



# Iowa Workforce NEWS

August 2013 • Issue 30

## Iowa's Jobless and Injury Benefits Increase

Maximum weekly benefits paid to jobless Iowans and to workers injured on the job increased July 1, 2013, announced Iowa Workforce Development.

The rise in benefits was triggered by an increase in wages covered by unemployment insurance. The average annual wage for insured Iowa workers increased to \$40,106.68 in 2012, up from \$38,949.32 the previous year.

The new benefit payment schedules apply to people who filed new unemployment insurance claims after July 1, 2013, and to workers who are injured on or after July 1, 2013.

Under Iowa law, the number of people covered by unemployment insurance and their gross wages are primary elements of a formula Iowa Workforce Development uses each year

to compute maximum and minimum benefit amounts paid to jobless workers. The new rates are listed in the chart below.

Iowa Workforce Development officials noted that about half of those eligible for unemployment insurance benefits have enough earnings to qualify for the maximum benefit.

Out of an estimated total labor force of 1,638,800, approximately 89 percent of workers were covered by the Iowa unemployment insurance program in 2012.

Beginning July 1, the workers' compensation maximum weekly benefit for temporary total disability, healing period, permanent total disability and death increased to \$1,543. For permanent partial disability, the weekly maximum is \$1,419.

## Iowa Unemployment Rate Drops to 4.6 Percent

Iowa's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate remained at 4.6 percent in June, but was down from the June 2012 rate of 5.3 percent. Meanwhile, the U.S. unemployment rate for June was unchanged at 7.6 percent.

"The Iowa economy posted solid job gains in June, which helped to accelerate job growth for the first half of the year," said Teresa Wahlert, director of Iowa Workforce Development. "Over the past few months, hiring has occurred in a wider range of industries."

The statewide estimate of unemployed persons increased slightly to 76,500 in June from 76,400 in May. The current level compares with 87,300 for June 2012.

The total number of working Iowans rose to 1,577,200 in June from 1,576,700 in May. Total employment stood at 1,550,300 one year ago.

| Number of Dependents | Maximum Percentage of Statewide Average Weekly Wage | Maximum Weekly Benefit Amount Effective 7-7-2013 | Minimum Weekly Benefit Amount Effective 7-7-2013 | Current Maximum Weekly Benefit Effective 7-1-2012 |
|----------------------|---|--|--|---|
| 0                    | 53  | \$ 408.00  | \$ 60.00   | \$ 396.00   |
| 1                    | 55  | \$ 424.00  | \$ 63.00   | \$ 411.00   |
| 2                    | 57  | \$ 439.00  | \$ 66.00   | \$ 426.00   |
| 3                    | 60  | \$ 462.00  | \$ 70.00   | \$ 449.00   |
| 4 or more            | 65  | \$ 501.00  | \$ 73.00   | \$ 486.00   |

# Message from the Director

Since launching in the summer of 2012, the Skilled Iowa Initiative has had impacts across every county in Iowa.

To date, over 6,500 Iowa businesses have signed on in support of the initiative and over 27,000 Iowans have certified their skill sets through the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC). While Skilled Iowa has made tremendous strides across the state, Iowa is still dealing with a skills gap affecting the middle skill jobs. Continued partnership across the state is critical to ensure Iowa has a skilled workforce to meet the demands of growing industries.

One of the cornerstones of the Skilled Iowa Initiative is the internship program, a unique opportunity that connects unemployed Iowans with training opportunities at Iowa businesses. The individuals receive a new transferrable skill through an internship that provides on-the-job training in conjunction with basic skill development all while maintaining unemployment benefits. Although interns are not guaranteed a job at the completion of the program, nearly 55 percent of the interns have received a full-time employment offer.

As the initiative moves fully into the second year of the program, Skilled Iowa will further focus efforts on connecting high school students with expansion oriented industries in Iowa. To date, the Skilled Iowa Initiative has provided access to the National Career Readiness Certificate testing to all high schools in the state. High schools all across Iowa

have held testing events for students to receive a certification.



**Teresa Wahlert**  
IWD Director

“Our students are critical to tomorrow’s workforce,” stated Teresa Wahlert, director of Iowa Workforce Development. “By embedding the work critical skills of applied mathematics, reading for information and locating information into the high schools, our students are receiving a sound platform to begin further education and employment.”

The Skilled Iowa Initiative strives to create Skilled Iowa Communities across the state. Des Moines County was the first area to become a Skilled Iowa Community and a half-a-dozen other areas are closely vying to become the second Skilled Iowa Community. In order to become a Skilled Iowa Community, the area must meet the following metrics: 10 percent of the employers covering at least 20 percent of the areas employment must be Skilled Iowa Members, 5 percent of the current labor force has achieved the NCRC certification, and 20 percent of the transitioning labor force must receive the NCRC certification.

To mark the first anniversary of Skilled Iowa, there are two new publications that detail the changes in the Middle Skills employment sectors and a detailed analysis of the NCRC credentialing in Iowa. Both publications are available at [www.iowaworkforce.org](http://www.iowaworkforce.org).

For more information on the Skilled Iowa Initiative, visit [www.skillediowa.org](http://www.skillediowa.org).



## IowaWORKS Southeast Iowa Skill Lab Success Story

Chanelle N. came to IowaWORKS Southeast Iowa in need of assistance with her job search. She had been with her company for just over a year and was currently making about \$8.00 per hour. A single parent, Chanelle was in need of more money and preferred a closer job location.

After speaking with her, staff learned she was interested in working for CNH in Burlington. She spent a great deal of time working on her résumé and online application. A discussion of her transferable skills led to her remembering on the job training from her prior jobs which she did not think about before. She also made corrections in her focus career résumé to make a tailored version for CNH. She also took the time to do an accurate thorough online application.

Her pay-off for doing it right...almost double her wages at \$14.47 per hour. She used the Focus Career Résumé as a guide and with Skill Lab assistance made appropriate more marketable changes with a job ready résumé.

### Get Social with IWD and Skilled Iowa



#### Facebook:

Iowa Workforce Development  
Skilled Iowa

#### Twitter:

@iowaworkforce  
@skillediowa

#### YouTube:

Iowa Workforce Development

## Cedar Rapids IowaWORKS Office Raises Money for Homeless Veterans

The Cedar Rapids IowaWORKS office raised \$747.18 for Homeless Veterans during the month of May 2013. The integrated office events committee, comprised of Sharon Bowers, Carol Duggan, Jennifer Erlacher, Joan Lehner, Kate Pine and Gina Walsh, established a “Coin War” fundraiser that tied into the Memorial Day holiday. During the month of May, the office was split into teams representing the different branches of the US Armed Forces. Many of the staff members are Veterans and ended up on teams that represented their branch of service. The Membership/UI team was Air Force, Skills Development/Vet Rep team was Navy, the R&P Team was Coast Guard, PROMISE JOBS was Army and the Marines were represented by WIA and Kirkwood Community College GAP Tuition staff, HACAP, Experience Works and Job Corps partners, in addition to IWD Auditors.



Each team was to collect coins which would count as positive points. Opposing teams were to donate bills which counted as negative points. Each week in May, team leaders counted their points and announced the standings to the office to encourage more competition. The Marines were the winners with 10,986 points and won, not only bragging rights, but Dilly Bars from Dairy Queen delivered during a break.

The office donated the entire monies raised to the Homeless Veterans Re-Entry Program (HVRP) in Iowa City and the VA

Outreach Center in Cedar Rapids. Along with a monetary donation, the staff also gave various sundries including toiletries to the Homeless Veterans Shelters.

The month culminated in an informal ceremony with Kelli Hugo from HVRP and Sean Kayse from The Department of Veterans Affairs who accepted the check for \$747.18 and the items donated for the shelters. They both stated their appreciation for the office’s efforts and thanked the Vet Reps, Jeff Fischer and Greg Clark, for facilitating the donation.

## Iowa Business will be Required to File Tax Reports Electronically in September

Iowa Workforce Development Unemployment Insurance Tax Bureau is announcing that beginning September 20, 2013, all Iowa businesses will be required to electronically file their quarterly Contribution and Payroll Report through MyIowaUI.org. Launched in 2010, MyIowaUI assists employers in filing their quarterly tax reports in an accurate and efficient manner.

“This new policy shows our continued effort to streamline our services,” said Teresa Wahlert, director of Iowa

Workforce Development. “All the services of MyIowaUI are available 24 hours a day, allowing employers to do business when it’s convenient for them.”

MyIowaUI.org provides businesses with real time information about the status and activity of their account. It gives the employers their current tax rate, lists all active workplace locations and automatically calculates the taxable wages and contribution due. Currently, more than 60 percent of Iowa employers are filing their tax reports electronically.

Additionally, employers are strongly encouraged to submit payments electronically. Using ePayment is a fast and secure way to ensure timely payments and reduce printing and postage expense.

Further information is available at [www.iowaworkforce.org](http://www.iowaworkforce.org) or [MyIowaUI.org](http://MyIowaUI.org). Employers needing help logging in for the first time can also try MyIowaUI customer service at (888) 848-7442 or by email at [iwduitax@iwd.iowa.gov](mailto:iwduitax@iwd.iowa.gov).

# Labor Services

## Labor Services Employees Participate in Crane Training

Division of Labor employees from OSHA, Contractor Registration, Discrimination and Child Labor attended Crane Training June 25th- June 27th at the Operating Engineers training facility south of Indianola. The training occurred in two

sessions which consisted of a day and half each. It involved a day of classroom activity and half day of actual hands on crane work. The employees found the training valuable to perform their jobs.



IWD employee Jeff Ellis takes his turn behind the crane wheel.

IWD employee Sonja Waldner puts her training to practice by testing out the operation of a crane.



# Noteworthy Employee Acknowledgements and Accomplishments

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

- John W. wrote a note of thanks to Joy Milligan, Des Moines. He said "she did a great job and gives public employees a great name."
- John Davis sent in a thank you note to Paula Fastenau, Council Bluffs; Liz Carlson, Council Bluffs; and Gilda Bettis, Council Bluffs, for their

assistance in helping him find a job. "My lack of computer skills became apparent and these three people came to my rescue," said Davis. After helping him develop a resume and cover letter, they also matched him up with another agency for further assistance. It all paid off when he was offered another job soon after. Davis said he has "much respect and admiration to those who have done me a great service."

- Kathy Thielen sent a note thanking North Iowa Community College, IWD and Skilled Iowa for her recent internship opportunity. "This internship provided me with the ability to build on my customer service, administrative and Excel experience. [Everyone] was extremely professional and my experience was very positive. I am grateful for the opportunity to add this Internship and experience to my resume." If you would like to learn more about Skilled Iowa Internships, visit [www.skillediowa.org](http://www.skillediowa.org).

- Meg Farber thanked Brianne Croushore, Des Moines, for going above and beyond. When Farber called with a question about her unemployment insurance claim, Croushore was "pleasant, polite, knowledgeable and most of all treated me like a person, not a number. I wanted to send a heart-felt compliment."

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



## Employee News

### May-August Anniversaries

#### 5 Years

Brad Frevert  
Russell Munsinger  
Theodore Hall  
Gisselle Munford  
Dana Barrer  
Meggan Kriewaldt  
David Phillips  
Jeremiah Beamer  
Jason Kerr  
Jon Murad

#### Katie Hommer

Timothy Hedrick  
Joseph Hogue

#### 10 Years

Carolyn Baumberger  
Pamela Varner  
Tracy Bielecki  
Diane Neri  
Doug Keast  
Sheryl Lewis  
James Galanits

#### 15 Years

Melissa Vansice  
Lisa Kolontar  
Linda Moravec  
Lou Thompson-Dee  
Bethany Clark  
Heidi Wicks  
Mitch Mayhan

#### 20 Years

Stanley McElderry  
Brenda Tart  
Janis Harbison

#### Jason Landess

Karen Pfab

#### 25 Years

Vanessa Ziegler  
Linda Edmonds  
Debbie Fisher  
Robert Kronlage  
Clyde Roeder  
Elizabeth Carlson  
Michelle Roovaart  
Peggy Peterson  
Kimberly Symonds

#### 30+ Years

Annette Lippert  
Douglas Rempfer  
Inkham Dara  
Sharon Ortega  
Elaine Weidlein

### New Hires

Amy Harms  
Shelly Moore  
Bradley Bolluyt  
Amy Maurer  
Annette Dawson

### Retirements

Mark Heiny  
Linda Benson  
Lynette Dietz  
Clyde Roeder  
Janet Thomas  
Dennis Reichardt  
Marsha Wilson  
Susan Box  
Vicki Clarkson  
John Frank Pearce

### Transfers/Recalls

Kelly Hart  
Sherry Tate  
Karla O'Brien

## Iowa Workforce NEWS

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For Deaf or Hard of Hearing, call Relay 711

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