

Iowa Workforce NEWS

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MyIowaUI Enhanced for Employer Convenience Related to Unemployment Insurance Taxes

Effective January 1, 2013 Iowa Workforce Development added additional feature to MyIowaUI, Iowa's on-line unemployment insurance tax system. Businesses and accounting firms will register online and immediately receive their account number, eliminating the processing time and paper forms.

"Providing enhanced online services is a critical step in providing greater efficiency for Iowa businesses," stated Iowa Workforce Development director Teresa Wahlert.

Over 32,000 businesses have already taken advantage of this online system by electronically filing their quarterly unemployment tax reports, making unemployment tax payments on-line and monitoring their account. MyIowaUI is designed to be a portal for businesses, accountants and third party administrators to manage unemployment insurance account(s) online.

To initiate the process of registering for an unemployment insurance tax account, the business owner or agent will sign in at www.myiowaui.org. It is recommended they have the following information readily available:

- the date they began employing workers in Iowa
- the first date wages were paid in Iowa

- their Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN)
- ownership information
- all wage information to date

It is our hope that once employers utilize MyIowaUI to register on-line, they will also take the time to explore and use other features offered by MyIowaUI. We would like to thank all of our businesses, accountants and third party administrators that have offered their appreciation for the convenience of on-line registration, as well as suggesting their ideas for enhanced features. MyIowaUI will continue to be a work in progress as long as we continue to receive feedback. Employers can access www.myiowaui.org to begin the registration process.

NCRC Update

Total certificates - 17,204

Platinum-139

Gold-4,144

Silver-9,562

Bronze-3,359

Iowa Unemployment Rate Drops to 4.9 Percent

Iowa's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate dropped to 4.9 percent in November from 5.1 percent in October. The statewide unemployment rate was 5.6 percent one year ago. The U.S. unemployment rate also continued to trend downward in November, falling to 7.7 percent from 7.9 percent in October.

"Iowa's unemployment rate reached a milestone in November," said Teresa Wahlert, director of Iowa Workforce Development. "November marked the first time since December 2008 that the state's jobless rate was lower than 5.0 percent."

The number of unemployed Iowans dropped to 80,400 in November from 83,600 in October, and 92,600 in November 2011. The total number of working Iowans continued to rebound in November, increasing to 1,560,500 in November from 1,555,900 in October. The level of unemployed stood at 1,569,900 one year ago.

Message from the Director

As 2012 comes to a close, it's important to recognize the great accomplishments of this department, as the work completed at Iowa Workforce Development affects every business and nearly every Iowan on a daily basis.

In 2012, Labor Commissioner Mauro successfully navigated a robust series of public input sessions regarding proposed changes in elevator requirements. While the hearings were often filled with passionate input, the final result will lead to a plan for promoting the overall safety of elevator operations without over burdening the operators. Our Unemployment Division has successfully managed the decline in unemployment claims throughout the year while ensuring the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund was successfully administered allowing employers to receive a decrease in tax rates for the 2013 calendar year.

Additionally the division went through a series of realignments that ultimately consolidated nearly all claim operations into the Unemployment Insurance Service Center. The realignment allowed the department to provide expanded hours of operations and a toll-free number that could be utilized by all Iowans for questions regarding their claims. The Labor Market Information Division launched several new products in 2012, including the highly regarded and utilized "Workforce and Economic Development Status Report" and



Teresa Wahlert
IWD Director

the "Middle-Skill Jobs Report". Iowa is not always viewed as the most likely state to land national events, however Workers' Compensation Commissioner Godfrey successfully lobbied the International Association of Industrial Accident Boards and Commissions (IAIABC) to bring the 2013 Spring Forum to the state. The Workforce Services Division has continued to enhance the usage of our Virtual Technology system by placing the technology in 96 percent of the Iowa school districts ensuring that our future labor force has access to the National Career Readiness certification and workforce information. IWD's Virtual Access Technology was recognized as a leader in 2012 garnering two prestigious awards: the NetApp International Technology Award and CIO Magazine's Top 100. Our dedicated IT deserves this recognition. Finally, the Governor's Skilled Iowa Initiative was successfully launched in June. To date, over 2,600 Iowa business locations are participating in the program, nearly 18,000 Iowans have received the National Career Readiness Certification.

As we move into 2013, we will continue to bring innovative options to Iowans and streamline our processes. As we have additional information on budgets and legislative activities, I will provide you with updates.

IWD Staff Graduate from the Certified Public Manager Program

On Wednesday December 5, 2012 James Morris, (Labor Market Information), Paula Fastenau (Regional Manager), and Jodi Douglas (UI Tax) and three other classmates from other state agencies, made an excellent presentation on the digital literacy gap in Southwest Iowa as their final requirement to graduation from the Certified Public Management curriculum. Additionally, James Borwey (Labor Services) Tom VanderLinden (Iowa OSHA) and additional classmates presented their final project on the economic impact of year round schools. All five have dedicated two days per month for the past 18 months attending classes through Drake University raising their public management skills.

A number of additional IWD employees are past CPM graduates:

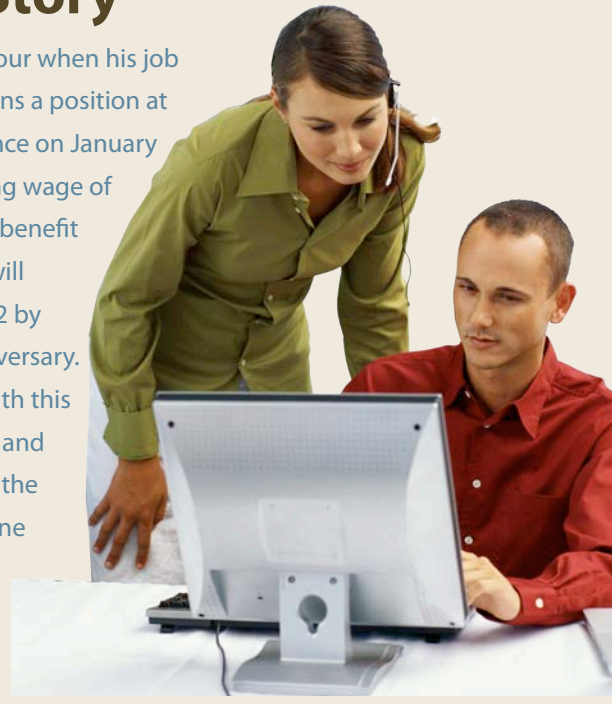
Lori Adams - 2007
Barbara Bobb - 2008
Donna Burkett - 2007
Christian Foshier - 2010
Anne Jackson - 2008
Kerry Koonce - 2004
Mike Msuya - 2009
Joe Mullen - 2010
Ryan Murphy - 2010
Jon Nelson - 2004
Paula Nissen - 2008
Carie O'Brien - 2012
Deb Ostrem - 2009
Joan Oyibo - 2009
Brent Paulson - 2010
Dennis Schwartz - 2010
Venus Vendoures Walsh - 2010
Heidi Wicks - 2009

IowaWORKS Southeast Iowa Success Story

“John” came into the center the day after he found out he was going to be laid off from Siemens. He has been affected by several regional layoffs in the past and thought his job at Siemens would finally be the job he would retire from. Staff discussed his options, including the tuition reimbursement offered by the company but John’s main goal was to get back to work. I referred him to American Ordnance, helped him with the website and reached

out to the HR Director about hiring John. I also gave John the regional workshop calendar and recommended computer classes, résumé, interviewing and informed him he would need to take NCRC to obtain a position at A/O. John came in for classes after working all night on many occasions. He worked with several IowaWORKS team members throughout this process and Maria enrolled him in WIA. He worked at Siemens for 4 years and was earning

almost \$20 per hour when his job ended. John begins a position at American Ordnance on January 2nd with a starting wage of \$14.59 plus a full benefit package, which will increase to \$16.42 by his one year anniversary. John is thrilled with this new opportunity and appreciates all of the help from everyone at the Center!



IowaWORKS Southern Hills holds Customer Service Workshop

On November 21st IowaWORKS, Southern Hills, partnered with Decatur County Development Corporation and Central Decatur Schools to teach approximately 17 junior and senior students customer service skills. The focus for this class was to prepare teenagers to enter the workforce with the necessary soft skills employers require. Local employers repetitively tell IowaWORKS that the workforce lacks dependability and overall work ethic. Entering into the school system to teach youth the soft skills before they enter the workforce seemed like a logical step in improving the quality of workers for our employers. The connection with the local school was facilitated by Angie Jensen – Decatur County Development Association.

In this session, students were put in an assembly line and had to

produce a product. Students were then able to develop a plan and assign tasks to produce more than their competitors. They learned how not coming to work effects the team and the profitability of the company. They also learned how to deal with a difficult supervisor/coworker, how first impressions can determine their success at job hunting and how poor customer service effects them as an employee.

The class covered the following topics:

- Defining our customers (Who is my customer? Is it only the person buying our products or do I have other customers?)
- First Impressions (When I begin a new job how am I being viewed? How do customers view me? Does my physical appearance really make a difference at my job?)

- Dependability (How many days is it acceptable to miss work excused and unexcused? How does missing work affect the employee rather and the business? What are my options if I have to miss work?)
- Gossiping (Does gossiping affect my job performance? Who am I hurting if I only tell my friends rumors?)
- Dealing with Difficult Coworkers (Some coworkers are impossible to deal with how do I remain calm! Why does my coworker do that just to tick me off?)
- Effects of Customer Service (How does good and bad customer service effect the employee and the employer?)
- Trust (How do I build trust with a customer and resolve customer complaints?)



Iowa ACESweb staff proven track record of high-quality support, technical ability, dedication to the CES program

In 1986, an effort to ensure comparability of methodology and operations across a diverse set of state agencies led BLS to contract with the Iowa State Employment Security Agency (SESA) to develop and support IBM mainframe software that multiple states could use for the production of Current Employment Statistics (CES) employment, hours and earnings estimates. This shared software approach, called Automated Current Employment Statistics (ACES), was written to be compatible with most state hardware and software systems, and was an immediate success. By the early 1990's the ACES system had been exported to 28 state agencies.

Over time the system evolved to keep pace with rapid technological advances. The early 1990's saw a rapid expansion of personal computers across

Federal and State governments. The Iowa developers successfully converted the IBM mainframe version of ACES to a PC-based version, cutting operational costs and expanding the use of ACES to more states. In the late 1990s, BLS and the IWD collaborated to develop a network-based version of the mainframe software to take advantage of emerging networking (local area network/wide area network) technology. In early 2009, the IWD developed a web-based version of ACES (called ACESweb), further reducing costs and improving program efficiency. The new web-based system incorporated substantial graphical and functional enhancements that improved the state's ability to produce and review CES estimates. It also included features that substantially improved upon the transparency and consistency of

the estimates. The Iowa staff was highly deserving of accolades for these accomplishments, and in 2010 was awarded the BLS Eminent Achievement Award for State Employees, with the citation "For the design, development, testing, and deployment of the CES ACESweb State & Area processing system. This new system incorporates substantial graphical and functional improvements to enhance the States abilities to produce, review, and document estimates."

In 2011, BLS transferred the production of State and MSA estimates from the State Workforce Agencies of the 50 states and the District of Columbia to BLS in order to reduce program costs and to further improve standardization of the estimating procedures. Because this was an initiative in the President's Budget, BLS was required to meet

strict deadlines. The hard work and dedication of the ACESweb developers was critical to the initial success of that initiative. In particular, the development of a module to perform annual benchmark production was required within a very limited time frame to meet the objectives of the initiative; and the ACES web team delivered on time. The Iowa staff members remain integral to the continued success of the CES program. The support that they now provide on a monthly basis enables the CES program to continue to develop high-quality CES estimates on schedule within the federal/state cooperative environment.

In summary, the Iowa ACESweb staff has a proven track record of high-quality support, technical ability, and dedication to the CES program.

Unemployment Insurance

UI Tax is offering businesses, accounting firms and third party administrators the option to register for a UI tax account number online, which will allow the employer to immediately receive their account number, in most cases, immediately. All field audit and customer service staff will be receiving training for the Register Employer function and all future enhancements to MIUI. Thank you to all the testers, Amanda Cross, Dana Barrer, Tim Hedrick, Kathy Wampler, and Kim Cross, for working hard on putting written procedures and training together. As well, the Tax Bureau is excited to announce that we will be releasing significantly more functions for MyIowaUI (MIUI) for staff as well as employers and agents. By the end of the year staff will have all core functions (except field audits) in order to complete their daily tasks. These core functions include: Transfer of Experience, Activate Account, Wage Adjustment, 940

Certifications, Recalculate Rates, Reverse Payments, Reverse Quarterly Report, and Manage Suspense accounts. This will put us in a position to focus on digging into all backlog of work which accumulated due to our system limitations without these functions.

We certainly would not be in this position without the focused dedication to those that have helped with the development and testing of MyIowaUI over the year. Our current testing team includes: Ryan Anderson, Brandie Cummings, Tim Hedrick, Kathy Wampler, Kim Cross, Dana Barrer, Amanda Cross, Randy Hendrickson, Melissa Vansice, Keith Hawkins, Carol Tanner, Genea Sporer, Ivy Fuller, Mark Brady as well as the IT Development Staff. There are many staff that have been involved with the development and testing of MIUI in one capacity or another, and without the support and

dedication of all Tax staff we certainly would not be reaching this successful goal. Thank You and Congratulations!

On December 6th the UISC mailed out marketing material to 46 pre-selected businesses with the intent of adding some of them as one of the newest member of the E-Response Group. E-Response employers will be the future of Unemployment Insurance and simply put, give the employer the ability to submit their claimant notices back to us in an electronic format saving the UI program time, postage, and paper. This process will significantly help IWD with timeliness and provide better customer service especially during peak workload. We have started slow in hopes of working out any bugs that may arise and continually add employers every month during 2013.

IowaWORKS Update

Fort Dodge Holds Holiday Food Drive

In preparation for the Holiday Season, the Fort Dodge office staff held a Food Drive for the local Food Pantry in December. Staff brought canned, boxed and paper items, and also donated money. The event was topped off by a visit from some of Santa's Helpers in the morning meeting who handed out some prizes, and was followed by an office potluck at noon. Happy Holidays!



Council Bluffs holds "Salute to Veterans" Open House

An "ESGR Boot Camp for Employers" was held in Council Bluffs on Wednesday, November 7, 2012. Topics included ESGR, Hiring Our Heroes, h2h jobs, Understanding Military Language in a Resume and USERRA.

Following that program, a "Salute to Veterans" open house was held with over 30 attending, including employers and veterans.

The IowaWORKS Loess Hills veterans representative and SW IA ECI coordinator, along with the ESGR partnered to bring these programs to Southwest Iowa.



Labor Services

The 41st Governors Safety and Health Conference

The 41st Governors Safety and Health conference was held November 1 & 2, 2012 at The Prairie Meadows Conference Center. The Safety Council Conference is dedicated to promoting and providing continuing education concerning Iowa workplace safety and health.

The over 340 attendees included occupational safety professionals, risk managers, consultants, business executives, supervisors and occupational health nurses who have an impact on workplace safety and health.

Providing scholarships to Iowa students in the safety and health career path is a benefit of the council. Since 1977 the Governor's Safety Conference has awarded over \$130,000 in scholarships to students in occupational safety at five Iowa colleges. At this year's conference scholarships totaling \$7,500 were awarded to three safety and health students

that attend Iowa Universities. The funds for the scholarships were generated through conference registrations and contributions from the American Society of Safety Engineers.

Dr. Steven Freeman, Ph.D., Iowa State University was the 2012 Gary Hawk Award recipient.

Dr. Freeman received the award for his devotion to the occupational safety arena and his commitment to educating future generations on occupational safety. The Gary Hawk Award is provided to recognize an individual who has dedicated their career and made a significant contribution to Iowa occupational safety and health.

The Occupational Safety and



Labor Commissioner Michael Mauro, Steve Flann OSH Advisory Council and Dr. Steven Freeman Gary Hawk Recipient

Health Council who hosts the safety conference is made up of twenty volunteers located throughout Iowa who are dedicated to Iowa workplace safety and health.

A special thank you to employees from the Iowa Division of Labor and Iowa Workforce

Development who work to make this conference a great success: Labor Commissioner Michael Mauro, Chair OSH Advisory Council Joe Mullen, Pam Conner, Katie Hommer, Dawn Chamberlain, Suzanne Hutton, Ylonda Shook, Anne Jackson, Tom Vander Linden and the OSH Advisory Council.

Elevator Code Update

A subcommittee of the Iowa Elevator Safety Board studied the American Society of Mechanical Engineers A17.3 code that requires older elevators be upgraded to a higher level of safety. Earlier this year, the Elevator Safety Board held five public meetings across

the state and sought public input on the A17.3 code.

New controllers necessary to implement the fire service requirements of A17.3 would have been a costly upgrade for many elevator owners. As a result of public comments, the board decided not to adopt the

fire service provisions of A17.3.

Better statistics concerning the other A17.3 requirements are needed before the board can determine the next step. Therefore, the board has requested that during the regular elevator inspection in 2013, every older elevator be surveyed to

determine what work would be required under A17.3. Owners will be given information about their own elevators, and totals will be available for statistical purposes. For more information, visit www.iowaworkforce.org/elevator.

Noteworthy Employee Acknowledgements and Accomplishments

We appreciate the feedback we get from our customers. Here are a few noteworthy comments we've received:

– Lisa Warren, with the Ottumwa Job Corps, sent a letter to Linda Rouse, Ottumwa, "Thank you for hosting CSD at the job fair on November 15th. There was an excellent turnout and we were able to make connections that

will benefit Ottumwa Job Corps in the future. We appreciate your hospitality and value our partnership." Sincerely, Lisa Warren, CSD, OJCC.

– Lynn Slykhuis, DCS, sent a note thanking Kristi Zeransky, Des Moines, and Dave Brown, Des Moines, for bringing an employment application and taking the time to sit with a gentlemen at the Ft. Des Moines

while he completed it. "I wanted to let you know how great your IWD staff are," Slykhuis said.

– Lori Adams thanks Todd Spencer, Creston, and Kelly Roach, Creston, for their assistance in making sure a live chat demonstration went well. "It worked perfectly during a recent demonstration with the Department of Labor," said Adams.

– Brent Camery, Des Moines, received a nice note from US Army veteran Paul Staver. "Thank

you Brent for giving me the advice, the help to revise my resume, the alternate sources of employment and a great boost of confidence. It was a pleasure to meet and work with you toward gainful employment. You are a professional who cares."

If you would like to send us your noteworthy comment, send it to: kathryn.hommer@iwd.iowa.gov or 515-281-5407.



Employee News

Retirements

Dan Anderson
Penny Dow
Joy Hol

New Hires

William Grell

Transfers/Recalls

Erin Irvine
Kevan Irvine
Janet Bannister
Michael Barr
Renaldo Ellis
Holly Robertson
Ruth Westergard
Sharon Bowers
Carla Dennis
Daniel Noonan
Nancie Petty
Carmela Alden
Patricia Henrich
Jacqueline Friemel
Eunice Meyer
Lyndsay Phillips

Anniversaries

5 Years

Kasandra Ellenwood
Tereasa Jefferson
Jana McCleary
Kimberly Arnold
Keely Hartschen

10 Years

Dennis Schwartz
Kristi Williamson

15 Years

Brent Paulson

20 Years
Mark Keith
Craig Norris

25 Years

Kimberly Becker
Becky Goodier

35+ Years

Gary Batten
Rita Kapsch
James Van Syoc

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For Deaf or Hard of Hearing, call Relay 711

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