The Joslyn Institute’s activities in the Omaha and Lincoln corridor were selected as a best practice by the Dubai International Award for Best Practices (DIABP), an award program jointly administered by UN-Habitat and Dubai Municipality. JISC was recognized for its work on enhancing environmental decision-making capacity in the region. Utilizing twin strategies of outreach and demonstration, JISC’s primary objectives in the region include:

- expand capacity to respond to regional growth/depopulation challenges through the use of information in decision making, research, and improved access and participation;
- develop a framework to measure progress toward a sustainable condition, and;
- expand engagement from region to state-wide, national and international audiences, training decision makers and community leaders on use of the sustainability framework for regional planning, design, and administration.

*Nebraska Nexus: Resources, Conservation, Development and Change* is a new video produced by the Joslyn Institute that explores five critical resources—food, water, energy, land and materials, and how we must consider both conservation and development of those resources to respond effectively to global pressures—population growth and migration, global warming, and human consumption—and to ensure they remain sustainable for future generations and the high standard of living we now enjoy. The video was produced with the support of Humanities Nebraska and the Nebraska Environmental Trust, with the administrative support of Nebraska Academy of Sciences. Nebraska Educational Television will air it on Thursday, May 29 at 7 pm CDT on NET2 World and will repeat Sunday, June 1 at 1 pm also on NET2. There will be additional broadcasts in June, times and dates to be announced. The video will be made available to schools, colleges, civic groups, libraries and others.

The Joslyn Institute’s initiatives in China have continued apace. JISC President and CEO W. Cecil Steward was keynote speaker and an awards judge at the Guangzhou International Urban Innovation Conference and Awards held in Guangzhou in November. JISC’s participation will continue in 2014. *Sustainometrics: Measuring Sustainability*, an essential guide for urban planners and administrators, was published in a Chinese edition with an initial print run of several thousand. (The book, by Steward and Sharon S. Baum Kuska, also is being used in classes at the University of California.) At the end of the year, efforts to forge even stronger ties with partners in China were beginning to come to fruition, and in 2014 a partnership to work toward sustainability in the natural environment was announced. The photo above shows once fertile fields, now abandoned, outside Guraao in Guandong, where textile production has trumped agriculture and high levels of industrial pollution are found.
In 2013, JISC participated in the ReEnergize program, which aimed to find ways to make homes and other buildings more energy-efficient, then make those upgrades at a reduced cost. Omaha and Lincoln received a combined $10 million in federal stimulus money. JISC President W. Cecil Steward and JISC Vice President Sharon S. Baum Kuska evaluated, in cooperation with The Schemmer Associates, 25 individual commercial properties within the City of Lincoln. Results included baseline inventories of energy consumption, energy efficiency evaluations, retrofit recommendations for increased efficiencies and sustainable performances, energy cash flow opportunities, and a recommended EcoSTEP assessment for tracking performance efficiencies into the future.

The Joslyn Institute has forged partnerships with groups in Minden, Broken Bow and Lincoln in its new grant-funded program to help foster and facilitate targeted communication strategies and deliberative, democratic decision-making surrounding specific issues in which each community is now involved. The two-year program, funded by the Nebraska Environmental Trust, is headed by Dr. Jay Leighter, Associate Professor of Communication Studies at Creighton University and a member of the JISC board of directors. After a series of discussions about the aims of the project with leaders and stakeholders across the state, these three communities agreed to join JISC as collaborators in the project. The three communities—Minden, Broken Bow, and Lincoln—have distinct geographical and demographic differences, with different sets of issues and with varying capacities in place to address such issues.

JISC is helping to conduct a statewide recycling study throughout Nebraska, along with partners UNL Public Policy Center, Nebraska Association of Recyclers, and UNL Bureau of Sociological Research. The study will include four surveys as part of this study:

- A survey of City Clerks to identify recyclers operating in cities, towns, and municipalities in Nebraska; 2) amount of recycling and solid waste disposal; and 3) amount of public funding for recycling and solid waste disposal.
- A survey of County Treasurers who may not be aware of recycling operations in rural areas.
- A survey of primary public and private recycling operations to identify locations of recycling operations, amount and type of recyclables, and type of recycling operations.
- A survey of secondary public and private recycling operations to identify locations of recycling operations, amount and type of recyclables, and type of recycling operations. Analyses and working closely with stakeholders are intended to help lead to sustainable communities and improvement in the lives of all Nebraskans.
The Joslyn Institute’s first foray into the world of public charitable challenge giving was a resounding success in May. JISC raised $1,087.56 from 13 different donors. In Lincoln, EcoStores Nebraska participated in a similar day of giving, raising more than $430. EcoStores included in-store outreach this year. Customers that donated at least $10 were entered into a drawing for a $50 gift certificate. In-store customers gave $160.

This month, JISC will again participate in Omaha Gives! on May 21, from midnight to midnight, and Ecostores will also participate again in Give To Lincoln day on May 29. A reminder card has been included in the annual report packet. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

WasteCap Nebraska presented its 2012 Product Stewardship Award to EcoStores Nebraska in October. Pictured above are (from left) WasteCap’s Executive Director Carrie Hakenkamp and EcoStore’s Craig Steward and Christine Hunt.

Steward reports that Ecostores sales grew between 20 and 25 percent in 2012 and between 7 and 10 percent in 2013.

JISC President and CEO Cecil Steward has been a member of the Solid Waste Plan 2040 for Lincoln. The committee identified the development of a comprehensive, integrated solid waste management plan as a strategy for the future of the city and county. The Public Works and Utilities Department and the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department facilitated the development of the Solid Waste Plan 2040 with a planning process that included numerous opportunities for public participation and involvement. The feasibility of waste transfer stations and one or more eco-industrial parks where value could be extracted from Lincoln’s waste stream is a proposal still under consideration.