



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Local Community Leaders Launch National Effort to Reform Immigration For America

Lincoln and Omaha, Nebraska – Local faith, community, immigrant, small-business, legal, civil rights, and other leaders from large and small Nebraska towns gathered at the Capitol and the College of St. Mary today as partners of the [Reform Immigration FOR America Campaign](#), a broad-based national effort to fix the broken immigration system and accomplish a rational and humane solution this year. Hundreds of community leaders from across the country are due to travel to Washington, D.C. on Wednesday for a national campaign summit.

“This is a campaign to reform immigration for America – for all of us – so that our country and communities can move forward,” said Darcy Tromanhauser, director of Nebraska Appleseed’s Immigrant Integration and Civic Participation Program. “We invite everyone to join us in working to create an immigration system we can all be proud of, one that upholds the values that make our country great – values of family, community, dignity, due process and the rule of law. Our Nebraska delegation should understand that communities here need and want practical solutions to reform immigration.”

“In Crete, our community wants to focus on working together to make our town great,” said Karen Buchfinck, a local resident of Crete. “But we can’t do it alone. All the community-building in the world can’t address the barriers created by our broken immigration system at the federal level. We have incredible talent and potential in our town that is being wasted by federal inaction on this issue.”

“We can’t afford the inefficiencies of this broken system,” said Professor of Economics Hendrick Van den Berg of the College of Business Administration at the University of Nebraska – Lincoln and author of a textbook on the economics of immigration, published by Springer. “We can’t and we shouldn’t want to uproot 12 million individuals from our workforce, nor 12 million consumers from our local economies, nor 12 million family members from our communities – the economic and human impact would be very serious. What we need is a rational solution that brings our immigration process back in line with our country’s values as well as our practical reality.”

Speakers at the two events included:

Lincoln

Darcy Tromanhauser, *Director, Immigrant Integration & Civic Participation Program, Nebraska Appleseed*

Ever Preciado, *Small Business Owner (Lincoln)*

Rev. Chuck Bentjen, *Director, Justice and Advocacy Ministries, ELCA-Nebraska*

Marilyn Meecham, *Executive, Interchurch Ministries of Nebraska*

Leroy Stokes, *President, NAACP – Lincoln*

Karen Buchfinck, *Community Member (Crete)*

Hendrick Van den Berg, *Professor of Economics, College of Business Administration, UNL*
Vicar Diana Kuhl, *ELCA/Community Member (Fremont)*

Omaha

Ben Salazar, *President, Nuestro Mundo Newspaper and Cesar Chavez Job Training Institute*

Dr. Maryanne Stevens, RSM, *President, College of St. Mary*

Rev. Liz Connor, *Pastor, Cristo Rey Lutheran Church*

Joe Florian Ezui, MS, LPC, *Community Member (Omaha)*

Ricardo Castro, *Executive Director, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Nebraska*

Stephen Jackson, *President, NAACP – Omaha*

Rob Dorton, JD, *Program Manager/Immigration Attorney, Lutheran Immigration Services*

Organizations and individuals interested in joining the Campaign to Reform Immigration For America can do so by visiting: <http://www.reformimmigrationforamerica.org/>

or in Spanish: <http://www.reformamigratoriaproamerica.org/>

Individuals interested in joining are encouraged to text “justice” or “justicia” to 69866.

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For media inquiries to the Reform Immigration For America’s National Press Office, please contact:
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Nebraska Appleseed, a nonprofit, nonpartisan public interest law project, is a national leader in addressing social problems facing vulnerable children without loving and permanent homes, low-income families working hard to make ends meet, and new immigrants seeking a better life. Nebraska Appleseed’s current year action plan and description of its six program areas, significant litigation and policy reform successes, and broad-based accomplishments can be found at neappleseed.org.

Nebraska Appleseed is a part of the Appleseed network of independent state-based public interest law centers working to identify and address social injustices. The Appleseed network seeks to build a just society through education, legal advocacy, community activism and policy expertise by addressing root causes and producing practical, systemic solutions with broad implication. For more information visit appleseednetwork.org.

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