



Nebraska State Treasurer Don Stenberg - November 2015



Treasurer Stenberg with Larianne Polk, director of ESU 7, outside the Columbus ESU office.

'Impressive' Gains for Nebraska NEST Scholars

High school students enrolled in the Nebraska NEST Financial Scholars online program made substantial gains in their overall financial knowledge in the 2014-15 school year, recording an impressive average knowledge gain of 61 percent, State Treasurer Don Stenberg reported recently.

"The gains students made last year are both impressive and meaningful. They are especially rewarding for those of us committed to helping students master the basic financial information

needed for their future personal, professional, and family lives," Stenberg said Sept. 30 at Educational Service Unit 2 in Fremont and at Educational Service Unit 7 in Columbus.

"Not only do NEST Financial Scholars know more, but they are also more confident and better prepared to make the financial decisions they will face as they move through their teen years and into young adulthood," Stenberg said. For example, 66 percent of the students said they were prepared to decide how much money to spend and how much to save after completing the online course.

Stenberg said the program's proven record of success is an incentive for more high schools to take advantage of the free online course. Last school year, 101 schools participated, reaching 4,811 students.

<https://treasurer.nebraska.gov/news/2015/0930/>

NEST on the Farm 2015

The annual NEST on the Farm contest switched its focus from words to pictures in 2015, but the audience was the same - Nebraska kids. Five of the six winners were recognized Aug. 29 on the Family Fun Zone stage at the Nebraska State Fair in Grand Island. The children, ranging in age from 3 to 11, were recognized for their photos of farm and ranch life in Nebraska. Each of the winners received a \$1,000 NEST scholarship. "The children's photos cause us all to stop and appreciate the rural life around us," Treasurer Stenberg said. More at



Treasurer Stenberg and Rachel Biar, college savings director, with four of the NEST on the Farm winners. From left, Elizabeth Leimser, Grand Island; Ralph Wichman, Lincoln; Isabella Shelburne, Gretna; and Rowan Lee of Grant and her grandfather, Mark Lee.

<https://treasurer.nebraska.gov/csp/scholarships/essay/farm/2015/winners-announced/>



State Enters into New Contract for Secure Credit, Debit Card Processing

The State of Nebraska has entered into a new, five-year contract for payment card processing services for credit cards and debit cards with U.S. Bank. Treasurer Stenberg said that over the course of the contract, the state will save an estimated \$550,000 in processing charges.

"The State of Nebraska expects to see greater volume under the new contract as Nebraskans continue to shift from using cash for these types of transactions to the use of credit and debit cards," Stenberg said. In 2014 the state processed more than \$154 million in credit and debit card transactions, up from the \$153.9 million in 2013.

As part of the contract, U.S. Bank is providing 200 EMV (Europay, MasterCard, Visa) chip-enabled readers to state agencies at no additional cost. The new readers, which authenticate microchip-card transactions, add an additional layer of security. More at <https://treasurer.nebraska.gov/news/2015/0709/>.

Fun and Work at the Nebraska State Fair

Nebraska State Treasurer's Office staff members greeted hundreds of Nebraskans at the 2015 State Fair in Grand Island, helping them search for unclaimed property and learn more about saving for college and for long-term care. The State Fair is one of the most productive outreach events for our unclaimed property team. Check out upcoming outreach events at the Gateway Farm Expo, Nov. 18-19, in Kearney and the Northeast Nebraska Farm & Equipment Show, Jan. 13-14, in Norfolk.



Rachel Biar, director of college savings, and Miriam Midzi of First National Bank of Omaha talk about college savings with Mark Sutton and his daughter, Samantha, of Wahoo. Mark and his wife has NEST plans for each of their children.



Treasurer Stenberg poses with Celeste Hall and Ginny Smith of his unclaimed property team. More than \$37,000 was paid out in claims filed as a result of the 2015 State Fair.

NEST Celebrates Young Readers, Libraries in Capitol Ceremony

Treasurer Stenberg recognized NEST Read to Win \$529 Scholarship winners Oct. 5 in a ceremony in the Capitol Rotunda. A total of 15 young readers each received a \$529 scholarship in the drawing. More than 20,000 entered in the drawing after completing summer reading programs in their local libraries. Pictured here with Treasurer Stenberg are some of the winners with their big checks. Read more at

<https://treasurer.nebraska.gov/csp/scholarships/read-to-win/2015/winners-recognized/>



Back row, from left, Treasurer Stenberg; Deborah Goodkin of First National Bank of Omaha, Rod Wagner of the Nebraska Library Commission, Vicki Wood of Lincoln City Libraries, Karen Bery of the Omaha Public Library Foundation, and Karrie Hurlay of the Ravenna Public Library. Front row, from left, Brayden Sanchez of Omaha, Landon Flora of Omaha, Landon Bliss of Lincoln, Jack Reents of Hastings, and Calleigh Chmelka of Lincoln.

Newsletter header photo courtesy Nebraska Capitol Commission.

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