



The U of I Extension would like to welcome Steven Groner as the new Extension Educator for Community and Economic Development serving Edwards, Lawrence, Richland, Wabash, and Wayne Counties. This position also conducts a partnership program with the Lawrence County Industrial Development Council. Steve will be dedicated to matching resources and programs, offered by the University of Illinois, to local projects.

Steve started his career as a product designer and now applies those skills to solve complex business problems. After earning a MBA degree from Benedictine University in Lisle, Illinois he then focused on marketing assignments with several well established downstate manufacturers. As his experience grew, the companies placed him into education, planning and leadership roles.

Most recently, he served as director of the Institute for Entrepreneurial Success at Kaskaskia College. Programs included; a regional small business development center, start-up incubator space, youth initiatives, foreign trade education and entrepreneur clubs. They then expanded services to help start-up companies grow after launch- adding tools such as profit analysis, long-range planning and roundtable peer discussion groups. This community service closed in 2016, along with similar centers around the state, as colleges dealt with significant reductions in funding.

Steve believes in lifelong learning and appreciates the depth of resources that the University of Illinois Extension Network provides. Each day he meets people dedicated to our region and looks forward to tackling economic development issues together.

For resource information or programs that could help benefit your business or organization please contact Steve at [stevenrg@illinois.edu](mailto:stevenrg@illinois.edu) or call 618-943-5219.