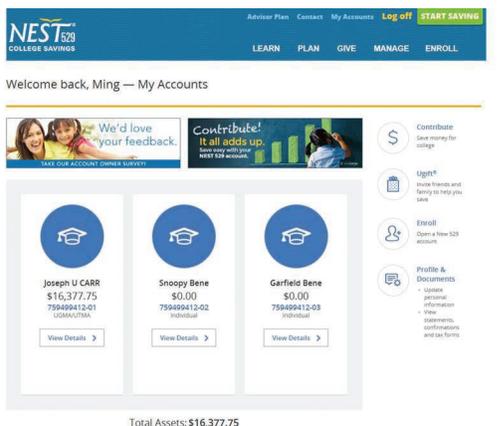
2 Bloomberg, S&P 500 Index

3 Bloomberg, Bureau of Economic Analysis

4 Bloomberg, Bureau of labor Statistics

## Saving For College Just Got Better

Exciting new improvements to the NEST Direct website are coming soon. The site, including the secure account area, will now be fully responsive—easily viewed on all mobile devices. This will make it easier to access the information you need to know about NEST and about your account.



Now making contributions, seeing your account balance, and all the full online functionality NEST account owners love will be easier than ever. We hope you will log in and take a look around.

## It's That Time of Year— How to Easily Withdraw Funds for College Expenses



**Online:** Log in to your account. Click on "Make a Withdrawal," and follow the instructions.



**By mail:** Download a *Withdrawal Request Form* online, fill it out and mail it in.



**By phone:** Call the Customer Service Center. If you have an Advisor Plan account, you may want to talk to your Advisor.

Qualified withdrawals can be sent to the beneficiary's school, the account owner, or the beneficiary of the account. If banking information is on file, the withdrawal can be sent electronically to the account owner's bank of record.

## Scholarship Corner

We're proud to have awarded numerous NEST scholarships this year in Nebraska and nationwide. There are more scholarships and bonuses to come. Make sure to check the website regularly.

### \$100 Bonus for New Accounts for Kids 8 and Younger

Share the good news with friends and family. The first 200 new NEST Direct accounts for beneficiaries 8 and younger, opened with a specific promo code, will receive a \$100 bonus into the account. This opportunity is open nationwide. Go to [NEST529.com/scholarships](http://NEST529.com/scholarships) for the official rules and the promo code.

### NEW AGAIN FOR 2015 Nebraska Summer Reading

Hey Summer Readers! NEST is offering fifteen \$529 scholarships to kids who complete their summer reading program through their libraries. Those who qualify will be automatically entered in a drawing to win one of the scholarships. Five scholarships will be awarded in each of Nebraska's three congressional districts. And, the library of each winner will also win \$250.

### Fantastic Future Me

The Fantastic Future Me exhibit is now at Nebraska's Grand Island Public Library. Using this interactive exhibit, children create avatars of their fantastic future selves and email to friends and family. They are then invited to open NEST accounts using a promo code. The first 50 new accounts will receive a \$25 bonus. Also, one winner from each location will be drawn from all new accounts to win a \$1,000 scholarship. The exhibit will be in the Grand Island library through Sept. 1 and in Blair, Neb., starting Sept. 4 through Nov. 20. If you are in the area, come visit us.

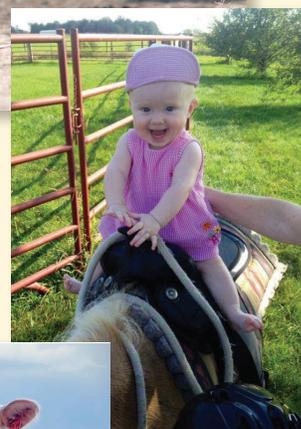


### NEST on the Farm Photos

New to the lineup of NEST scholarships this year was the NEST on the Farm Photo drawing. Nebraska kids could enter a farm-themed photo for a chance to win one of six randomly drawn \$1,000 scholarships. We saw many wonderful entries showcasing Nebraska's strong tradition of farming and ranching. The winners of this statewide contest were Louisa M. of Lincoln, Isabella S. of Omaha, Rowan L. of Grant, Ralph W. of Lincoln, Ayman A. of Omaha, and Elizabeth L. of Grand Island.



Pictured are a few of this year's submitted photos.



Look for next year's NEST on the Farm scholarship opportunity in the spring.



Go to the website for additional promotions and scholarship announcements!

# Kids Korner

The pitcher needs to get the ball to the catcher. Draw the path starting at three and counting by threes up to 300.

			3	6	9	12	27	30	
			102	99	96	15	24	33	36
			105	108	93	18	21	42	39
171	168	117	114	111	90	63	60	45	48
174	165	120	123	126	87	66	57	54	51
177	162	159	156	129	84	69	72	285	288
180	189	192	153	132	81	78	75	282	291
183	186	195	150	135	264	267	276	279	294
210	207	198	147	138	261	270	273	300	297
213	204	201	144	141	258	255			
216	219	228	231	240	243	252			
	222	225	234	237	246	249			

Find the hidden words listed below.

COLLEGE	EDUCATION	FRIENDS	SAVINGS											
CONTRIBUTION	FAMILY	NEST	SUMMER											
E	M	R	H	K	S	F	Y	G	B	Z	A	T	P	U
Y	E	J	E	V	R	A	I	L	J	Y	M	S	W	X
F	J	P	T	I	S	X	V	W	I	G	P	E	R	S
Q	B	U	E	G	U	N	T	I	L	M	N	N	C	Z
M	D	N	O	M	Q	A	E	A	N	O	A	Y	I	Q
E	D	U	C	A	T	I	O	N	I	G	R	F	E	L
S	E	T	A	U	S	P	K	T	E	G	S	F	A	C
N	N	A	O	W	N	E	U	Y	J	Z	Y	C	I	I
G	F	T	S	G	V	B	D	G	Z	U	A	O	M	X
M	Y	D	X	B	I	V	T	H	K	S	D	L	A	O
E	X	J	R	R	Q	R	E	M	M	U	S	L	H	G
B	L	E	T	U	C	U	C	G	L	W	S	E	I	M
A	S	N	W	K	U	X	J	I	K	K	B	G	V	E
J	O	J	M	V	V	D	D	C	O	Q	S	E	P	S
C	K	A	C	D	P	D	T	J	O	S	X	O	L	U

## Contact Us

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The NEST Direct and NEST Advisor Plans are sponsored by the State of Nebraska and administered by the Nebraska State Treasurer. The NEST Direct and NEST Advisor Plans offer a series of investment portfolios within the Nebraska Educational Savings Plan Trust, which offers other investment portfolios not affiliated with the NEST Direct or NEST Advisor Plans. The NEST Direct and NEST Advisor Plans are intended to operate as qualified tuition programs to be used only to save for qualified higher education expenses, pursuant to Section 529 of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code.

An investor should consider the Plans' investment objectives, risks, charges, and expenses before investing. The Program Disclosure Statements, at [www.NEST529Direct.com](http://www.NEST529Direct.com) or [www.NEST529Advisor.com](http://www.NEST529Advisor.com), which contain more information, should be read carefully before investing.

Investors should consider before investing whether their or their beneficiary's home state offers any state tax or other benefits that are only available for investments in such state's qualified tuition program and should consult their tax advisor, attorney and/or other advisor regarding their specific legal, investment, or tax situation.

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Participation in the Plans does not guarantee that contributions and the investment return on contributions, if any, will be adequate to cover tuition and other higher education expenses, or that a beneficiary will be admitted to or permitted to continue to attend an eligible educational institution.

Except for the Bank Savings Individual Investment Option, investments in the NEST Direct and NEST Advisor Plans are not guaranteed or insured by the FDIC or any other government agency and are not deposits or other obligations of any depository institution. Investments are not guaranteed or insured by the State of Nebraska, the Nebraska State Treasurer, the Nebraska Investment Council or First National Bank of Omaha or its authorized agents or their affiliates, and are subject to investment risks, including loss of the principal amount invested. FDIC insurance is provided for the Bank Savings Individual Investment Option up to the maximum amount set by federal law, currently \$250,000.

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