

Western Iowa Advantage is a collaborative group of economic development officials in Adair, Audubon, Carroll, Crawford, Greene, Guthrie, Ida, and Sac Counties.

Western Iowa Advantage holds Annual Banquet

The Western Iowa Advantage Annual Banquet was held on Tuesday, March 26 at the Carrollton Center in Carroll. WIAD Chair, Shannon Landauer, gave an update of the organization. Overview of the most recent planning session was discussed, pointing out changes to the organization's efforts in the coming months. Examples were shared of successful projects around the region that WIAD partners have been working on. Significant changes going forward include the transition of the 2019 Summit topic from workforce to housing. This event will take place in November.

Justin Erickson of Essex Capital was the keynote speaker for the event. Justin is responsible for coordinating the Community Venture Network events three times each year in Minneapolis. Partners from the WIAD region attend CVN to explore opportunities for business ventures to locate in the region. Erickson talked about his organization and partnership, as well as how to be successful at recruiting small business in rural communities. Discussion included comparisons to larger scale site selection projects and projects in smaller rural communities.

While Justin was in the area, he visited several communities in the region that have physical assets, sites or buildings, that may be a fit for the companies he works with. As Erickson spoke through the evening, he referenced visits he had made and discussed how the proactive marketing efforts of these communities can help with site location.



Above: Justin Erickson, Community Venture Network, addresses the attendees at the WIAD Annual Banquet at the Carrollton.

FEATURED BUILDING: 2102 STATE STREET, GUTHRIE CENTER

This former RV dealership which features over 18,000 sq. ft. of office and shop space is available for purchase in Guthrie Center. The building is located just off of Iowa Highway 44 within the city limits.

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FEATURED SITE: AUDUBON INDUSTRIAL PARK

The Audubon Industrial Park contains 25 acres which is platted into lots which vary in size from 3 to 5 acres. The park is located within the city limits of Audubon and is owned by the Audubon County Economic Development Corporation (ACED). Buried utilities are located in the street right of way.

The 2016 Audubon County Laborshed has a potential labor force of 32,352 with 9,689 people willing to change employers or to enter the workforce. Labor costs are competitive and our leading employers repeatedly comment on the high integrity, loyalty, and ethics of their workforce.



The Audubon County Airport with its 3640' concrete runway is located next to the Audubon Industrial Park and access to Highway 71 is quick and easy.

Audubon is located 16 miles north of Interstate 80 on Highway 71, halfway between Des Moines, IA and the Council Bluffs/Omaha, NE area. Driving distances are Chicago, IL 421mi., Kansas City, MO 202mi., Denver, CO 615mi., and Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN 331mi.

The City of Audubon works aggressively with its incentive programs.

Audubon is a place where you can balance your time between rewarding careers and raising your family. The Audubon school district offers a comprehensive and varied curriculum including Des Moines Area Community College courses. Audubon has a 25 bed hospital, golf course, T-Bone Trail (16 miles of hard surface), Olympic lane swimming pool, revitalized downtown, tennis courts, several ball parks, fishing, hunting, and more.

Contact: Sara Slater, Audubon County Economic Development Corporation, actorg@windstream.net

Western Iowa Advantage Partners Tour Templeton Rye

In March, Western Iowa Advantage Partners toured the newly constructed Templeton Rye Distillery. The 35,000 square foot distillery can produce 500,000 gallons of original proof whiskey on an annual basis. At any one time, 229,000 gallons of water is in the distillery's 9,000 feet of piping and 52,000 pounds of Copper was used to make the Still. The Templeton Rye Distillery and Visitor Center is open to the public for tours and tastings. Distillery tours provide insights into the process of creating Templeton Rye; The Good Stuff, while the Visitor Center features a museum showcasing deep ties to the community. Cheers!



Pictured: Evan Blakley, Chamber and Development of Crawford County; Deb Calvert, Mid-American Energy; Shannon Landauer, Carroll Area Development Corp; Laurie Gilbert and Sara Slater, Audubon County Economic Development, Mark Reinig, Iowa State CIRAS; Brandy Ripley, Sac Economic and Tourism Development; Rick Hunsaker, Region XII COG; and Sarah Gomez, Midwest Partnership.

WESTERN IOWA ADVANTAGE PARTNERS TOUR CONTINENTAL CARBONIC PRODUCTS

In May, Western Iowa Advantage Partners toured the new constructed Continental Carbonic Products, Inc. facility in Denison. Located across from The Anderson's Ethanol facility, Continental Carbonic Products utilizes CO₂ gases to produce dry ice and liquid CO₂. Scheduled to be open in late May, Continental Carbonic Products will bring 50 high quality jobs to Crawford County.



Railroad Revolving Loan and Grant Program

The Railroad Revolving Loan and Grant (RRLG) Program provides financial assistance to improve rail facilities that will create jobs, spur economic activity and improve the rail transportation system in Iowa. The program is funded through appropriations from the state legislature and repayments from loans for rail development projects funded in the past. For this round, the Iowa Department of Transportation anticipates approximately \$3.9 million available for eligible projects.

The RRLG program has three funding categories under which eligible applicants may apply:

- 1) Targeted Job Creation.
- 2) Rail Network Improvement.
- 3) Rail Port Planning and Development.

Industries, railroads, local governments or economic development agencies are eligible to apply. Additional information regarding the Railroad Revolving Loan and Grants program can be found by clicking [HERE](#). The application deadline is 5:00 p.m. on June 21, 2019.

Iowa's Unemployment Rate Drops to 2.9% in March 2019

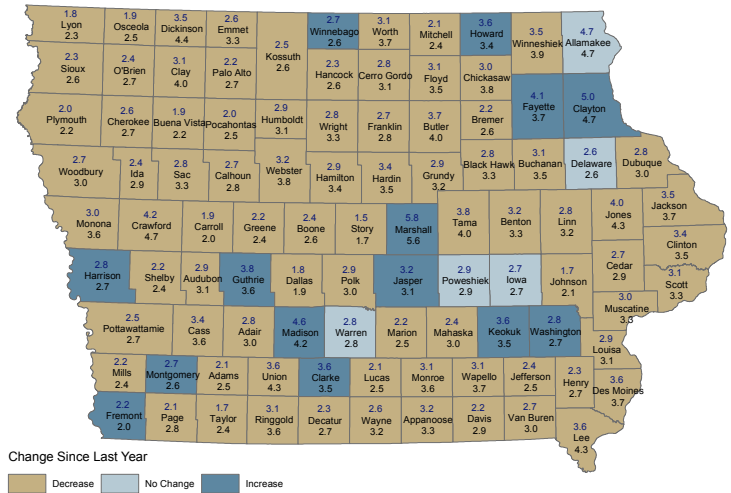
The Western Iowa Advantage Region's monthly unemployment rate decreased to 3.0 percent in March 2018 to 2.9 percent in March 2019, according to figures released from Iowa Workforce Development. Iowa's unemployment rate was 2.8 percent in March 2019 down from 3.0 percent in March 2018. The U.S. unemployment rate was 4.0 percent in March 2019. Total employment in the region increased to 45,360 in March 2019 from 44,280 in March 2018.

Western Iowa Advantage tracks various economic indicators in Adair, Audubon, Carroll, Crawford, Guthrie, Greene and Sac Counties in Iowa, including employment trends.

County unemployment rates in the region for March 2019:

- Adair 2.8%
- Audubon 2.9%
- Carroll 1.9%
- Crawford 4.2%
- Greene 2.2%
- Guthrie 3.8%
- Ida 2.4%
- Sac 2.8%

Unemployment Rates for Iowa Counties in March
March 2019 (Rate Above) and March 2018 (Rate Below)



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