

# Community

## Investment and Social Impact Report

2023





Thank you for  
your support  
and interest  
in Nebraska's  
communities.



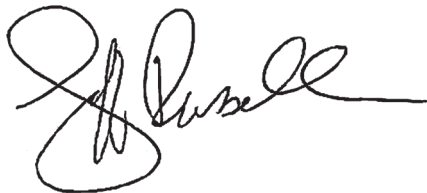
Nebraska – It's in our name and it's an indelible part of who we are. For 85 years, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska (BCBSNE) has called the Cornhusker State home. Along with our members, we have lived, worked and made memories here for generations.

We have a rich history, but equally important, we have a bright future, one that is focused on not only keeping our long-standing promise to be there when our members need us but being a valued partner throughout their health journeys. As our name makes clear, we are "of Nebraska." We continue to build on our mission of being a champion for the health and well-being of our members and the communities we serve.

I am pleased to announce that BCBSNE is launching the Nebraska Blue Foundation to facilitate an even stronger focus on serving and supporting communities statewide. The foundation will anchor our legacy of caring for our communities by creating a sustainable source of charitable giving for years to come. It also gives us greater flexibility to make larger and more focused investments in promising programs and community initiatives.

This report provides you with a high-level overview of our community investment efforts and involvement over the past year. Through this report, we celebrate the tremendous work being done by organizations across the state who partnered with us in 2023 to positively influence the quality of life for Nebraska's communities and citizens. But we're also looking forward to being part of the meaningful work yet to come!

Thank you for your support and interest in Nebraska's communities.



**JEFF RUSSELL**  
**PRESIDENT AND CEO**

**BLUE CROSS AND**  
**BLUE SHIELD OF NEBRASKA**

# Contents

- 04** Who We Are
- 06** Employee Engagement
- 08** Community Events and Sponsorships
- 09** Support for Students and Teachers
- 10** Investing in the Future Workforce
- 11** Awards and Recognition



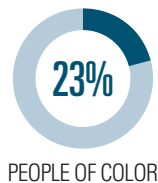
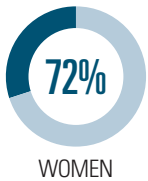
# Who We Are

## Belonging at Blue

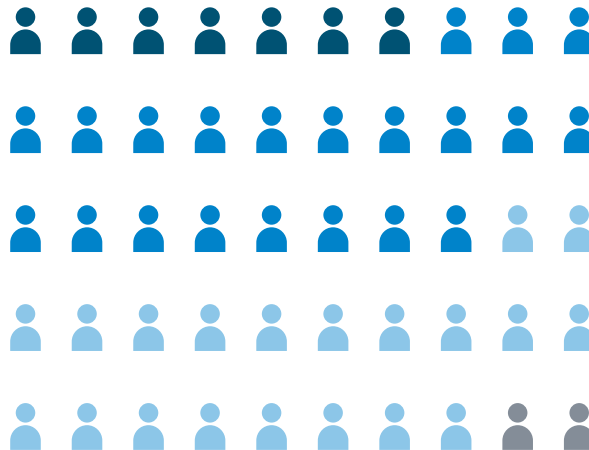
We value the unique perspective every person brings to our workplace and our community. Diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) are hallmarks of our organizational culture. Our individual differences make Team Blue stronger.

### OUR WORKFORCE

1,100+  
EMPLOYEES



Four generations in the workforce:



12% BABY BOOMER

39% GEN X

43% MILLENNIAL

6% GEN Z

### OUR CULTURE

35%

of employees  
belong to an ERG

We have six employee resource groups (ERGs) that inspire and encourage DEI. Our ERGs offer a place where every employee can not only feel safe to be themselves but know they belong.



**Building Leaders Like Us for Excellence (BLUE)** supporting African American employees



**Military Families United Together** supporting veterans and military families



**Fearlessly You @ Blue** supporting LGBTQ+ employees



**Possibilities** supporting employees with disabilities



**Latinos Empowered to Achieve Their Potential (LEAP)** supporting Latino employees



**Young Professionals (YP) Connect** supporting YPs and their advocates





## ERG ACTIVITIES

In 2023, BCBSNE's ERGs carried out the company's mission of being a champion for the health and well-being of its members and the communities it serves by supporting a variety of community events outside of their usual day-to-day work environments.



### Omaha Cinco de Mayo Celebration

South Omaha has hosted the celebration for decades. LEAP represented BCBSNE during this event, which included a parade along historic 24<sup>th</sup> Street, marching bands and entertainers.



### Omaha Freedom Festival

BLUE represented BCBSNE with a booth at the festival featuring interactive games and giveaways. The event was held in celebration of Juneteenth, a day that honors the end of slavery in the U.S.



### Heartland Pride Parade and Festival

Decked out in every color of the rainbow, Fearlessly You @ Blue led approximately 25 employees and their families in the Pride Parade.



### Belonging at Blue Summit

All six of BCBSNE's ERGs teamed up to host the company's second annual Belonging at Blue Summit. This week-long event provided employees with the opportunity to grow personally and professionally.

# Employee Engagement

## SUPPORT FOR UNITED WAY OF THE MIDLANDS

### Annual Campaign

For more than 30 years, BCBSNE has raised funds for the United Way of the Midlands (UWM), a nonprofit dedicated to the educational, financial and health needs of the community. In 2023, more than 600 employees supported the campaign by volunteering, pledging funds or participating in fundraising events, such as a trivia challenge and cutest pet contest. Team Blue raised \$389,000 through the campaign. Additionally, BCBSNE gave UWM a corporate gift of \$92,500.

### Hygiene Kit Packing

BCBSNE partnered with UWM to offer a volunteer opportunity for employees on Wednesday, Oct. 25. Throughout the day, 150 employees packaged a record-breaking 1,500 hygiene kits for One World Community Health Centers, an organization that UWM supports.

## TEAM BLUE IN ACTION

### Volunteer Events

BCBSNE encourages teams to organize volunteer activities to build camaraderie while making a difference. In 2023, 73 employees volunteered at eight different organizations or causes for National Volunteer Month in April.

## TEAM BLUE IN ACTION



### American Red Cross

BCBSNE hosts quarterly blood drives at its building and invites employees and their spouses to donate. In 2023, employees gave blood 97 times and donated 85 pints of blood.



### Salvation Army

In 2023, 28 volunteers gave 30 hours of their time and raised \$993.33 as part of the Salvation Army's Red Kettle Campaign.



### Food Bank for the Heartland

BCBSNE employees supported the nonprofit's Strike Out Hunger Campaign, donating 32,657 meals and 95 volunteer hours during the month of June.



### Employee Giving

We believe in supporting the causes near and dear to our employees' hearts and offer a gift matching program to amplify employees' personal donations to qualifying nonprofits. In 2023, BCBSNE matched more than \$10,000 in donations to 34 organizations.

# \$10,151

in individual donations were matched by the company



# Community Events and Sponsorships

## COMMUNITY EVENTS

### Flu Shot Clinics

BCBSNE hosted 21 flu vaccination clinics in October, in collaboration with YMCAs across the state and Hy-Vee Pharmacy. Clinics were open to everyone age six and up at no cost to them, and 600 shots were provided through these events.

### National Walk at Lunch Day

On April 26, Nebraskans across the state strode toward better health and a stronger community during National Walk at Lunch (NW@L) Day. Participants helped raise \$5,000 for Special Olympics Nebraska through this annual event.

600  
flu shots

\$5,000  
donated to Special  
Olympics Nebraska

## SPONSORSHIPS



### Combined Health Agencies Drive

Combined Health Agencies Drive (CHAD) is a local organization that has been raising funds with and for Nebraska's premier statewide health charities since 1972. It has 20 member agencies under its umbrella, which support Nebraska's most vulnerable populations. BCBSNE's sponsorship directly benefits the missions of each of the health charities, as well as enhances CHAD's existing inter-agency collaboration, community awareness, education and fundraising efforts.

### Active Events

BCBSNE has a long-standing tradition of supporting events that encourage movement. In 2023, we hit our stride by supporting several events in the community, including the American Lung Association's Corporate Cup, Born & Raced in Nebraska's 10K series and Bicycle Across Nebraska, to name a few.

### Angels Among Us

In 2023, BCBSNE contributed \$10,000 to Angels Among Us, supporting their incredible work in providing financial help to families whose children have cancer.

### Team Jack Foundation

BCBSNE donated \$5,000 for the Sweep Away Cancer campaign with Husker volleyball, donating \$250 for every Husker volleyball sweep.

### Mid-Plains Community College

To support Mid-Plains Community College, BCBSNE donated \$10,000 for its Health and Science Center expansion project.



# SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

BCBSNE is proud to provide health insurance coverage for Nebraska’s teachers through the Educators Health Alliance. We believe creating a brighter future for our state includes being there for the next generation of Nebraskans. In 2023, we supported students and teachers through the following philanthropic initiatives:



**\$1,000**

grant to Elkhorn Valley Schools’ (Tilden, Nebraska) physical education department for participating in NW@L Day. BCBSNE awards a grant to one participating school each year.

**\$25,000**

awarded to 12 incoming University of Nebraska at Kearney (UNK) and University of Nebraska Medical Center health science students through BCBSNE’s endowed UNK Health Sciences Scholarship Fund.



**530**

submissions recognizing teachers across Nebraska for Touchdown for Teachers. Five outstanding teachers were recognized at the Nebraska Football Red White Spring Game in April.

**\$5,000**

donated to Umo'ho" Nation Public Schools to supply helmets, knee pads and elbow pads to students enrolled in an after-school program that teaches safe biking and skating practices.

**389 students**

at Conestoga Elementary School supplied with notebooks, folders, crayons and more in August of 2023 for the new academic year through BCBSNE’s annual school supply drive. In addition to the items donated, our employees raised \$975 to put toward teachers’ highly requested items, such as tissues and sanitizing wipes.

**\$18,000**

grant to Beatrice Elementary School for the purchase of new equipment for its physical education department. The funds enabled the school to partner with Project Fit America, a national nonprofit devoted to encouraging kids to become healthier and more active.

**34,000+**



children screened by the Nebraska Lions Foundation Mobile Screening Unit, sponsored by BCBSNE. The Nebraska Lions travel the state to provide free vision and hearing screenings at schools, offices and events to improve the lives of children and adults.



**13 girls**

in fourth through sixth grade at Conestoga Elementary participated in Girls on the Run. This training program, sponsored by BCBSNE, prepared them for a 5K and provided female empowerment and confidence-building lessons.

# Investing in the Future Workforce



## IGNITE NEBRASKA

In 2022, BCBSNE helped launch Ignite Nebraska, an apprenticeship program fueling the way toward a more equitable future. Through this workforce development model, Ignite Nebraska's partners, like BCBSNE, work together to help apprentices succeed by providing them with access to:

- **Higher learning at no cost**, eliminating the financial barriers that can keep people out of the classroom.
- **Accelerated, paid on-the-job training**, enabling apprentices to begin their careers as soon as possible.
- **Family and financial resources**, providing participants with additional support, so they can focus on the new skills they're learning without having to worry about losing access to assistance.

The second Ignite Nebraska apprenticeship cohort, hosted by BCBSNE, graduated in January of 2023. Through the program, the apprentices gained the skills they'd need for a career in information technology by working in BCBSNE's Information Services department and learning in the classroom at Bellevue University.

Upon graduation, the three apprentices received full-time job offers from BCBSNE.

- To learn more about Ignite Nebraska, visit [IgniteNebraska.org](https://igniteNebraska.org).

## AVENUE SCHOLARS

Since 2012, BCBSNE has been a proud employer partner of the Avenue Scholars program, which helps Omaha area students ages 18 to 25 prepare for and enter financially sustaining, high-demand careers.

BCBSNE has hosted 123 Avenue Scholars during their internship. Scholars like Brooke Gute and Jennifer Interiano have graduated from the program and are creating successful careers at BCBSNE.



**"The internship with Avenue Scholars really allowed me to get my foot in the door and gain experience in the field with an actual career path," Gute said. "I ended up with such a supportive, diverse group of individuals where a healthy work-life balance is possible."**

**"I am so grateful for getting the opportunity to be a full-time Blue employee in an environment that I truly value and feel encouraged to grow in," Interiano said. "Being able to do my part and knowing I'm in it for the member is the most rewarding part."**



# Awards and Recognition

---

BCBSNE WAS HONORED TO WIN THE FOLLOWING AWARDS IN 2023:

- Governor's Wellness Award
- 2022 Plan Excellence Award for the Federal Employee Program Plan
- Nebraska Safety Council - One of Nebraska's Safest Companies Award
- 4-star rating from Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services for our Medicare Advantage PPO and Medicare Advantage Core HMO plans





An independent licensee of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association.  
36-132-508 (03-25-24)