

Two battle for NU regents seat

By ERIN SCHULTE
Senior Reporter

Six years ago, NU Regent Nancy O'Brien won her seat on the board in a race where her opponent outspent her five to one.

This year, Andrew Sigerson, an Omaha attorney and former president of the ASUN, hopes he can have the same luck in his race against O'Brien for the District 2 regent position.

Sigerson has said he's got a better perspective of what students want because of his age and experience as president of the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska from 1992-93.

But O'Brien, of Waterloo, said she's made changes during her term as regent that directly change life — for the better — for nearly every student at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.


O'Brien pointed out accomplishments she felt made life better for every student: getting N-Roll and online registration for classes going.

The same old drop-add lines that she had while in school at UNL were unacceptable, she said, and new technology meant the university didn't have to have that problem anymore.

O'Brien also said she pushed to get more transfer classes among NU campuses. When she started her term as regent, only 250 courses would transfer. More than 800 classes are now easily transferable, she said.

Regents meetings have also been made more open to the public since she began her term, O'Brien said. Regents

Nancy L. O'Brien



Age: 45.
Hometown: Waterloo.
Occupation: Management consultant.
Family: Married, five stepchildren.
Education: Bachelor's degree, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 1972; master's degree, special education, University of Nebraska-Omaha, 1975; doctoral degree, educational administration, UNL, 1979.

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NANCY O'BRIEN

are more credible to students because of open discussion at meetings. Students can attend the meetings if they wish, she said.

O'Brien lives in Waterloo and has a doctorate in education administration from UNL. She served as chairwoman of the Board of Regents last year.

Sigerson said O'Brien abused her position as a regent, and that the board is virtual “royalty.” Last year, O'Brien took more than 40 tickets for the Fiesta Bowl to distribute to people who had contributed money to the university. O'Brien said it was her job to foster good relationships with those who

contributed money to the university.


Regents should spend less time taking things from the university, Sigerson said, and instead spend time figuring out how to lower costs for college students, which is something he said he wanted to do if elected as a regent.

Recent budget increases of around 6 percent each year are way too high, he said. Students often end up paying for it.

“At the rate we're going, the only thing students who graduate are going to be able to worry about is how to pay their debt,” Sigerson said.

Sigerson said, if he was elected, he

Andrew Sigerson



Age: 25.
Hometown: Omaha.
Occupation: Attorney.
Family: Married.
Education: Bachelor's degree, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 1993; law degree, UNL College of Law, 1996.

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ANDREW SIGERSON

would vote to hold tuition increases over the next five years at the rate of inflation.

One thing that should go up at NU is faculty salaries, he said.

“We will never have as strong an academic university as we do an athletic university if we do not reward our good faculty members,” Sigerson said.

Teaching faculty should also be encouraged to get out and work in the real world, Sigerson said. Regents should support faculty who want to work, so they can teach real-world skills to their students. Sigerson said he's heard complaints that college does

not fully prepare students for the working world.

O'Brien said her goals, if elected, would be to take care of deferred maintenance problems and create excellence in UNL's academic programs.

Another area UNL has done well in, but needs to keep improving, is with using information technology and interactive technology in the classroom, she said.

“UNL is a campus on solid ground and we must maintain the momentum that has developed,” O'Brien said.

NEA donates \$100,000 for initiatives

From The Associated Press

The National Education Association has contributed \$100,000 to support Nebraska initiatives 411 and 412, which deal with quality education and property tax relief.

Word of the donation from the two-million member national teacher's union was included in a financial disclosure released Monday by Citizens for 411 and 412.

Co-chairmen of the group, Bryce Neidig of the Nebraska Farm Bureau and Craig Christiansen of the Nebraska State Education Association said the group has raised \$577,073 to work for passage of the two ballot questions.

The measures seek to make education a fundamental right and state aid to education a paramount duty of the state and to cap property taxes.

Nebraska Legislative Candidates		
District	Incumbents	Challenger
1	Floyd P. Vrtiska	John M. Stalder
3	Mike Avery	Jon C. Bruning
5	Don Fritsch	Tim Krallcock
7	(open seat)	Craig Christensen
9	(open seat)	John Hilgert
11	(open seat)	Shelley Kiel
13	(open seat)	Robert J. Sivick
15	(open seat)	John N. Klaus Becker
17	(open seat)	(no opponent)
19	(open seat)	Lowen Kruse
21	(open seat)	Ronald A. Elliott
23	(open seat)	(no opponent)
25	(open seat)	Carol L. Hudkins
27	(open seat)	Carol M. Yankin
29	(open seat)	John E. Pokorny
31	(open seat)	Barb Nichols
33	(open seat)	(no opponent)
35	(open seat)	Mimi Heintzman
37	(open seat)	(no opponent)
39	(open seat)	Chris Peterson
41	(open seat)	(no opponent)
43	(open seat)	Roy Stephens
45	(open seat)	(no opponent)
47	(open seat)	(no opponent)
49	(open seat)	(no opponent)

26 seats open in Legislature races

From The Associated Press

Two appointed state senators hope to win their legislative seats in their own right, while two other incumbents face serious challenges.

The four races are among 26 legislative seats on ballots across Nebraska for the Nov. 5 election.

At least one new state senator is guaranteed when the next session begins in January. Three people are running for the Omaha area District 9 seat from which attorney John Lindsay retired. Shelley Kiel and Robert Sivick were thought to be running a dead heat before John N. Klaus Becker also got on the ballot through petitions.

The 25 odd-numbered districts in the 49-member officially nonpartisan, one-house Nebraska Legislature are up for election.

In the only race in an even-numbered district, newly appointed Sen. Don Pederson of North Platte faces John Margritz for the two years remaining in the District 42 seat that was vacated by Sen. David Bernard-Stevens of North Platte. Sens. Kate Witek of Omaha and Jim Jones of Eddyville recently attended a fund-raiser in North

Platte for Margritz. Both are Republicans as are Margritz and Pederson.

Another legislator appointed by Democratic Gov. Ben Nelson to fill a vacant seat, Democrat Lee Klein of Battle Creek, faces Norfolk Republican Gene Tyson in the heavily Republican Madison County District 19.

Klein filled a vacancy created when Sen. Connie Day of Norfolk resigned for health reasons. Day, who also was a Democrat, was elected in the aftermath of a redistricting struggle in 1992. She ran against four Republican challengers who petitioned onto the ballot and split the vote.

Incumbents appear to have the edge in most legislative races, but two face tight races. In District 3, state Sen. Mike Avery of Gretna faces a tough battle with Jon C. Bruning. In District 35, Sen. Dan Fisher is locked in a tight race with Chris Peterson.

Both Fisher and Peterson are pro-life, pro-business Republicans. They live in the same neighborhood in Grand Island and attend the same church. Fisher has served on the Banking and Judiciary committees during his first four-year term. Peterson is a member of the state Postsecondary Commission for Higher Education.