

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

Save the Date

Western Iowa Advantage Annual Dinner

April 19, 2023

6:00 p.m. Social, 7:00 p.m. Dinner

Odebolt Community Center, 116 E 2nd Street, Odebolt, Iowa

Guest Speaker: Danna Larson, Rural Revival

Sponsored by: **western
IOWA
advantage**

Western Iowa Advantage Members Tour Audubon Second Story Apartments



The City of Audubon and the Iowa Development Group, LLC received a \$500,000 2nd Story Housing grant through the Iowa Economic Development Authority to complete the project at 302 Broadway Street, Audubon. The building was constructed in the late 1870s and had been sitting vacant for over 50 years until this project created two new one-bedroom units on the building's second story.



IEDA Awards Puck Custom Enterprises Funds to Make Investment in Manning Facility

Founded in 1979, Puck Custom Enterprises designs, develops and manufactures complete systems of equipment to pump liquid through lay-flat hose, offering products under the brands BullDog Hose, US Coupling and Light Speed. The company plans to invest in its Manning facility with new manufacturing equipment. The project represents a \$3 million capital investment and was awarded tax benefits and a \$150,000 forgivable loan through the High Quality Jobs program. It is expected to create 40 jobs incented at a qualifying wage of \$19.75 per hour.



WHO IS WIAD AND WHAT DO WE DO?

In Western Iowa, the advantage is clear: we thrive on collaboration and networking. Western Iowa Advantage (WIAD) is the pooled resources, infrastructure, innovation, and intellect of Audubon, Calhoun, Carroll, Crawford, Greene, Ida, and Sac Counties.

WIAD was founded as a cooperative marketing venture to promote economic prosperity and attract new business and industry to our region. Today, WIAD has expanded this mission, evolving as a collaborative networking opportunity for our region's economic development partners to address workforce, housing, quality of life, and community development initiatives while promoting regional growth and sustainability. WIAD assists with location searches, permits, financial/tax incentive programs, utilities, workforce demographics, job-training programs, and more.

Every WIAD action is initiated to help our partners achieve their goals. Through WIAD, our partners can access Community Venture Network (CVN). CVN events connect growing businesses exploring expansion locations with non-metro communities like Western Iowa. Many companies want to explore locations with lower costs, a strong labor force, robust financial incentives, and substantial civic support. Western Iowa provides all of this and more, and CVN helps connects companies to us.

In light of our continued focus on site selection and business attraction, WIAD maintains and updates LOIS, a national online location analysis tool designed for communities and economic development organizations to promote available site and building inventory. The tool's integrated GIS component produces market, demographics, workforce, infrastructure, housing, business, and industry information, making it simple for site selectors to explore our community.

Futhermore, key WIAD functions were identified by our partners for our 2023 planning meeting:

- Tradeshows; Community Venture Network (CVN)
- Marketing: Website, featured business and industry articles, and housing developer attraction
- Annual report and meeting
- Quarterly newsletter
- Annual Summit/ Workshop for education and professional development
- Synchronist type existing business and industry visits
- LocationOne site inventory (LOIS)
- Promotion of regional educational workshops facilitated by Region XII COG and other partners

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- Promotion of business development webinars and podcasts discussing
- Entrepreneurship
- Website Building
- Optimizing Social Media
- Business Planning
- Business Finance
- Visibility and Expansion
- Diversity
- Succession Planning

The regional power of WIAD is revealed in our partners' responses when asked why they are a part of our organization:

"We are able to participate in things like CVN that we probably couldn't afford on our own. The same for when we were able to go to larger conferences and trade shows. We are stronger together and learn from each other. Great support system."

"Networking opportunities and promotion of economic development projects."

"We want to support the county organizations in our service territory. There is benefit to the cooperation among the organizations, and we encourage this."

"To be part of a regional group that offers assistance and support to our executive director."

"The sharing of knowledge and resources with other developers and our communities."

"Help with grants, information about available funding and programs."

"We value the networking and collaborative opportunities within our region."

"Primarily for the opportunity to learn from my peers who are dedicated to seeing the region grow and prosper. We learn so much from everyone."

"WIAD helps further our mission."

By its nature, WIAD provides supplemental resources to each county's economic development office. At WIAD's 2023 Planning Meeting, our partners shared what activities they found the most successful and beneficial:

- Business Spotlight articles, CVN, summits, Synchronist
- The conversations WIAD partners have with the local businesses during tours: providing each partner with a "story behind the numbers"
- Educational and/or training workshops that bring our community leaders together
- Summits

Western Iowa Advantage: It's Easier Here!

WIAD is ready to take on 2023, keeping an eye on education, support, and business tours while tackling workforce attraction and housing. We are committed to facilitating ongoing improvements in our region's economy, quality of life, and tourism. Contact us today at 712.792.9914 or info@westerniowaadvantage.com and see how easy it can be!

