

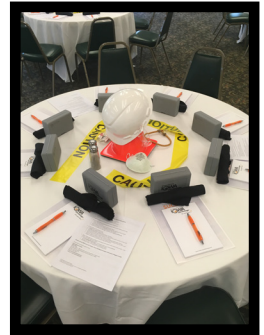
Western Iowa Advantage is a collaborative group of economic development officials in Adair, Audubon, Carroll, Crawford, Greene, Guthrie, Ida, and Sac Counties.

EMPLOYER EDUCATOR SUMMIT HELD

Hosted by Western Iowa Advantage, approximately 100 people attended the Employer Educator Summit in Panora held in October. The day's agenda was packed full of helpful resources, great examples, and inspiring speakers. One program highlighted was Panorama Community School District's Staff Development Day & the Career Fair they hosted this past year. Another program shared with attendees was Guthrie County Extension's STEM Festival. Other programs covered included iJAG, Iowa Ag Literacy Foundation, and Future Ready Iowa.

The Workforce Warrior Award was presented to Bill Howell, General Manager of POET in Coon Rapids, for his commitment to working with area schools to help develop a stronger future workforce, not only for POET, but throughout our region, state, and nationally.

Presentations from the 2018 Employer Educator Summit can be found at www.westerniowaadvantage.com/workforce/2018-employer-educator-summit.



Above: Attendees of the EE Summit are welcomed by WIAD Chair, Evan Blakley.

Right: Bill Howell, General Manager of POET in Coon Rapids, accepts the Workforce Warrior Award from Evan Blakley.



WIAD Partners Tour VT Industries



On August 13, 2018 WIAD Partners toured VT Industries in Holstein before their monthly business meeting. VT Industries Inc. manufactures quality commercial wood doors, laminate countertops, vanity surfaces and other crafts. VT Industries employs 700 people at their Holstein plant and 1,900 employees company wide. The Holstein plant produces 16,500 doors per week.

Left: Mary Tyler, VT's HR Business Partner guided the plant tour. Mary Tyler (lower right), clockwise; Shannon Landauer, Carroll Area Development Corp, Rick Hunsaker and Chris Whitaker, Region XII Council of Governments, Jim Gossett, Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative, Sam Wagner, Mid-American Energy, and Mark Reinig, CIRAS.
Photo Source: Ida County Economic Development

Newly Opened Waspy's in Audubon Hosts WIAD Partners



Western Iowa Advantage Partners held their September meeting at the newly opened Waspy's Truck Stop in Audubon. Partners met with Waspy's Chief Operating Officer, Beth Handlos and Chief Executive Officer, Brian Handlos, who provided an overview of the Waspy's projects in Audubon and in Templeton.

Waspy's Truck Stop in Audubon is located just south of Audubon on Highway 71 on 16-plus acres and consists of: convenience store, grab & go kitchen, grocery products, multiple fuel options, certified scale with five-axle capacity, semi parking, trucker lounge, car wash and RV station. The

Feed Mill Restaurant and Blue Grass Inn & Suites also are located in the complex. Waspy's in Audubon has 92 employees and ideally employment will grow to 130, once complete. The Waspy's complex in Audubon represents a \$20 Million investment and a \$7 million project investment in Templeton.

Manufacturing Day Events Held in Sac County



Students toured Cookies Food Products in Wall Lake, Iowa. Owner Speed Herrig is pictured giving the tour.



Students toured molly&you (formerly the Beer Bread Company) in Sac City, Iowa. Mercedes Barlow, National Sales Manager, is pictured talking to the kids.



King Construction visited with the group about their company and what they do. Pictured is Owner Dave King & Project Manager Marcus Stoltenberg.



Due to the large group size we were unable to tour Essentia Protein Solutions. Pictured is Troy Jepsen, Maintenance Supervisor/Manager with Essentia sharing slides about the company and photos of inside the plant. Plant Manager Jack Wolf is controlling the slideshow.

Manufacturing Day Tours Throughout the Region



AAI in Jefferson spoke to students about their business and took students on a tour of their facility.

Photo Credit: Greene County Development Corporation



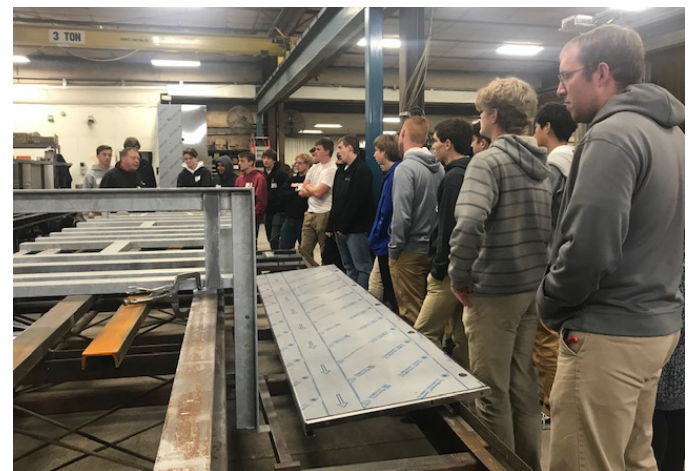
B&D Manufacturing took local students on tours of their facility in Scranton.

Photo Credit: Greene County Development Corporation



Students were able to tour Toyne, Inc. in Breda to learn more about the company and what they do.

Photo Credit: Carroll Area Development Corporation



2018 Region XII Educational Workshop

Tips to Turn Up Top Talent - Employment Issues

Date: December 12, 2018

Time: 5:30 p.m.

In this presentation, Maggie Hanson, Davis Brown Law, will review what she and other lawyers see as the stumbling blocks encountered by employers in hiring/firing and related topics. As an employment law attorney, she has heard all the horror stories related to new employees...embellishing the “facts” on resumes, to hiring managers asking all the wrong questions. She will also briefly touch on sexual harassment and the #metoo era, as well as drug testing.

Presenter Maggie Hanson

Maggie is a rising leader and employment attorney with a focus on litigation and insurance defense. She advises and defends employers, managers, and HR professionals in court, mediation, arbitration, and administrative forums. Maggie defends a wide variety of employer clients including rental property management companies, insurance companies, not-for-profit organizations, and manufacturers in disputes related to labor and unions, discrimination/harassment, civil rights claims, FMLA, wrongful termination, breach of contract/non-compete agreements, and unemployment claims.



Agenda:

- 5:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. – Dinner
- 6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. – Presentation
- 7:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. – Question and Answer

Registration:

You can register by clicking [HERE](#) or by contacting Chris Whitaker at 712-775-7811.

This workshop will be held in Region XII COG's training room at 1009 East Anthony Street, Carroll. Fee is \$15 per person and seating is limited. We look forward to seeing you there!

Iowa's Unemployment Rate Remains at 2.5% in September

The Western Iowa Advantage Region's monthly unemployment rate decreased to 1.9 percent in September 2018 from 2.8 percent in May 2018, according to figures released from Iowa Workforce Development. Iowa's unemployment rate was 2.5 percent in September 2018 from 3.0 percent in September 2017. The U.S. unemployment rate was 3.7 percent in September 2017. Total employment in the region increased to 45,440 in September 2018 from 38,000 in September 2017.

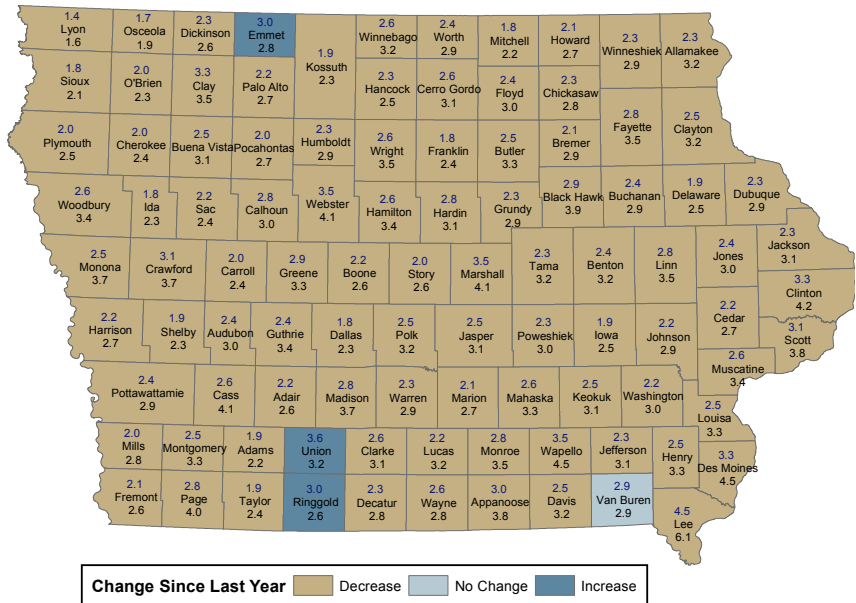
Western Iowa Advantage tracks various economic indicators in Adair, Audubon, Carroll, Crawford, Guthrie, Greene and Sac Counties in Iowa, including employment trends.

County unemployment rates in the region for September 2018:

Adair	1.9%
Audubon	2.0%
Carroll	1.7%
Crawford	2.5%
Greene	1.7%
Guthrie	1.8%
Ida	1.5%
Sac	1.7%

Unemployment Rates for Iowa Counties in June

June 2018 (Rate Above) and June 2017 (Rate Below)



WIAD PARTNERS:

Rick Hunsaker, Executive Director, Region XII Council of Governments/Region XII Development Corp.
rhunsaker@region12cog.org ■ (712) 775-7800 ■ www.region12cog.org

Brandy Ripley, Executive Director, Sac Economic & Tourism Development
briley@saccountyiowa.com ■ (712) 664-2940 ■ www.saccountyiowa.com

Shannon Landauer, CEcD, Executive Director, Carroll Area Development Corporation
s.landauer@carrolliowa.com ■ (712) 792-4383 ■ www.carrollareadev.com

Sarah Gomez, Executive Director, Midwest Partnership Corporation
sgomez@midwestpartnership.com ■ (515) 523-1262 ■ www.midwestpartnership.com

Evan Blakley, Executive Director, Chamber & Development Council of Crawford County
eblakley@cdcia.org ■ (712) 263-4789 ■ www.cdcia.org

Ken Paxton, Executive Director, Greene County Development Corporation
ken@greencountyiowa.com ■ (515) 386-8255 ■ www.greencountyiowa.org

Rita Frahm, Executive Director, Ida County Economic Development
rmfracm@gmail.com ■ (712) 364-3181 ■ www.idacounty.org

Chris Whitaker, Local Assistance Director, Region XII Council of Governments/Region XII Development Corp.
cwhitaker@region12cog.org ■ (712) 775-7811 ■ www.region12cog.org