

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA MEDICAL CENTER  
**Office of Global Engagement**  
**Annual Report**  
2020





Friends and colleagues,

At the heart of our commitment to our international and UNMC constituents is our mission of promoting international diversity, fostering global understanding and awareness and advancing internationalization efforts at UNMC. This year, it has been a guiding light amid this uncertainty — as it has guided our work to serve our international and UNMC partners. The pandemic has emphasized the need for global engagement to address global challenges and the need to collaborate together to address the complex and critical issues facing the world.

With the COVID-19 pandemic prohibiting international travel, our usual groups of visitors were not able to come to UNMC. Our staff found creative ways to engage our international community. This report will demonstrate the value of global engagement opportunities for our students, faculty and staff. UNMC has developed extensive and significant partnerships to advance our mission.

International students are a vital part of our mission. International students enrich our university by bringing their unique experience and insights and sharing them with our UNMC community and play a key role in developing and sustaining partnerships across the globe.

As we look ahead, the Office of Global Engagement will continue to serve the campus through our global partnerships, programs, and services. We will strive to expand our partnerships in other parts of the world, which will create new opportunities for faculty, staff and students.

Thank you for your continued support of the Office of Global Engagement as we diligently work to provide excellence to our UNMC campus.

Sincerely,

Jane Meza, PhD  
Associate Vice Chancellor for Global Engagement



## Mission and Vision



### **Mission**

The Office of Global Engagement (OGE) promotes international diversity, fosters global understanding and awareness, and advances internationalization efforts throughout the UNMC community.

### **Vision**

Our vision is comprehensive global engagement for Nebraska and beyond, advancing UNMC's world-class education, cutting-edge research, and renowned public service to meet the complex challenges of today's interconnected world.

### **What we do:**

The OGE is committed to providing the UNMC community with high-quality opportunities to enrich and expand its experiences with the people, cultures, and contemporary concerns with all regions of the world. The Office of Global Engagement is responsible for:

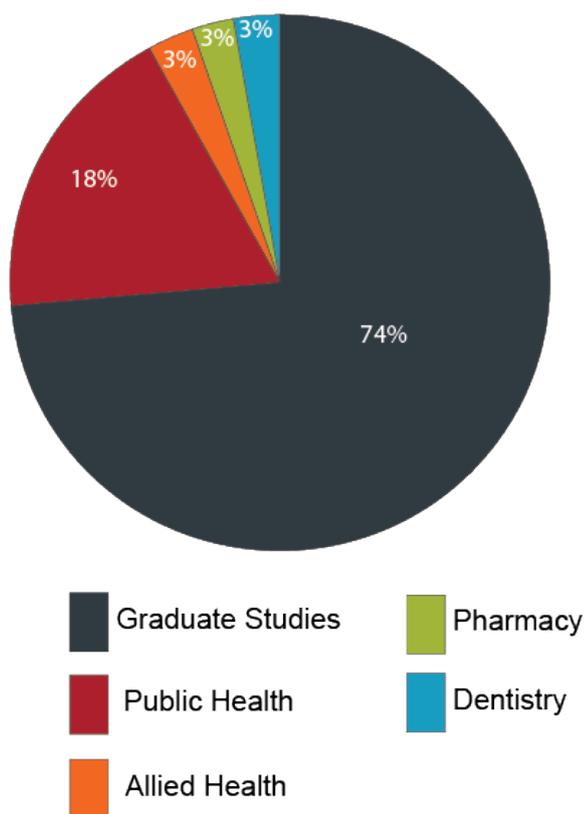
- Providing support to and advocating for the university's international community including students, faculty, staff, and scholars;
- Facilitating and coordinating diverse opportunities for global learning experiences;
- Coordinating bilateral exchange programs for health science rotations and research with UNMC's global partners;
- Developing and managing observership and training programs;
- Managing the US immigration and visa sponsorships of international students, faculty, staff, and visitors on behalf of UNMC;
- Collaborating with UNMC departments to ensure compliance with UNMC policies including compliance training, immunizations, and export control;
- Developing and maintaining academic collaborations and business partnerships;
- Developing capacity in the healthcare sector;
- Bolstering economic development in Nebraska and the world;
- Coordinating various international and cultural engagement opportunities.

# 2020 ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

## International Students

UNMC welcomed 43 international students in 2020. These students represented 16 countries and participated in 17 different academic and graduate medical education programs across all colleges. The COVID-19 pandemic did cause challenges for our fall semester students due to the closure of many of the global embassies and consulates and international borders that severely limited travel options. Many of our accepted international students had to defer the start of their UNMC programs.

International Students  
Enrollment by College, 2020



## INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ORIENTATION

For the eighth consecutive year, UNMC offered the International Student Orientation (ISO) along with the International Student program comprised of UNMC student volunteers. The fall 2020 ISO was held virtually in combination with the all-campus new student orientation. Of the 20 new international students, 16 were transfer students already in the U.S. with four newly arrived in the U.S. In December 2020, the OGE held virtual information sessions for both current and incoming international students. Topics presented included public transportation and driving a car, U.S. phone plans, how to prepare and dress for winter in Omaha, and tips on finding housing near campus.

## INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ASSOCIATION

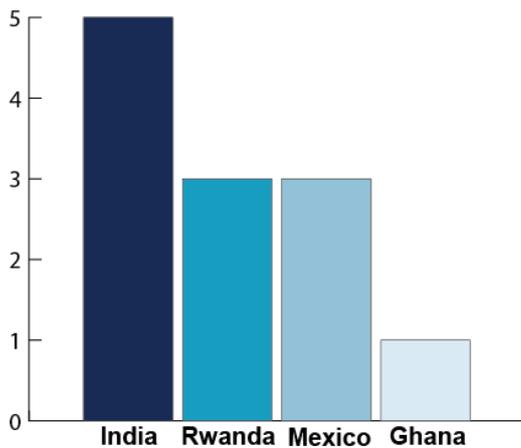
The OGE continues to support the International Student Association (ISA). Due to COVID-19, the traditional on-campus events were suspended for 2020. The ISA adapted to the situation and held its 2020 International Week virtually. The ISA organized two photo contests through their Facebook page. International students were encouraged to submit photos for the two categories: "Introduce Your Culture/Country" and "Traditional Dress".



## Global Learning Opportunities

The OGE supported global learning opportunities for 12 M4 students in four countries in 2020 prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Global Learning by Country, 2020**



The OGE worked hard with UNMC leadership to ensure the safe and prompt return of all UNMC students who were abroad in the spring of 2020. All in-person global experiences were canceled for the remainder of 2020.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic other OGE annual programs such as the Medical Spanish/Global Health Course, SAGH Medical Service Trips, the International Student Research Forum, and the Global Health Opportunity Program (GHOP) for Summer Experiential Education (SEED) in Physical Therapy were all canceled for 2020.

## Programs

### BEN NELSON FELLOWS

The OGE and the Congressional Office for International Leadership (formerly known as Open World Leadership Center) co-hosted a webinar in Nov. 2020, with six Russian doctors, chosen as 2020 Ben Nelson Fellows, to discuss differing tuberculosis and HIV remedies in the U.S. and Russia. We hope this group of Fellows will be able to travel to the U.S. in 2021.

### CHINA SCHOLARSHIP COUNCIL

Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and travel restrictions, the OGE was unable to welcome any new China Scholarship Council (CSC) students to UNMC in 2020. There are currently 51 CSC-sponsored students on campus. In 2020, 12 current CSC students graduated. The OGE provided one-on-one support to students, including virtual office hours throughout the year. We also communicated with students about important updates relevant to them and the pandemic, including international travel guidelines and safety procedures.

### FACULTY TRAINING

In January 2020, the OGE welcomed eight faculty members from China's Hainan Medical University for their training development program. The faculty spent their first two weeks with UNMC's ILUNO English workshop. Five faculty observed courses in the College of Medicine, and one each in the Colleges of Nursing, Pharmacy, and Public Health. The OGE welcomed two faculty from Tongji University in Shanghai, China. The faculty learned about medical education at UNMC and observed classes during the College of Medicine's circulatory block.

### FAMILY MEDICINE TRAINING

More than 1,600 participants took part in the 11th Shanghai Sino-U.S. Family Medicine Symposium held virtually October 2020. The symposium is a continued effort of UNMC's ongoing collaboration with Tongji University in China. This year, the symposium focused on providing medical education in a pandemic, with presentations by 11 UNMC faculty. Topics included adapting medical education and curriculum-level changes for medical student and residency education; discussing faculty and student wellness and resiliency; to problem-based learning and clinical skills education and training during a pandemic. The symposium also focused on telemedicine, how to precept telemedicine encounters and interprofessional education. An overview of how UNMC continues to navigate the pandemic was also discussed.

## INTERNATIONAL OBSERVERSHIPS

The OGE partners with international universities and hospitals to provide opportunities for international physicians to experience the U.S. medical system and observe clinical practice at UNMC and its affiliated partners in Omaha. The OGE welcomed 10 international physicians in 2020 prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

## STUDENT ALLIANCE FOR GLOBAL HEALTH (SAGH)

During the fall 2020 semester, SAGH, in collaboration with OneWorld Community Health Centers, began participation in no-contact food pickup and delivery for families of COVID-19 patients. SAGH also started a moderated on-line monthly journal club, open to anyone, to discuss articles relevant to global health.

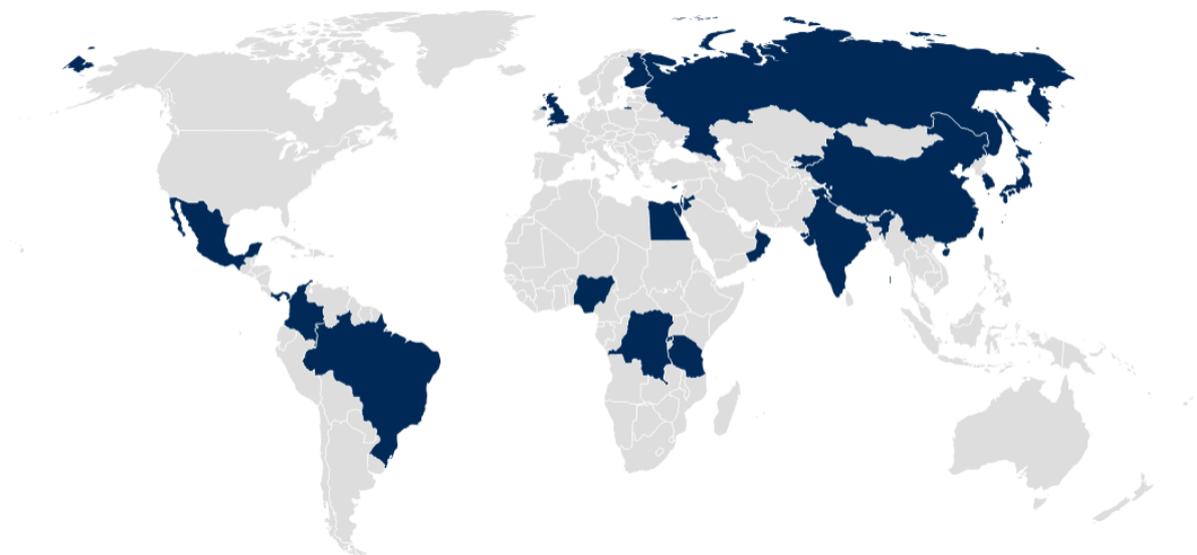
## STUDENT RESEARCHERS

In January 2020, the OGE welcomed three research students from China Pharmaceutical University in Beijing for a four-month research program. They were the fourth cohort of undergraduate students to come to UNMC for this program, which matches them with faculty researchers in Pharmaceutical Sciences. Although their work was disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, the students were able to complete their research and presented their work in a virtual ceremony in May 2020.

## Partnerships

The OGE's partnership activities include reviewing and documenting all international agreements, continuing to strengthen relationships with existing partners, and developing new strategic partnerships. UNMC currently has almost 50 active or pending international agreements for education, research, and business collaborations in 23 countries. In 2020, four new agreements were signed with partners in Brazil, Japan, Rwanda, and South Korea and one agreement was renewed with our partners in Oman. In addition in 2020, the OGE partnered in the initial development of a major global health initiative with colleagues in the Middle East and North Africa region and expanded its collaboration with Anahuac University in Mexico that was started in 2015 by the College of Public Health.

## Map of active or pending partnership agreements by country, 2020

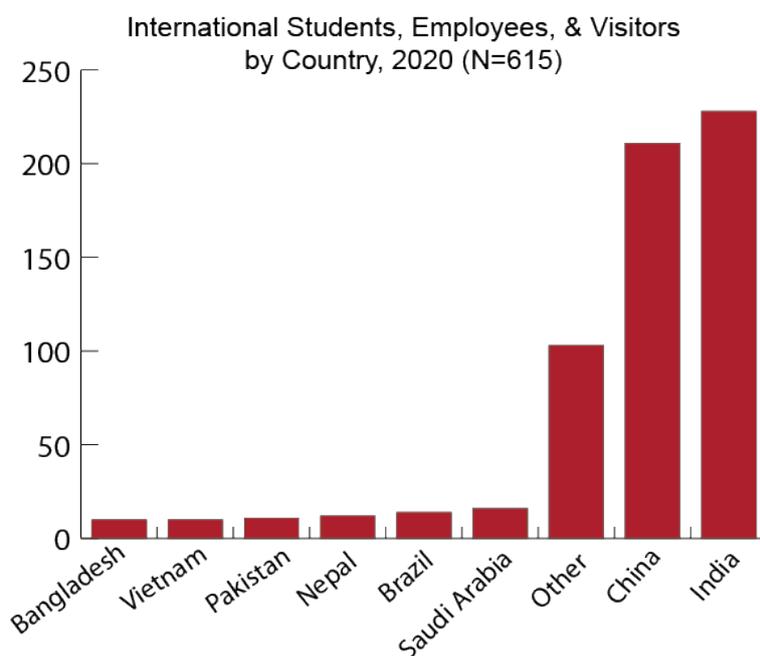




## Support Services

### VISA SPONSORSHIP

The OGE assisted and sponsored 615 international students, employees, and visitors representing 65 countries to work, study or visit UNMC in 2020. The OGE staff advised faculty, staff, sponsored employees, and students on all visa and immigration-related issues. The OGE also provided advice to UNMC departments and international employees regarding the process and regulations for sponsorship of permanent residence. Services were also provided to UNO for preparation of government petitions to sponsor international employees to work at UNO.



### INTERNATIONAL VISITORS

The OGE's international visitor registration service is highly utilized by colleges and departments across the UNMC campus to bring visitors for programs ranging from a few hours up to one year. Visitors must meet all immunization requirements and complete compliance training modules in addition to UNMC Export Control requirements prior to arrival on campus. In early 2020, prior to the pandemic, the OGE registered 43 international visitors representing 11 countries.

### TAX PREPARATION ASSISTANCE

The OGE offered free virtual tax preparation assistance to the UNMC international community in 2020, with 175 individuals participating.

## Other Activities

### INTERNATIONALIZATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

In 2019, UNMC successfully completed a two-year mentorship under the American Council on Education's "Internationalization Laboratory" Program. In response, the OGE has been aligning our resources in order to better support the academic mission of the UNMC campus in a systematic and collaborative approach to global education across our campus. In late 2020, the OGE acted to institutionalize this commitment by establishing the UNMC Internationalization Advisory Committee with representation from major academic and research groups across the campus. This important committee will:

1. Serve as an inter-professional leadership team which ensures that UNMC works together as a campus to develop and implement an integrated internationalization strategy.
2. Provide guidance to maximize campus-wide ownership of the strategic plan and implementation of the ACE Internationalization Laboratory report recommendations.
3. Advise and evaluate the strategy for UNMC's global engagement and international partnership development.

### OGE COMMUNICATIONS

After the formation of the Office of Global Engagement in 2019, a new website was created combining information from both the Asia Pacific Rim Development Program (APRDP) and the International Health and Medical Education (IHME) webpages. You can visit the new website at [www.unmc.edu/global](http://www.unmc.edu/global).

The OGE has also created two digital newsletters to keep our colleagues and partners updated on our international activities. The Global Glance is a monthly bulletin that relays technical information, deadlines, and other pertinent information and opportunities. The Global Connections is a quarterly newsletter that contains campus-wide stories of events and accomplishments.

To receive these digital publications, please sign up here: [https://www.unmc.edu/global/engagement/sign\\_up.html](https://www.unmc.edu/global/engagement/sign_up.html) and to read past issues, please go here: <https://www.unmc.edu/global/engagement/publications.html>.





## OGE Leadership

Jane Meza, PhD  
Associate Vice Chancellor for  
Global Engagement  
Professor of Biostatistics at  
UNMC College of Public Health

Bruce Grogan, MPH  
Director of Global Engagement

Lenal Bottoms, MA  
Administrative Program Associate

Daniel “Dan” Teet  
International Student Advisor

Steve Daubendiek  
Visa/Immigration Specialist

Donald “DJ” Thayer, MBA  
Director of International &  
Domestic Business Affairs

Bo Han, PhD, MBA  
Senior Business Development Specialist

Danielle Thies, MA  
International Program Associate

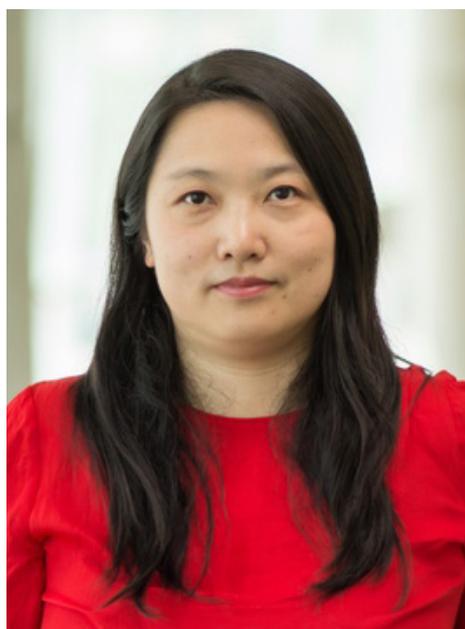
Nasreen Maiwandi, MPH  
International Visitor Associate

Zenghan “Hannah” Tong, PhD  
Director of Academic Partnerships  
Instructor at COM Pharmacology/  
Exp Neuroscience

Leah Niebaum, MA  
Program Associate

Sara Pirtle, MBA  
Program Manager

Connor Willingham  
Coordinator



The OGE was pleased to name Zenghan “Hannah” Tong, PhD, as director of academic partnerships. Dr. Tong, who is also an instructor and researcher in the Department of Pharmacology and Experimental Neuroscience, completed her PhD. in chemistry at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. She most recently served as the associate director for the Asia Pacific Rim Development Program (APRDP), in which she oversaw UNMC’s partnerships and programs with China.

In her new role, Dr. Tong will continue to play a vital role in the creation and expansion of international academic partnerships at UNMC. She and her team will work closely with faculty members, departments, and colleges to expand global learning activities and enhance exchange programs with our international partners.

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# 2020 RECAP

**615**

Visa-Sponsored  
International  
Participants



**65**  
Countries



UNMC established four new international agreements in Brazil, Japan, Rwanda, and South Korea and renewed one agreement with our partners in Oman.



**261**

International  
Students

**29**

Countries

**63%**

Enrolled in  
Graduate  
Studies



UNMC welcomed 43 new international students to campus in 2020.

12 UNMC students participated in education abroad activities in 4 countries (an additional 60 students had their trips cancelled due to COVID-19).





**University of Nebraska Medical Center**

Office of Global Engagement  
985700 Nebraska Medical Center  
Omaha, NE 68198-5700  
402.559.4517 | [global@unmc.edu](mailto:global@unmc.edu)

[unmc.edu/global](http://unmc.edu/global)

