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Downtown Lincoln Association Wins National Award for Waste Reduction and Recycling

January 24, 2011 – Lincoln, Neb. – The Downtown Lincoln Association (DLA) is proud to announce that they have been awarded with the first place national award from Keep America Beautiful (KAB) for their efforts in waste reduction and recycling. This award is given to organizations with outstanding programs that promote waste reduction through wise waste handling practices such as reduce, reuse, and recycle.

George Pinkerton, DLA Maintenance Director, is proud of his maintenance team for receiving national recognition.

“DLA is a leader in all areas in which Keep America Beautiful has an affiliated focus on litter reduction, recycling and greening/beautification; in addition, we attempt to conserve water and energy, purchase locally manufactured equipment when possible and provide employment for the developmentally disabled.”

KAB, an environmental organization that has been cleaning up American communities with the help of thousands of volunteers for nearly 60 years, gives out national awards annually in the categories of beautification/community greening, litter prevention and waste reduction/recycling.

DLA bested organizations in other prominent cities such as Buffalo (2nd Place) and Oklahoma City (Distinguished Service) to win the esteemed award.

Also deserving of the national recognition are the Community Alternatives of Nebraska (CAN) crew members. This crew includes individuals with developmental disabilities who assist with recycling and waste management efforts in downtown Lincoln alongside DLA’s maintenance workers.

Janna Harsch, one of the CAN Crew Leaders and supervisors, was happy to hear about the award as well.

“The recognition is great for the crew; people with disabilities aren’t always recognized for the work that they do, so to be recognized nationally is just amazing.”

Harsch’s crew works on O, P and Q streets while another crew cleans up M and N streets and the Haymarket area. Crew members are responsible for checking waste and recycling containers, cleaning up debris and spotting damage and graffiti.

Harsch, who has worked with people with disabilities for three decades, says her crew has been cleaning up downtown Lincoln year-round since 1999.

“It brings about the idea that everybody can contribute and is invaluable, and I think the long-term relationship we’ve had speaks for itself, it’s just great; there’s not a week that goes by that we’re not thanked by someone in the downtown community.”

Starting March 1st, Lincoln and Lancaster County will partake in KAB’s Great American Cleanup, a three-month, nationwide effort involving an estimated three million volunteers/attendees with the aim of making significant strides in community restoration and beautification.

Founded in 1967, the Downtown Lincoln Association provides services and champions initiatives for maintaining and enhancing our vibrant downtown. Our vision is to create an energetic downtown environment where we live, learn, work, invest and play. DLA has evolved into a multi-faceted organization supporting a wide range of programs and activities including maintenance, economic development and advocacy. For a complete listing of downtown businesses, events and residences visit downtownlincoln.org. ‘Like’ us on Facebook at facebook.com/downtownlincoln.

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