



# UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA GERONTOLOGY

Do You Have The Cour**AGE** to Care?



DD Lauderville

## **Professional Biography**

DD Lauderville, Housing Department Director, oversees Durham Booth Manor (HUD housing for low-income older adults), the Dora Bingel Senior Center, Permanent Supportive Housing Program and the Renaissance Housing Programs for The Omaha Salvation Army.

DD earned her Bachelors and Master's Degrees in Social Work, along with a Gerontology Certificate from UNO.

She has experience as a Clinical Therapist in a rural mental health setting in Iowa. Has worked for The Salvation Army for the last 21 years.

DD received The Salvation Army National Social Services Award for Excellence in Social Work in 2004.

## **STORY**

The Notre Dame Sisters in Omaha were bound and determined that I would attend college. As a “Wanna-Be” nun, I was interested in service to others but I needed to define my career. After discovering that I didn’t need math skills to earn a certificate in Gerontology or to be a Social Worker, I enrolled into UNO as an older, non-traditional student.

My world expanded immediately. Exposure to interesting classes, topics, assignments, along with motivating instructors led me to enjoy school for the first time in my life. I found my passion in life. I attended school for 9 years during which included leaving the convent, working full time with the Omaha homeless and losing a parent. The years were challenging but rewarding. I obtained both a Bachelors and Masters in Social Work and that amazing certificate in Gerontology that started the whole thing.

Returning to my hometown in western Iowa, I enjoyed my work and experience as a rural Licensed Mental Health Therapist. The years at the agency helped me hone my skills but more importantly, cemented my desire to work with older adults.

Life had other plans when I returned to Omaha after accepting a position that worked with the homeless and near homeless. My days with the homeless clients was also mixed with learning boring technical government regulations, and collaborating with federal and city government. Little did I know that this time period would allow me to be employed full time in the Older Adult Housing industry, an emerging field.

I have been privileged for the last 21 years to walk with Durham Booth Manor residents on their journey in life. It has been an honor to work FOR them, to represent the older adults who need a listener and a voice in this world.