



Spring 2009

Fostering leadership and building relationships throughout the greater Omaha community.

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### Dear LOAA Members,

In April of 1999, I was offered the position of director of the Leadership Omaha program. It took only two seconds for me to accept the offer despite being certain I was not up to the challenge. Ten years ago Class 21 was in the midst of their "Best Class Ever" year, the world was pondering the implications of Y2K and we all were anticipating the 21st Century. Fast forwarding to today, Class 31 is in the midst of their "Best Class Ever" year, the world is still absorbing the inauguration of our first African-American president and Omaha is in need of committed community leaders more than ever.

Change is everywhere. Certainly if you took a good look at the header of this newsletter, you noticed a new logo. The Greater Omaha Chamber has gone through the process of developing a master brand which will unify the look of all the divisions, programs, and events the Chamber is responsible for. You will see the new brand rolling out in the upcoming months.

In 2008 Leadership Omaha celebrated 30 years of developing effective community leaders who will strengthen and transform the community. Your alumni association supported the redesign of [www.leadershipomaha.org](http://www.leadershipomaha.org), and sponsored a luncheon and board training seminar to bring leaders together. The association granted a scholarship to Leadership Omaha Class 31 as well as recognized David Karlo as the 2008 Goldstein Outstanding Young Leader Award honoree. And, as always, LOAA has stayed committed to giving you the tools to connect as community trustees and to further your ability to be the leaders Omaha is waiting for.

LOAA remains committed to our purposes:

1. Provide a forum for interaction of the members;
2. Establish a means of communication between the members regarding matters of mutual interest;
3. Provide members with information regarding current community issues and needs;
4. Provide information to its members regarding leadership opportunities in the Omaha community;
5. Provide information to community organizations regarding the particular interests, background, and talents of members available for leadership positions; and
6. Generally establish, promote, and foster leadership for the Omaha community.

We look forward to a full year of events, including educational forums, networking opportunities and some fun with the family. In order for LOAA to remain successful, we need your participation and support. Please visit [www.leadershipomaha.org](http://www.leadershipomaha.org) to pay your 2009 dues or to print out the membership form to mail in.

Join us as we explore community trusteeship a decade into the 21st Century.

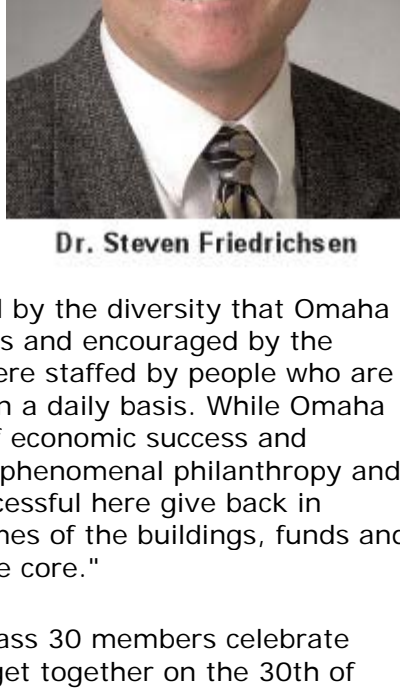
Sincerely,

Leadership Omaha  
Lynda Shafer  
Manager, Leadership and Workforce Development,  
Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce

### A Newcomer's View of LO

Having recently relocated to Omaha from Idaho to assume the position of Dean of the College of Dentistry at Creighton University, Dr. Steven Friedrichsen(30) still feels like a newcomer to LO and the community and has a unique 'newcomer's' view about LO.

"Leadership Omaha was one of the most enjoyable experiences of my professional career," declared Friedrichsen. "As someone who has always been engaged in the communities I've lived in I wanted to learn more about Omaha and to find where I belong or could best serve. Although most of my classmates had been in the area longer, everyone learned a lot. I was the proverbial sponge, soaking it all up and taking lots of notes. We had a chance to listen to and work with some exceptional leaders and I came away in awe of the many of the people who gifted their time to us. I was surprised by the diversity that Omaha offers in a number of dimensions and encouraged by the number of organizations that were staffed by people who are earnestly making a difference on a daily basis. While Omaha is often portrayed as a Mecca of economic success and capitalism, it is also a center of phenomenal philanthropy and giving. People who became successful here give back in abundance. Just look at the names of the buildings, funds and charities; they are Omaha to the core."



Dr. Steven Friedrichsen

Friedrichsen pointed out that Class 30 members celebrate their special connection with a get together on the 30th of each month. "I haven't been very successful at attending those, but I have invited several classmates to lunch. It is a great way to keep connected, to learn what is going on in their lives and to experience more of the outstanding restaurants in Omaha. In 2009 one of my goals is to leave work early enough to make the monthly functions."

"It is an honor and privilege to serve as the Dean of the School of Dentistry," said Dr. Friedrichsen. "Creighton's dental school is a national resource in dental education. The majority of our students are from states that do not have dental schools. Our mission is to prepare our graduates to become excellent general dentists for practice, residencies and specialty programs. The key to our success is the unique environment at Creighton - the University has an exceptional leadership team, including Father Schlegel, the Vice-Presidents and my fellow deans."

Friedrichsen has overwhelming sense of appreciation for Omaha, "We are a vibrant community. Like every community we have some problems; but there are solutions if we work together. We also have a bright future. There are amenities and events here that are completely disproportionate (in a good sense) for our size. They are frequently unexpected by those who don't live here. Last fall the School of Dentistry was host to a national group. When the meeting location was announced the year before, someone in the group quipped about having to go bowling because there wouldn't be anything else to do. By the time they came, experienced our hospitality, enjoyed the sites and had a reception and dinner in the Durham Museum they were raving fans of the city and noted it would not be long before they wanted to come back. In many ways that is the Omaha experience: surprising and unexpected."

Steve and his wife, Susan, have two children: a daughter who just received her Master's in Special Education and teaches in western Washington and a son who has graduated from college and works as a scribe in the Emergency Department at a hospital in Boise, Idaho.

### Meet your 2009 LOAA Board members

#### 2009 Leadership Omaha Alumni Association Board of Directors

- President:** Wayne Hudson (27), Lieutenant, Douglas County Sheriff
- Past President:** Renee Franklin (25), Executive Director, Social Settlement
- President-elect:** Ann O'Conner (24), VP, Nebraska Community Services Heartland Family Services
- Secretary:** Karen Douglas (30), Assistant General Counsel, Mutual of Omaha
- Treasurer:** Corey Watton (28), CPA/Shareholder, Lutz & Company
- Goldstein Award Chair:** Mary Tessin (18), Gifted Education Supervisor, Omaha Public Schools
- Communications Chair:** Tom O'Hara (25), Executive Officer, US Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District
- Class Rep/Class Liaisons:** Don Terry (25), Quality Living, Inc., Marketing
- Class Rep:** Lori Byrne (26), Associate VP of Development, University of Nebraska Foundation
- Class Rep:** Jo Ellen Stock (29), General Attorney, State & Local Taxes, Union Pacific

### 2009 LOAA Brown Bag Seminar Series - what is it, what is in it for you?

The Leadership Omaha Alumni Association will offer the 2009 Brown Bag Seminar Series to update Leadership Omaha members about ongoing topics affecting our community. Each brown bag seminar will be run about an hour or two and will focus on a particular project or issue. Brown bag seminars give Leadership Omaha members a great opportunity to network and gain more access to community happenings.



This year, the LOAA will present three brown bag seminars to the Leadership Omaha members. The seminars are open to any member or guest who may be interested in attending.

The first brown bag seminar will be sponsored by Coldwell Banker Commercial World and will take place at the downtown Chamber office on March 27, 2009, from 7:30 AM to 9:00 AM with David G. Brown, President and CEO of the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce, presenting on "Yahoo! Can you say Silicon Prairie? A High Tech Strategy to Win Big." The presentation will illustrate how Nebraska is working to attract the data center industry and other high-tech companies. Register at [www.leadershipomaha.org](http://www.leadershipomaha.org).

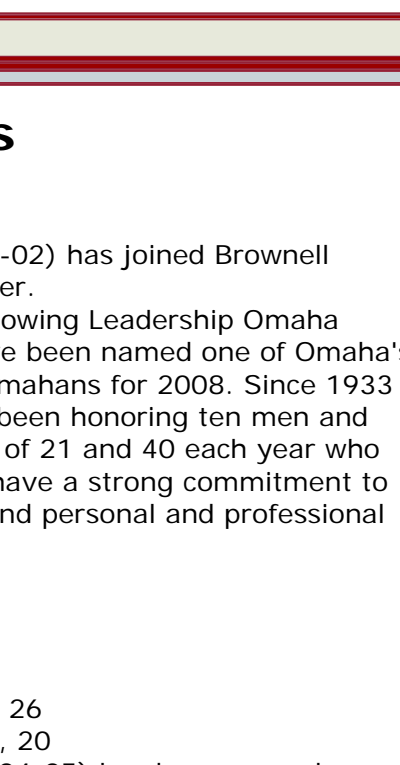
Future topics for the 2009 Brown Bag Seminar Series will include: a legislative overview in June, covering the 2009 session and an October panel discussion on gun violence. Look for more detailed information at [www.leadershipomaha.org](http://www.leadershipomaha.org).

If you have questions or suggestions for the 2009 LOAA Brown Bag Seminar Series, please contact Karen Douglas at 402-351-6605 or [karen.douglas@mutualofomaha.com](mailto:karen.douglas@mutualofomaha.com).

### Class 32 Applications Available Soon

On March 23rd, applications for Leadership Omaha Class 32 will be available at [www.leadershipomaha.org](http://www.leadershipomaha.org). The completed applications are due to the Chamber of Commerce by May 11, and applicants will be notified of their status by June 26. Each year, between forty-three and forty-eight candidates are selected from local companies and organizations to participate in the Leadership Omaha program.

Rodrigo Lopez (7), past chairman of the LO Selection Committee and a member of the Chamber's Board of Directors and Executive Committee, shares what the Selection Committee looks for in applicants. "Applicants must demonstrate commitment to community involvement. Such commitment is evident by prior substantive and balanced involvement in a variety of community and professional organizations. The committee values consistent involvement with charitable, educational, artistic, nonprofit, and professional organizations outside applicant's workplace and family. The selection process also considers professional success, which is discernible by a record of consistent promotions and appointments to leadership positions."



Rodrigo Lopez

Once applications are received, each member of the Selection Committee receives a copy of every application and respective attachments. Lopez explains the process, "Generally, each committee member spends between twenty to forty hours reading, scoring and ranking the applications. Upon completion of the review, the entire Selection Committee gathers for a half-day discussion of each applicant. The Committee endeavors to select a class that reflects the community and offers a balanced and broad representation of every segment of the city. The selection responsibilities end with a meeting in the fall, during which the committee considers improvements to the application form and selection process."

Lopez is the founder, President and CEO of AmeriSphere, a provider of capital solutions for the multifamily industry, engaged in originating, underwriting, closing and servicing multifamily mortgage loans throughout the United States. Leadership Omaha provided an effective underpinning for AmeriSphere's success. Rodrigo and his wife Mary have two children; David will be attending law school at Creighton University this fall and Ana is a freshman attending Boston College.

More information can be found at: [www.leadershipomaha.org/LeadershipOmaha.aspx](http://www.leadershipomaha.org/LeadershipOmaha.aspx)

### Upcoming Events and Seminars

**LOAA Events:**

- Brown Bag Series:**
  - March 27, 2009: Economic Development - Yahoo Project
  - June 2009: Legislative Overview
  - October 2009: Panel Discussion on Project Safe Neighborhood
- LOAA Night at the Ballpark** -April 25, 2009: Great networking event and evening of baseball as the Royals take on the Oklahoma City RedHawks. More information to come - check the LOAA web page.
- Opportunities to Connect:**
  - Alzheimer's Association Oscar Night 2009**, Sunday, February 22 - 4:30 PM to 8:00 PM, Harrah's Hotel & Casino: Join the celebrities and share the thrill of walking down the red carpet on Oscar Night at Harrah's Hotel & Casino while supporting the Alzheimer's Association Midlands Chapter. Tickets for Oscar Night are \$75. Tables of 8 are \$600. For more information or to order tickets, e-mail [mevans@midlandsalz.org](mailto:mevans@midlandsalz.org) or call (402) 502- 4301.
  - Young Professionals Summit**, Thursday, March 5 - 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Qwest Center Omaha  
Put the 2009 Young Professionals Summit on your calendar. In addition to breakout sessions and networking opportunities, attendees will have the opportunity to hear from keynote speaker Malcolm Gladwell at lunch from 11:30 to 1:00. Gladwell is the author of Tipping Point, Blink, and the newly released Outliers. Registration for the full day is \$89 (8 a.m. - 4 p.m.) and \$50 for the keynote luncheon only. Make your reservations by Friday, Feb. 27 at [www.omahayoungprofessionals.org/YPSummit.aspx](http://www.omahayoungprofessionals.org/YPSummit.aspx), or [reservations@omahachamber.org](http://reservations@omahachamber.org) (402) 978- 7912.

### Announcements

- Joyce Southard, 24 (2001-02) has joined Brownell Talbot as business manager.
- Congratulations to the following Leadership Omaha Alumni members who have been named one of Omaha's Ten Outstanding Young Omahans for 2008. Since 1933 the Omaha Jaycees have been honoring ten men and women between the ages of 21 and 40 each year who strive for excellence and have a strong commitment to both community service and personal and professional development.
  - o Susan Schnase, 30
  - o Jeff DeMare, 30
  - o Megan Addison, 28
  - o Jason Lauritsen, 27
  - o Vickie Brady Ahlers, 26
  - o Sherye Hutcherson, 20
- Catherine Damico, 27 (2004-05) has been named a partner at Kutak Rock LLP.
- Chris Vairo, 22 (1999-00) has joined Trilogi Inc. as VP of Business Development. Trilogi Inc., formerly R. Smith & Associates, Inc., specializes in reimbursement and resolution of third party health claims.
- Lance Jones, 26 (2003-04) has been named to the 2009 board of directors of the Financial Planning Association of Nebraska.

### Feedback

We want to hear from you. How can LOAA best serve you? Email Lynda Shafer with questions or comments. Web link: [www.leadershipomaha.org/ContactUs.aspx](http://www.leadershipomaha.org/ContactUs.aspx)

Leadership Omaha is a community leadership training program. The goals of the program are to motivate individuals to develop a sense of community trusteeship, to encourage participants to assume leadership roles in community affairs, to develop participant awareness of the Omaha community, to provide opportunities for communication between emerging and established leadership, and to explore various aspects of leadership. Contact us for the upcoming class schedules!

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