

Panhandle

Public Health District

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Panhandle Safety and Wellness Conference Honors WNCC Wellness Leader with Leading Light Award

A standout leader in Western Nebraska Community College (WNCC) wellness was honored at this year's Panhandle Safety and Wellness Conference with the 8th Leading Light Award, recognizing her dedication to creating a culture of health and well-being on campus.

Jenny Keener, Human Resource Specialist at WNCC, received the Leading Light Award for her visionary leadership and commitment to a truly holistic approach to wellness. Under Keener's guidance, wellness has become a vibrant and meaningful part of the college's identity—far beyond a checklist of programs.

Jenny leads with creativity and compassion, developing innovative initiatives that engage faculty, staff, and students in all aspects of well-being—mental, physical, financial, and spiritual. Her ability to inspire others and foster collaboration has transformed wellness from a department initiative into a campus-wide culture. "Jenny doesn't just oversee wellness efforts—she lives them," shared her nominator. "She models the behaviors she promotes and inspires others to do the same. Wellness at our college has grown significantly because of her leadership, and it's now integrated into everything we do."

"I am incredibly honored to receive the Leading Light Award," said Jenny Keener. "Wellness is not just something we do—it's who we are. I'm proud to work alongside such a dedicated team and community that values the well-being of our faculty, staff, and students. Together, we've built a culture where wellness is woven into everything we do, and I'm excited to see how it continues to grow."

The Panhandle Worksite Wellness Council will open nominations later this year for the 2026 Leading Light Award recipient to be recognized at next year's conference.

For additional information about worksite wellness, visit www.pphd.ne.gov/pwwc.html or call Berosek at 308-279-3496. The Panhandle Worksite Wellness Council is proudly part of Panhandle Public Health District. The Council specializes in supporting employers in the Panhandle region. We recognize that many employers support a diverse and remote workforce and offer innovative ways to overcome the challenge of working with a virtual team. We understand that many of our employers do not have full-time wellness resources and work to provide resources and training to make running a worksite wellness program as easy as possible.



Panhandle Public Health District is working together to improve the health, safety and quality of life for all who live, learn, work and play in the Panhandle. Our vision is that we are a healthier and safer Panhandle community.

Leading Light Award:



Jenny Keener



Left to right, Husband Denton Keener, Jenny Keener, Daughter Ashton Keener



Left to right, sister-in-law Kaycee Keener, Husband Denton Keener, Daughter Ashton Keener, Mother-in-law Diane Keener, and Father-in-law Dean Keener