

**College of Public Affairs and Community Service  
Alumni Award for Excellence in Public Service  
2004 Recipients**



**Allen Curtis** received a bachelor of science degree in criminal justice from UNO in 1974. A 1960 graduate of Hastings High School, Curtis also earned a master of arts degree from the University of Nebraska \_ Lincoln in 1977. Allen retired as chief of police of the Lincoln Police Department (LPD) in 1994 after 23 years of service. In 1994, Allen was appointed by Governor Nelson to be the executive director of the Nebraska Crime Commission. During his tenure there, the commission has more than doubled the number of services and grant\_funded programs available to help local communities address victim, youth, drug, violent crime and other criminal justice problems and needs. Allen was instrumental in the building of a \$12 million addition to the Nebraska Law Enforcement Training Center and in the development of the Nebraska Automated Finger Print System (AFIS), the victim notification system (VINE), and Nebraska Criminal Justice Information System (NCJIS). He has received the Law Enforcement Coordinating Council Top Gun award, the Nebraska Sheriffs President's Award, U. S. Attorney's Granite Award, the Department of Justice Community Relations Special Appreciations Award and is a member of the Police Officers of Nebraska (POAN) Hall of Fame. Allen and his wife, Carol, have four children and six grandchildren.

**Aldona Gasiliunas** Doyle received a Goodrich Scholarship upon graduation from Omaha South High School. A first generation American, she earned a bachelor of science degree in criminal justice in 1986 and a master of public administration degree in 1999. Aldona has worked as a probation officer and as a case manager for a non\_profit organization. In 1994 ,and again in 1998, she was elected to the Metro Community College Board of Governors. In 2000, Aldona was elected to the Sarpy County Board of Commissioners. She has been actively involved in creating and organizing a county\_wide criminal justice coordinating committee and the Sarpy/Cass Department of Health and Wellness. Aldona has been married to Mark Doyle for nearly twenty years. They have three school\_age children, Gabriella, Raeanna and Luke, and live in Bellevue.

**Christine Gillette** has been with the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging for 25 years and assumed her current position of community services division director in 1997. She graduated cum laude with a bachelor of science in education degree with a specialization in gerontology in 1979. Chris oversees and provides support to the agency's six volunteer programs, homemaker program, rural transportation program, Grandparent Resource Center, and Partnerships in Aging. She also serves as project director of the Intergeneration Orchestra of Omaha, a group that she and a former co\_worker created 19 years ago. Chris currently serves on the St. Joseph Villa Foundation and Odyssey Healthcare advisory boards. Chris and her husband Dennis have 2 daughters, Carissa, a senior at the University of Northern Iowa and Cayla, a freshman at Lewis Central High School in Council Bluffs. Chris is very active in her church, Westminster Presbyterian, having served as an elder, deacon, and Sunday school teacher. In her spare time Chris enjoys attending her daughter's music and sporting events and has been a member of a fitness center for 24 years.

**Morgan Keen Hecht** earned a master of social work degree from the University of Nebraska in 1972. She provides clinical social work services to families, individuals, and youth through Family Enrichment, as well as consultation service to human service agencies and practitioners. She is also a mediator. She previously provided social work services through Family Services of Omaha\_Council Bluffs, Meyer Children's Rehabilitation Institute, and Creighton Psychiatric Associates. She is a former adjunct faculty member at the UNO School of Social Work. Ms. Hecht was on the founding committees and boards of the Parent Assistance Line and the Children's Crisis Center; she co\_founded the Positive Parenting Groups. She has served on the boards of St. Anthony's Shelter, Child SavingInstitute, Children's Square USA, Suicide Prevention Line, Interdisciplinary Child Abuse Council of Omaha. She has served on the advisory board of Creighton University Department of Social Work and is currently on the advisory board of the UNO School of Social Work.

**Gene Klein** received a master of social work degree from UNO in 1993, and received a bachelors degree from Creighton University in 1988. A Licensed Mental Health Practitioner and Certified Master Social Worker, Gene has over ten years of professional experience in the management of non\_profit agencies serving children and families. Since 2002, Gene has served as the executive director of Project Harmony, a non\_profit child welfare agency providing services to enhance the quality of child abuse investigations. He is a member of the UNO School of Social Work advisory board, a national peer reviewer for the Council on Accreditation for Agencies Serving Families and Children, the vice chair of the Omaha Archdiocese Review Board for the Protection of Children, and a member of the Child Abuse Task Force of the Governor's Commission for the Protection of Children. He is the former chair of the board of directors of the Greater Omaha Dependent Care Association and the Omaha Area Continuum of Care for the Homeless. A father of five, Gene is a volunteer football, soccer, and basketball coach with the YMCA. He and his wife, Teri have been married fourteen years.

**Marcos Eduardo Mora** was born in Los Angeles and raised in south Omaha. He comes from one of the largest Mexican American families in Omaha, la familia Barrientos.. Mora is a 1999 graduate of the Goodrich Program at UNO with a bachelor of general studies degree and a minor in Chicano Latino studies. He is currently the president of ABM Enterprises, Inc, a Spanish marketing company best known for El Directorio Latino, the Spanish Yellow Pages, El Perico, a bilingual newspaper, and La Vision Latina, an annual review of the Omaha Latino community. In November of 2001, the Annual Heartland Latino Leadership Conference recognized ABM with the Heartland Latino Leadership Award for Business and Economic Development. Mora also takes pride in being an accomplished musician in guitar, vihuela and

bass. He currently is the director of a non\_profit youth group, Mariachi Las Estrellitas de Omaha, which teaches children and young people the craft of Mariachi music. Mora is an active member of his church and community. He is a member of the Metropolitan Community College Community Advisory Board, the Hispanic Chancellor's Advisory Committee at UNO, and the Latino Youth Conference.

**Michael D. Turner** is director of marketing for Elliott Aviation. He earned a bachelor of general studies degree with a specialization in aviation administration in 1995 and a master of public administration degree from UNO with a specialization in aviation administration in 1997. Mike has almost 20 years experience in marketing and advertising, having worked in a variety of roles from art director to flight instructor to aircraft sales assistant. He oversees marketing and public relations at Elliott Aviation's fixed base operations (FBOs) and aircraft maintenance facilities in Des Moines, Omaha, Minneapolis, and Moline, Illinois. Prior to joining Elliott Aviation in 1997, Turner served as a media services expert at Creighton University developing marketing materials for the hospital and university. He also held positions with UNO, Metropolitan Community College and Leslie Associates. Mike is a commercial pilot and former flight instructor. He is married and has three children.

**Ellen Freeman-Wakefield** is the director of the First National Child Development Center and an adjunct instructor with the School of Public Administration at UNO. Ellen is a long time advocate for high quality early childhood care and education for children from birth through eight years. She has been the director at First National Child Development Center since its opening in January 2000. A native of England, Ms. Freeman received a bachelor of science degree in education and sociology from UNO in 1991 and a master of public administration degree from UNO in 1996. Ms. Freeman\_Wakefield is highly involved in the early childhood field in Omaha and was instrumental in establishing the first Bright Spaces playroom project at the Open Door Mission. She is currently coordinating the Bright Spaces Project for Omaha area domestic violence shelters. Ellen is president of the Omaha Association of Young Children, a board member of the Nebraska Association for the Education of Young Children. and a member of the Omaha 2000 advisory committee and the Early Childhood Consortium of Omaha. She is married to Bill Wakefield, a faculty member in criminal justice at UNO.

**Thomas H. Warren Sr.** is a 20\_year veteran of the Omaha Police Department. He was appointed to the position of Chief of Police in December 2003 by Mayor Mike Fahey. Chief Warren leads the largest law enforcement agency in the state of Nebraska, consisting of 764 sworn officers and 239 non\_sworn personnel. He manages an operating budget of \$77 million annually. Chief Warren received his master of science in criminal justice degree with an option in public administration from UNO in 1989. He earned a bachelor of science degree from Morningside College in Sioux City, Iowa with a double major in criminal justice and sociology and a minor in psychology. A 1979 graduate of Omaha Technical High School, Chief Warren recently received the A+ Award from Omaha Public Schools. His community activities include Butler\_Gast YMCA Board of Managers, director of football operations with the Boys and Girls Clubs of Omaha, and coordinator of the Omaha Police Athletic League. He has been married to his wife Aileen (UNO B.S. '83, M.S.W. '87) for 19 years. They have three children Jessica 16, Thomas Jr. 14, and Alexandra 12.

## 2004 Hubert Locke Distinguished Service Award



**Mary Heng-Braun** has served as the senior director of donor services at the Omaha Community Foundation since 2000. In this capacity, Mary helps the foundation's donors coordinate grant making with community need, based on their charitable intent. Mary was OCF's first program director, holding that title from 1991 to 1999. She was a founding member of the Women's Fund of Greater Omaha, which benefits women and girls residing in the metropolitan area. With CPACS faculty member Barbara Weitz, Mary launched Omaha's first "giving circle" in collaboration with the Women's Fund.

Mary was also critical in the development of the Latina Resource Center, the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council, and the Neighborhood Center for Greater Omaha. In conjunction with the Mammel Foundation, she developed and implemented the OXYGEN (Omaha's Next Generation) \_ a leadership program for younger donors that resulted in a \$40,000 grant to One World Health Center.

Prior to joining the Omaha Community Foundation, she served as CEO of Girls, Inc., during which time the agency added several new programs and increased the number of girls it served by 11 times. Girls Inc. now commemorates Mary's tenure with the agency through the "Mary Heng\_Braun Staff Award for Distinguished Service," given annually since 1985. Mary taught for five years before starting her career in Omaha's non\_profit sector. She is a native Nebraskan and holds a bachelor of arts degree in education.

Mary's past and current professional and community activities include serving on five local foundation boards, serving as Midwest regional chair of Girls Inc. of America, and as a sustaining member of the Omaha Network. She has been frequently recognized for her community service, including Great Plains Girl Scouts' Woman of Achievement;" YWCA's Woman of Achievement \_ Community Service; Girls Inc. Mentor and Founders awards, Nebraska Women's Political Caucus Community Advocate award, and the Distinguished Alumna of Influence for ICAN. She and her husband, Bob, have a blended family of five sons and one daughter.