



MEDIA RELEASE: March 24, 2008

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ANNOUNCING THE FIRST EVER WESTERN IOWA ADVANTAGE VIDEO CONTEST

Economic Development Marketing Group Rewarding Creative Videos That Highlight the Best Attributes of Western Iowa

Western Iowa Advantage (WIAD) is excited to announce an innovative new way to promote the region where we know business, careers, family, and fun all flourish. WIAD is interested in the perspective of our everyday citizens, and is looking for people to shoot short videos showcasing their favorite things about western Iowa. Millions of people watch videos on YouTube each day, and WIAD thinks that gives us the opportunity to highlight the awesome attributes available here in the best corner of Iowa. Specifically, the videos must be geared to life in the following counties: Adair, Audubon, Carroll, Crawford, Greene, Guthrie, Ida, and/or Sac.

Any topic is fair game as long as it promotes the area: why you love living here, why should other people want to live here, or how you spend your weekends. What is it that sets this region of the world apart? Is it the high quality of life, the strong sense of community, the strong education system, or the copious amounts of corn (literal or figurative)? Whatever it is, we want you to show it as creatively and in as entertaining a fashion as you can. Be artsy, contemplative, or metaphorical – it's up to you!

All of this work is not without reward. Videos will be judged on how well they portray the positive attributes of the area (40%), the overall appeal of the video (30%), and creativity/originality (30%). The most important thing is to show what makes Western Iowa great. Nobody wants to watch a boring video, so have fun with it. Spoof your favorite commercial - do a tour of your favorite places - take some action shots of people at local events. Anything goes!

There are 3 separate age groups: high school (13-18), college (18-22), and adult (18+). There will be 1 Grand Prize Winner for the best video, 1 First Prize Winner from each age group and 3 Runner-Up Winners chosen from the best remaining videos. Winning videos will also be presented on the Western Iowa Advantage websites and in promotional events for the community (the accolades and exposure are perhaps the best prize of all, no?). Prizes are as follows:

GRAND PRIZE WINNER:
- 42-inch HD-TV

3 FIRST PRIZE WINNERS:

- \$500

3 RUNNER-UP WINNERS:

- \$250

To enter, participants will need to upload their Videos to YouTube and email their YouTube username and the web address of the Video to videocontest@region12cog.org. Questions about the contest can be directed there as well. Videos can be uploaded to YouTube immediately, and registration will begin April 1st. Make sure to have “Western Iowa Advantage Video Contest” as part of the description for your video on YouTube.

The contest is void where prohibited. See Official Rules at www.westerniowaadvantage.com for details. Entries must be received by May 15th, 2008. There is no residency requirement, so let your extended families, cousins, and old college roommates know they can enter as well. As long as it showcases the great life one enjoys in western Iowa, we want to see it.

Western Iowa Advantage is a collaborative effort of economic development officials in Adair, Audubon, Carroll, Crawford, Greene, Guthrie, Ida and Sac Counties. The mission of this consortium is to work cooperatively in an effort to effectively market the many viable economic assets of this region. This effort will help build a stronger local, regional and statewide economy. Western Iowa Advantage is also committed to facilitating ongoing improvements in quality of life-oriented amenities, increased tourism and other areas that will enrich the livability of the region.

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If you'd like more information about the contest, or to schedule an interview with a Western Iowa Advantage representative in your area, please call 712-792-9914 or e-mail at cschreck@region12cog.org.