

Program recruits teachers

■ Teach for America sets its sights on those willing to instruct in needy areas.

BY ANNE HEITZ
Staff Reporter

America doesn't want young minds to be deprived of an excellent education just because their school may fall short on teachers.

University students, including some from UNL, are part of a plan to guarantee that all children in the United States get the education they deserve.

The goal of Teach For America is to find outstanding college graduates who are willing to teach in America's most underprivileged urban and rural public schools.

Anyone who obtains a bachelor's degree by June is eligible to apply. No previous courses in education are required, and all jobs are full-time, paid positions.

This national program started eight years ago and is open to all colleges in the country. Because of the vast number of colleges nationwide, the organization has selected 300 colleges across the nation at which it will specifically recruit for the program. Among them is the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Along with Creighton University, UNL is one of the two Nebraska colleges chosen to be a part of the western region, which includes a total of 41 schools.

Megan Matheny, recruitment director for the western region, said Teach For America is trying to make the program much more visible on campuses.

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recruitment director

ing which colleges to send recruiters to, coordinators look at the number of applications received in the past and the level of difficulty of the college's courses, its admissions standards, and the difficulty of requirements involved in getting a degree.

She said the program is a response to the teacher shortages in some areas of the country.

Anyone can apply, but there are three main groups that Teach For America actively recruits.

"We focus on math and science majors, bilingual Spanish speakers, and people of color," Matheny said. These are the areas in which there is often a low number of teachers available, she said.

The program targets inner-city and rural public schools that tend to have scarcity of teachers and a lack of resources, ranging from money to books and facilities. Many overpopulated schools sometimes have a ratio of one teacher to every 60 students.

"This is a very competitive program," Matheny said. "Out of 3,000 applicants each year, only about 500 are selected."

During the past three years, Teach For America has received a total of 14 applications from UNL students.

All candidates for admission

undergo an intensive selection process. The written application requirements include a letter of intent, references and an essay in which the applicants write about the most challenging situations they have ever faced.

Finalists then go through a daylong interview, which consists of a sample teaching session, group discussions and a personal interview.

Each selected person must attend a five-week training session in Houston before being assigned to one of the 13 sites across the country. Each teacher will commit to the school for two years.

The group was started eight years ago by Wendy Kopp, a senior at Princeton University in Princeton, N.J. Kopp wrote her thesis about an outstanding corps whose purpose was to teach those less fortunate, said Michele Mallardi, staff member and contact person for the program. Since 1989, Teach For America has attracted more than 20,000 applicants and has placed 4,000 of them in teaching positions in 13 regions. Some regions include a state or two; others cover only a city.

Mallardi said, "She made her thesis a reality."

Consumer advocates warn shoppers of holiday scams

BY LINDSAY YOUNG
Staff Reporter

People have found a way to avoid malls as crowded as Memorial Stadium this year when going to look for the Hilde Me Film they forgot to buy last year.

Instead, they shop online in the convenience and comfort of their own homes.

But consumer advocates urge them to beware.

Increased opportunities for holiday shopping may not be as sweet as they appear, some say.

Anyone can set up a site, claim to be selling a product, and collect hundreds of credit card numbers with no intention of delivering a product, said Damon Warren, the ImageNet network system administrator in charge of security in Loveland, Colo.

"I don't think the Internet will ever be safe because it's completely anonymous," Warren said.

However, Eric Fitzsimons, a Connecting Point support technician in Greeley, Colo., said people are taking the same risk with online ordering as they have been for several years with catalogs. Consumers don't know who is on the other end of the line taking their credit card numbers.

But he still advises shoppers to check for an opportunity for external billing when ordering online.

If a site doesn't offer external billing, it may not be worth ordering, he said. This gives consumers a sense of safety knowing they can cancel their checks.

There are ways to determine if a site is legitimate, but it is difficult, Fitzsimons said. Some things to look for include recognizable store names and name brands, opportunities for external billing, and the indication it

uses security socket layers.

Shopping services like eToys, based in Santa Monica, Calif., exist primarily on the Internet. Others, such as clothing companies J. Crew, Eddie Bauer and L.L. Bean offer online shopping as well as a nationwide chain of stores.

If a site says it uses security socket layers, information given to the company over the Internet will be encrypted, or changed into a code, as it travels to its destination server. When it arrives it is changed back into its original content.

It would be hard for computer buffs to get to the information protected by security socket layers as it travels, Fitzsimons said.

But these precautions aren't completely foolproof in protecting credit card numbers from hackers and scam artists, Warren said. When the information arrives at the server, anyone who knew how and wanted the information badly enough could get to it, he said.

Some online services, such as Wal-Mart's online holiday shopping, rid their servers of the information as soon as it has been used.

Policies for returning items and receiving refunds, and regarding warranties are placed on most Web pages as well.

eToys has items "from Barbie to BRIO" but will only accept returns in their original packaging. It also states in their disclaimer that there are no warranties.

Wal-Mart, however, will produce a refund on any gift regardless of reason if the product is returned within 45 days of receipt. There are some exceptions for electronics.

If information is not provided on returns, refunds, warranties, or security issues, Warren said, avoid the site and head to the malls.

Celebrations of the Season

Christian Science Services
Come any Sunday or Wednesday
■ First Church of Christ, Scientist ■ Second Church of Christ, Scientist
1900 D Street - 10:30 a.m. 84th & A Street - 10:30 a.m.
Sunday Schools convene at same hour
Wednesday Testimony Meetings at both churches 7:00 p.m.
Child Care During All Services

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church
Newman Center
The Student Parish on Campus
16th & Q 474-7914
Sunday Mass Schedule
10:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 5:30 p.m.
Daily Mass Schedule
M-Thurs: 6:50 a.m., 9:00 p.m.
Confession Schedule
M-Thurs: 8:30 p.m.
Sat: 4:43 p.m.; Sun: 5:00 p.m.
Christmas Schedule
Midnight Mass
Tuesday, December 16



First Baptist Church
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Episcopal (Anglican) 13th & R
Food Divine and Human — Thousands Served
Holy Communion—Sundays at 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.;
8:00 p.m. resumes January 11; Tuesdays at 12:30 p.m.
Christmas Eve — Family Service at 7:00 p.m.;
Lessons & Carols and Solemn Eucharist at 10:30 p.m.
The Rev. Dr. Don Harway, Vicar & Chaplain 474-1979

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KGBI 100.7 FM
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Listen for great Christian Rock music Saturday nights from 7-Midnight!

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December 14
Choir Christmas Concert
Time 11:00 a.m.
Wednesday
December 17
Candlelight Service
11:00 p.m.
Lutheran Student Center and Chapel
535 N. 16th
Larry L. Meyer, Pastor

UNTO US A CHILD IS BORN!
Isaiah 69
Please join us for advent services on,
Dec. 10 & 17 at 8:00 p.m.
Sunday Holiday Schedule
• Dec. 14: 9:00 & 11:00 a.m.
• Dec. 21 & 28 and Jan. 4 at 11:00 a.m.
• Jan 11: 9:00 & 11:00 a.m.
Have a Joyous and Safe Holiday Season!
University Lutheran Chapel (LCMS)
1510 Q 477-3997
ulc@unlinfo.unl.edu

