

Reinforcing a Strong Pipeline for Iowa's Future

Coming out of the "Great Recession" in 2012, the Iowa Association of Business and Industry (ABI) and the 15 Community Colleges of Iowa collaborated in an unprecedented way that is currently reaping benefits for all Iowans given just a 2.9% unemployment rate and has created a solid foundation for new efforts to ensure Iowa's workforce is ready for the future. Together, these organizations created the Elevate Advanced Manufacturing campaign to promote career pathways in advanced manufacturing throughout the state. ABI continues to lead this effort with the help of the community colleges. All 15 colleges contribute \$10,000 annually (\$150,000 total from the Iowa Skilled Worker and Job Creation Fund) which is matched by ABI business members to sustain continued outreach to students through curriculum distribution, regional specific programming and other creative approaches to teaching students about careers in Iowa. As a result of these efforts, enrollments and training in key manufacturing career pathways have increased an average of 14% and helped fill strategic positions with Iowa's manufacturers.

Recently, the ABI Board reconfirmed its successful partnership with the Iowa Community Colleges when it voted in favor of the Work-based Opportunity Regional Referral Consortium (WORRC) at the January 10th board meeting. Building on the system that the partnership has created with the Elevate Advanced Manufacturing campaign, together the organizations will work together to introduce work-based learning opportunities to students and future employees to careers in high demand areas, reduce student debt, accelerate learning, and reinforce the pipeline of talent for Iowa's employers. This initiative strives to work in collaboration with Governor Reynold's "Future Read Iowa" recommendations and support work based learning opportunities. A council of ABI members and College representatives will be created to ensure collaboration and coordination as well as the development of additional initiatives to support Iowa's future.

For more information or to get involved in Elevate Iowa, email Alex Monaghan at amonaghan@measuredintentions.com or Michele Farrell at mfarrell@measuredintentions.com