

OUR VIEW

Albion, UNL work together

*Partnership between town, students
could be inspiration for others*

Several years ago, the instructors of a class of journalism students at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln approached the Daily News about collaborating on a project. If the newsroom of the Daily News would take the time to meet with the students, answer questions and explain the thought process behind the look and design of the newspaper, the students would then work on possible redesign ideas for the newspaper as a class project.

It turned out to be a win-win project. The students benefited from their exposure to staff members here and the ideas generated by the students spurred a subsequent revamping of the Daily News' appearance. Some of the ideas the students came up with are still in place today.

That anecdote came to mind in light of the recent project undertaken by 15 UNL architecture students to create innovative and eco-friendly designs and revitalization ideas for the community of Albion.

The project was intended to show residents of the 1,600-population Boone County community the possibilities for development in their downtown area, as well as give UNL students real-world architecture experience. The 45 architectural designs that resulted include a children's learning center, an organic restaurant and hotel, a fitness center, a 21st century drive-in and a comic book store.

The project came about after Paul and Lori Hosford of Albion — two of that community's progressive leaders — met with a UNL professor about a possible partnership.

Andrew Devine, the city's administrator, is hopeful that these new projects will inspire new ideas and creativity. "These concepts really

provide us with great projects to try to succeed," Mr. Devine said. "There's no reason the concepts can't be utilized in our city."

That, of course, is the key. It's fine and good for Albion to seek out new ideas, but if

some aren't acted upon, it will be a shame. Knowing Albion and its residents, there's no question in our mind that new concepts will be pursued.

The situations involving Albion and the Daily News bring to mind the notion that students and faculty members at colleges — whether it be Northeast Community College, Wayne State College, UNL or some other institution of higher education — can be a gold mine of ideas, vision and energy.

One would hope that other communities, businesses or agencies might explore the possibility of similar partnerships in the future.

It's important to remember that colleges and their students can't always be counted on to be the source of new ideas for others. But in some cases, they can be — and should be.

TALK BACK

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