

western  
**IOWA**  
advantage™

2019-20 ANNUAL REPORT

*"The best way to predict the future is to create it."*

*-Abraham Lincoln*



*It's easier here!*



**Western Iowa Advantage** is a collaborative effort of economic development officials in Audubon, Calhoun, Carroll, Crawford, Greene, Ida and Sac Counties. Our objectives are to **embrace, leverage, and promote** the strengths of the region.

## THE FOUNDATION WE'VE BUILT STILL STANDS

### REMEMBERING WHAT'S IMPORTANT IN A CHALLENGING YEAR



Let's face it—it's easy to feel overwhelmed by the first events of this new decade. As developers, we're drawn to words like "growth", "progress" and "investment". But lately we've been saying things like "downturn", "surviving" and "recovery". While our plans for the year may have been temporarily rearranged, we have each experienced surprising effects in our communities; some of them surprisingly positive. We've seen the networks we've built become vital as we learn from each other. We've watched our communities pull together to help those suffering most. We've even seen people using the slowdown as an opportunity to start or improve a business, and we've talked to old acquaintances looking for somewhere new to locate... somewhere calm and that feels like home... a place like Western Iowa. We certainly have challenges to overcome, but the quality of life and the connections we've built together will certainly endure. We will all work together to ensure it.



## FORGING THE FUTURE

### AN INNOVATIVE MODEL FOR HIGH TECH EDUCATION PREMIERES IN JEFFERSON

Western Iowa has everything a cutting edge technology consulting firm needs—location amenities, connectivity, and great people. That's why Jefferson was chosen by Pillar Technology, part of Accenture Industry X.0, as the home for their new addition to their worldwide network of innovative business solutions studios called Forges.

First, they readily found a building with expansive square footage right on the town square. In addition, there were capital sources to complete the office build-out and enterprise business class fiber Internet connectivity with built-in Internet backbone dual-redundancy.

However, Pillar Technology is not just in Jefferson to take advantage of what the community has to offer, but to improve it by shaping it as a springboard to boost the state's tech pool. Pillar Technologies and Corteva Agriscience teamed with the Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) and Iowa Central Community College to foster Computer Languages programs to train the Western Iowa workforce for the digital economy.

As a matter of fact, the intense training begins in high school, moves through the community college courses, and ends with four months of free training at the Jefferson Forge Academy. Students then have the opportunity to apply for a paid six-month apprenticeship at the Jefferson Forge, or to anywhere else they desire because the education they receive has no strings attached.



## EXPANSIONS & NEW PROJECTS

Assisting in the sustainability and growth of existing industry in Western Iowa is the number one priority for WIAD. Workforce, education, demographic and benefit analysis are just a few of the areas local companies have come to depend on, all provided by WIAD and our partners. When time comes for expansion, WIAD assists in site selection, regulatory issues and in removing barriers to growth. These are a few of the area's recent projects:



### ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

### AG-TECH ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

### AGRICULTURE & BIO SERVICES

### DATA INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

### VALUE ADDED FOOD PROCESSING

- The Forge (Accenture Company) — Jefferson · \$1.7 million · 5 jobs
- New High School & Career Academy — Jefferson
- Rowland Apartments — Jefferson \$400k · 12 units w/16 add.'l planned
- Bauer Built Expansion — Paton \$3 million · 75 jobs
- Home State Bank — Jefferson \$1.2 million · 6 jobs
- The Forge/Accenture — Jefferson \$3.5 million, 30 new jobs, 65 training students
- Scranton Mfg. Paint Booth Addition — Scranton \$500,000, 3 new jobs
- Landus office expansion — Jefferson \$40,000, 3 jobs
- The Fieldhouse (wrestling clinic & retail) — Jefferson \$500,000 · 6 jobs
- Heartland Bank new location — Jefferson Square- \$900,000 · 15 jobs
- 30 Yard Line Restaurant — Grand Junction \$300,000, 12 jobs
- Coffee Corner — Jefferson \$60,000, 5 jobs
- Remington Seeds (Schaller, Iowa) Warehouse \$1.7 million †
- Carroll Brewing — Carroll 1.8 million · 14 jobs
- Journey Senior Services — Carroll 3.5 million · 38 jobs
- Wendl's Weapons — Carroll
- La Terazza — Carroll
- Kids Corner Boutique — Carroll
- Nature Ammil — Carroll
- QSA Boutique — Carroll
- Brown Bag and Company — Carroll
- The Trading Post — Carroll
- Resurrection Rides — Manning
- Accura — Manning \$1 million · 75 jobs
- Manning Dental — Manning \$400,000 · 4 jobs
- Ramsey's Market — Manning \$300,000 · 14 jobs
- Dollar General — Exira \$500,000 · 20 jobs
- Iowa Select Farms Sow Farm — near Rockwell City \$15.5 million · 18 jobs †\*
- Iowa Select Farms Warehouse & Conference Center — Rockwell City \$2.25 million · 3 jobs †\*
- St. Croix Hospice — Denison 7 jobs
- Bella Sera (Italian restaurant) — Denison 12 jobs
- ID Apparel — Denison \$150k · 6 jobs

† denotes completed within past 12 months  
\* denotes new business



# OTHER ONGOING INITIATIVES

Western Iowa Advantage uses an integrated marketing approach to reach decision makers. Whether company executives conduct the search or hire a site selection consultant, WIAD demonstrates how easy it is to access information about labor force, tax climate and much more. Some of our marketing and outreach efforts include:

## WESTERN IOWA INDUSTRY VISITS

Numerous times a year, the WIAD partners take time to tour industrial facilities across the region. The group works to make connections between local companies so more money stays here in Iowa and we remain informed of the current challenges facing our companies in western Iowa.



## WEBSITE IMPROVEMENTS

WIAD partners continue to work with Golden Shovel Agency, experts in economic development marketing, to bring new and improved features to our ever-expanding website. Their partnership is allowing increased editability, more frequent updates and a range of tools to stay relevant in today's constantly shifting technology landscape.



## CONTENT & NEWS UPDATE CREATION

WIAD continues to work with Golden Shovel Agency and their specialized media creation service called Gatekeeper to build an extensive repertoire of news and updates which will be shared on the WIAD website and throughout a selection of social media networks. The goal is to highlight successes and opportunities in the region, as well as to leverage the content to attract more positive media attention. Stay tuned as this new initiative grows into a valuable resource for marketing all the great things happening in the region!



## Our boundaries have changed!

We recently welcomed Calhoun County to our partnership in July 2019! Jill Heisterkamp is a passionate advocate for rural development and is already bringing great input and support to our region. Sara Slater of Audubon County has been attending meetings since April to carry on the long partnership with her communities as well. Sara brings big ideas to represent our small communities! In 2019, we also thanked Midwest Partnership for their years of service as they joined the Greater Des Moines Partnership.

## PARTNERS

Audubon County Economic Development Corp.

Calhoun County Economic Development Corp.

Carroll Area Development Corp.

Chamber & Development Council of Crawford County

Greene County Development Corp.

Ida County Economic Development Corp.

Sac Economic & Tourism Development

Region XII Development Corp.

MidAmerican Energy

Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative

Midland Power Cooperative