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Larned A. Waterman  
Iowa Nonprofit  
Resource Center  
University of Iowa  
130 Grand Avenue Court  
Iowa City, IA 52242

## INRC Unveils New Web Site

by Diane DeBok

Regular readers of this newsletter have probably noticed our new look. If you have visited our Web site recently, you undoubtedly recognized changes there as well. We have spent the last year redesigning our site to help you more easily reach the resources you use the most and to help you quickly become acquainted with new features we have added. Here is a quick overview.

Four of these new features appear in the top navigation bar:

1. **Iowa's Nonprofit Community** divided into these categories:
  - a. *Iowa Register of Accountability*-a voluntary listing of charitable nonprofits that have adopted the Iowa Principles & Practices for Nonprofit Charitable Organizations.
  - b. *Associations*-a database of more than 800 groups that promote professional development, set or maintain standards within a profession, or work for the betterment of their communities.
  - c. *Governmental Contacts*-a database of Iowa and national agencies.
  - d. *Iowa Nonprofit Database*-database of more than 6,000 Iowa nonprofit groups.

2. **Nonprofit Work** divided into these four subcategories.
  - a. *Career Resources* with links to Web sites listing nonprofit employment opportunities.
  - b. *Volunteerism* which lists opportunities for service both locally and internationally.
  - c. *Consultants* which lists freelancers and experts organized according to legal, fundraising, management, and marketing specialties.
  - d. *Compensation* with information on compensation data, tax issues, and financial accountability.
3. **Faith-based Nonprofits** provides sources for nonprofit and community organizations, both secular and faith based.
4. **Topics** is divided into subjects nonprofit workers most want to know about: Administration, Communication, Funding, Law and Tax, and Technology. Each category includes information about related courses, training sessions, a recommended book, a related online source, and the relevant section of the *Iowa Principles and Practices*. You may also click on a

*Web site, continued page 3*

## Nominations Open for Governor's Volunteer Awards

April 16 is the deadline for nominations for the 2010 Governor's Volunteer Awards (GVA). Nonprofits in Iowa may submit nominations through the Iowa Nonprofit Resource Center.

The GVA program provides Iowa nonprofits and government organizations with an easy, cost-effective way to honor their volunteers with a prestigious state-

level recognition award. Volunteers may be selected for an award in one of four categories: Individual, Group, Disaster Volunteer, or Length of Service.

Recipients do not need to live in Iowa, but their service must have benefited Iowans or an Iowa organization.

*For information on submitting an award, see page 3, column 3.*

# Coming Soon: Survey of Iowa Nonprofit Needs

by Helen Schartz, Director of Research, Law, Health Policy & Disability Center

*Watch for an email, postcard, or letter inviting your participation.*

As part of the Strengthening Communities Fund project, the INRC will conduct a statewide survey of the capacity-building and technical assistance needs of Iowa's nonprofits in April-June 2010.

Assessing these needs is a critical initial step to improved outreach and development of effective and necessary assistance. Iowa's nonprofits should look for an email, postcard, or letter inviting them to confirm their contact information and participate in this important survey. Findings and recommendations will be presented at the statewide Iowa Nonprofit Summit on November 15 and 16.

During FY11, the Strengthening Communities Fund project and the INRC will develop resources and trainings to address the needs identified by the survey.

The most recent statewide assessment of Iowa's nonprofits was INRC's survey of 138 organizations conducted in 2000. Three challenging areas were identified: organizational finances, provision of services, and governance. In response, the INRC and the Iowa Governor's Nonprofit Task Force developed the Iowa Principles and Practices for Charitable Nonprofit Excellence to improve management practices, promote ethical conduct, and maintain public accountability in Iowa's nonprofits.

Circumstances have changed in the past decade. A more current and comprehensive assessment of

the needs and barriers the state's nonprofits face is required.

The Strengthening Communities Fund project began in the fall of 2009 when the INRC received a \$250,000 ARRA grant through the Strengthening Communities Fund - State, Local, and Tribal Government Capacity Building Program.

## Iowa Political Figures Honored for Service Efforts

by Cory Lasker

On February 9, three Iowa political figures were honored at the Friends of National Service Awards Reception in Washington, DC. They were recognized for their efforts to promote service opportunities in Iowa and throughout the nation.

Governor Chet Culver was awarded the State and Local Leadership Award for his leadership and innovation in leveraging national service to meet state and local needs.

Representative David Loebsack received the Distinguished Service Award for advancing national service legislation to expand high-quality service opportunities for citizens.

Finally, Senator Tom Harkin was awarded the Career Service Award for his extraordinary support of national service.

Congressman Loebsack commended Governor Culver and Senator Harkin for their hard work and dedication to service. He noted that, "Iowans tend to lead the nation, and I am proud that

Iowa's commitment to service is being recognized."

"Nearly two years after the floods of June 2008, we are still rebuilding in Iowa," Congressman Loebsack continued. "While we still have a long way to go, the strength of our community and the helping hands of our volunteers from across the nation will enable us to rebuild. I would like to express my sincere thanks to all of the volunteers who are working with us in Iowa and all of the volunteers across the nation who make our country better each and every day."

In a press release, Governor Culver stated it was an honor to accept this award. He added, "I do so on behalf of the literally thousands of people in our state who have rolled up their sleeves and volunteered to help people address unmet needs across the state, country, and overseas. From helping to rebuild after the floods of 2008, to our recent response to the disaster in Haiti, Iowans' 'spirit of service' is alive and well."

In addition to his efforts in Iowa's flood recovery, Congressman Loebsack added amendments to the Edward Kennedy Serve America Act. His amendments created a new Volunteer Generation Fund that invests in the training and recruitment of volunteers. The funding will increase the number of volunteers nationwide and strengthen volunteer programs. These initiatives will allow millions of new volunteers to serve in even more areas of need.

More information on award recipients can be found at [www.voicesforservice.org/events/fons10/fons10.htm](http://www.voicesforservice.org/events/fons10/fons10.htm)

# Pilot Communities Sought for Training and Assistance

by Richard Koontz, INRC Director

Supported by a grant from the Strengthening Communities Fund—State, Local, and Tribal Government Capacity program, the Larned A. Waterman Iowa Nonprofit Resource Center (INRC) and the Institute for Public Affairs (IPA) are seeking five pilot communities with whom to develop training and technical assistance programs.

Local governments and nonprofit organizations may submit applications to be considered for this program.

Under the grant, the INRC and IPA will provide free training and technical assistance to local governments of communities with populations of fewer than 5,000 people and eligible nonprofit organizations, both secular and faith based, serving those communities for the purpose of developing and implementing long-term community economic recovery strategies.

The INRC and IPA will select one community from each of five regions in Iowa. The pilot communities will be used to identify, develop, evaluate and refine strategies to achieve the program objectives and respond to the issues, concerns, challenges, and opportunities presented.

To be considered for this program, local government organizations and their nonprofit partners must meet the following requirements:

- The population of sponsoring cities must be under 5,000 per the latest official census.
- Nonprofit organizations must provide services related to the economic development or recovery of the sponsoring city.

- At least one nonprofit organization must have appropriate tax exempt 501(c)(3) certification. Additional participating nonprofits must have appropriate tax exempt 501(c)(3) certification or other exempt status with the Internal Revenue Service Determination Letter unless the organization is a church or church-affiliated program.
- Letters of application must be jointly submitted by the designated representatives of the city and one or more eligible nonprofits.
- Services provided by INRC/IPA must be related to developing long-term community economic recovery strategies.

Applicants for this program must submit one (1) digital copy (Word or pdf) along with two (2) mailed or delivered hard copies, with original signatures, of the application form by 4:00 p.m. April 23, 2010. For an application form, email [julie-collins@uiowa.edu](mailto:julie-collins@uiowa.edu)

Applications must be submitted to: Julie Collins, Program Assistant, Institute for Public Affairs, 100 IPA, 124 Grand Avenue Court, Iowa City, IA 52242.

The Strengthening Community Fund, part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), is dedicated to improving the effectiveness and long-term sustainability of communities and secular and faith-based Iowa nonprofit organizations providing services throughout Iowa.

## Submit a Governor's Volunteer Award

Information and a nomination form may be found on the GVA Web site at <http://www.volunteeriowa.org/awards/>

Sent nonprofit nominations to Brenda Steinmetz, Iowa Nonprofit Resource Center, 130 Grand Avenue Court, Iowa City, IA 52242. For information, call (319) 335-9674 or (866) 500-8980 (toll free) or email [brenda-steinmetz@uiowa.edu](mailto:brenda-steinmetz@uiowa.edu)

Each summer, award ceremonies are held at venues across the state to recognize volunteers for their commitment, service, and time. Details about ceremonies will be emailed and will be posted at [www.volunteeriowa.org/awards](http://www.volunteeriowa.org/awards)

## Web site, from page 1

link to Frequently Asked Questions to see FAQs specifically related to the topic.

In our winter newsletter, we shared the news that the INRC had received a grant funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). On our new site, be sure to click on the ARRA link to learn more about how these stimulus funds are benefiting Iowa's economic recovery.

We hope the site will be beneficial to you as you carry out the work of your organizations. Feel free to email questions or comments to [law-nonprofit@uiowa.edu](mailto:law-nonprofit@uiowa.edu) or via the Question section of the Web site at <http://inrc.continuetolearn.uiowa.edu/AboutUs/sendquestions.asp>

# Building a High-Performance Board of Directors

by Elizabeth Weinstein, owner, Elizabeth Weinstein and Associates, Des Moines

## The Ideal Board of Directors

Picture this—a diverse group of knowledgeable individuals focused on a common purpose, communicating openly and honestly with each other, making wise and ethical decisions and continually seeking ways to improve the way they fulfill their responsibilities.

That description depicts a high-performance board of directors working hard to fulfill obligations to its stakeholders. Most boards of directors strive for the ideal but fall short for a variety of reasons—a lack of time, they are in a rut, there is a misunderstanding about roles and responsibilities, and misinformation about the level of commitment required.

## Who Cares?

Does having a highly active, well-run board of directors matter? In a not-for-profit organization, the board of directors has a crucial function. It determines the direction for the organization, sets policy, monitors organizational progress and is a counter balance to staff who are responsible for operations and for implementing the policies the board has set.

Without a strong board of directors, staff tends to operate without direction, too much decision-making authority and too little accountability. The bottom line is that the best interests of the clients who are served by the not-for-profit organization are not being met when the board is not functioning at an optimum level.

## Four Major Considerations

In order for a board of directors to be a high performer, four major areas must be the focus of attention: recruitment,

education, appreciation, and relationship development.

## A. Recruitment—Forget the Warm Body Approach

One key to producing a high-performance board is recruiting the right people as members. The composition of the board should be as diverse as possible with strong representation of those being served.

The more diverse the board members are in terms of experience, age, gender, education, and employment, the more varied are the perspectives to address challenges that confront the organization. This results in a more complete understanding of key issues, plus a greater potential for creative solutions.

A diverse board is dynamic. Disagreements happen regularly, but solutions are reached through open discussion and consensus building.

## Board Inventory

In considering recruitment strategies, it is important to conduct an inventory of the board to determine if there are any gaps in particular skill areas or representation of a certain population segment. To analyze the composition of your board simply develop a grid that lists the skills needed by the board (e.g. financial management, nonprofit management, legal, marketing, etc.); what groups the board should repre-

sent (e.g. civic, government, education, business etc.); and representation in terms of age, ethnicity, sex, education, employment, etc.

On one axis of the grid list all the characteristics desired and on the other axis list current board member names. For each member indicate on the grid characteristics that describe that individual.

Once the grid is complete you can see at a glance if there are any gaps in the ideal composition of your board.

The more diverse the board members are in terms of experience, age, gender, education, and employment, the more varied are the perspectives to address challenges that confront the organization.

The recruitment of board members should focus on finding individuals with the appropriate skills and background to fill any gaps. Identify people with a connection to the clients or services you provide.

## Honest Approach

How a prospective board member is recruited to a position is very important. Someone who recruits with the statement, “You just have to go to

*High-Performance, continued, page 6*

## Book Review

# Fundraising When Money is Tight

## by Mal Warwick

Reviewed by Cory Lasker

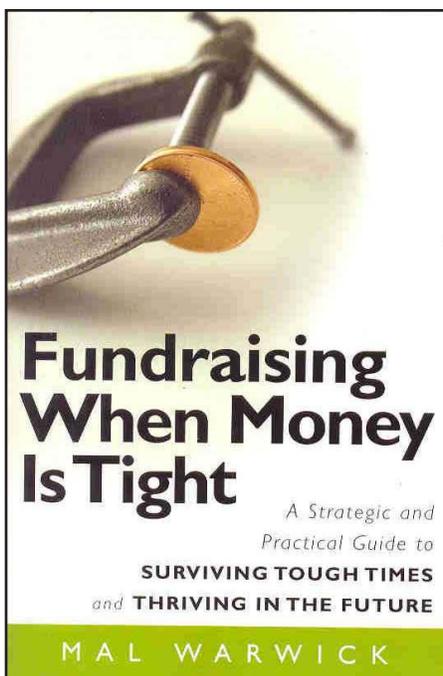
Undoubtedly the recent economic crisis has strained nonprofit and charitable organizations everywhere. Finding adequate funding is challenging when donors are also struggling financially. It's not uncommon that a nonprofit organization finds itself in a situation where the funding available does not meet the financial needs of its cause. Not only are the organization's short-term operations in jeopardy, but also its long-term sustainability can be damaged by a temporary downturn in the economy.

In response to these issues and concerns, Mal Warwick has written *Fundraising When Money is Tight*. The book is a self-proclaimed "nonprofit survival kit for hard times" and offers nonprofit leaders a unique perspective on approaching the challenge of fundraising in financially difficult times. Not only does Warwick use case studies of successful nonprofit organizations, but also those in the for-profit sector. He takes proven business principles that have guided Fortune 500 companies through tough economic times and applies them to the not-for-profit framework.

The book is divided into two parts. In the first part Warwick makes a strong case for developing a strategic approach to the recession and to the long-term picture of the organization. While nonprofits cannot predict the future, they certainly can anticipate it and plan accordingly. Scenario planning is an excellent method of accomplishing this objective. It entails an in-depth look at various things that might happen and how a nonprofit organization can effectively position itself to take advantage of any of those scenarios. Warwick uses the example of Royal Dutch-Shell to show how effective scenario planning can be. Because of Shell's efforts to anticipate the future, it was able to shelter itself from the effects of the 1973-1974

OPEC oil embargo and capitalize on the fall of the Soviet Union in the late 1980s.

From here Warwick discusses three possible scenarios resulting from this recession: the economy may recover quickly (this book was released in early 2009), it may recover slowly but steadily, or economic recovery will be comparable to that of the Great Depression (ten-year recovery). In approaching these scenarios Warwick outlines three different approaches: a nonprofit organization can be defen-



sive, selective, or aggressive. Warwick points out that the optimal approach will produce positive results under any scenario. After analyzing each approach under each scenario, he concludes that a selective approach to fundraising is ideal.

In the second part of the book, Warwick discusses how a selective approach to fundraising works. Generally it requires that nonprofit leaders take a careful look at their organization

and decide what expenses are unnecessary and where they can get the most bang for their buck in fundraising. This approach not only requires that nonprofits think about their present circumstances, but also the future.

In explaining how to face the present more calmly and the future with confidence, Warwick outlines nine steps nonprofits can follow. First, nonprofits should reassess "the whole ball of wax." This includes fundraising, marketing communications, and other aspects of their efforts. Next, nonprofits should strengthen their case for giving and build upon the prospects they already have. Organizations should "cut costs with a scalpel, not an ax." In approaching donors, nonprofits should look to those that already give, give often, and give big. Nonprofits should also stay close to their donors and be personal with them. They should also avoid categorizing donors and step up their efforts online.

While this book offers some great steps on approaching fundraising in tough times, it also encourages nonprofit organizations to rethink how they do things. This is a wonderful book for any organizational leader to read and share with his or her volunteers and employees.

**Fundraising When Money is Tight: A Strategic and Practical Guide to Surviving Tough Times and Thriving in the Future**, by Mal Warwick, 2009 Jossey-Bass, \$22.95 Paperback, 256 pages; ISBN: 978-0-4704-8132-5

*High-Performance, from page 4*

a meeting once a month,” and who minimizes the importance of the board role, will recruit an individual whose expectations are low. That person thinks, “It’s not very important if I am there or if I participate, and it’s doubtful I am really needed.”

The ideal approach is to target an individual who has the attributes you are seeking in a board member, and then to honestly describe the amount of time required, the responsibilities, and the rewards of the job.

It is a disservice to the individual, to the organization, and to the clients served if a board member is recruited by understating the importance of the board members’ responsibilities.

### **Appointed Members**

What about a situation where a person is appointed to a board by an outside organization, such as a county board of supervisors?

The key is to discover a connection or interest each of these board members has with an aspect of the organization. Perhaps one has a particular passion for policy development and another for financial investment.

By getting to know these individuals early in their board terms and identifying their various interests, there is a greater chance of keeping them motivated to actively participate in the work of the board.

### **Making the Ask**

When approaching a potential board member, follow this six–step process.

#### **1. Prepare**

Prior to meeting with the prospective members ask the following questions: What do you know about each of them? Why might he/she be interested in serving on the board? Do I have a

board member position description? What questions might each person ask?

#### **2. Establish a Relationship**

When meeting with prospects, create a friendly atmosphere, explain the mission of the organization, and outline the way it successfully meets the needs of its clients.

#### **3. Understand Their Perspective**

Ask the prospects questions to encourage them to talk about what is important to them. By gaining a better understanding of what motivates them, the recruiter can frame the request for help from this perspective.

#### **4. Make the Ask**

Ask for help from each prospect’s frame of reference. Include both factual information and give examples of how individuals are positively affected by the work of the board and organization (i.e. provide information for both the head and heart). Describe to each prospect how his or her contribution can meet the needs of the organization in fulfilling its mission.

What about orientation for new board members? How do you help board members develop good working relationships? Read this article in its entirety at <http://nonprofit.law.uiowa.edu/updates/2010/ArticleHighPerformanceBoard.pdf>

# **Corvington Confirmed as Head of CNCS**

On February 11, the United States Senate confirmed the appointment of Patrick Corvington as the new CEO of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS).

Corvington most recently served as a Senior Associate at the Annie E. Casey Foundation and has over twenty years of leadership experience on critical issues facing the nonprofit community.

“Patrick Corvington has devoted his career to finding solutions that address communities’ unmet needs and is an expert on volunteerism, philanthropy and nonprofit capacity building,” said Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA), Chairman, Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee. “He is well qualified to lead the Administration’s agenda on community service, including the implementation of the bipartisan Serve America Act.”

The CNCS is a federal agency that engages more than five million Americans in service through its Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve America programs, and leads President Obama’s national call to service initiative, United We Serve.

An article about Mr. Corvington appeared in the February 12 issue of The Chronicle of Philanthropy.

Read the article at [http://philanthropy.com/article/National-Service-Leader/64157/?sid=&utm\\_source=&utm\\_medium=en](http://philanthropy.com/article/National-Service-Leader/64157/?sid=&utm_source=&utm_medium=en)

# Nonprofits Have a Stake in 2010 Census

Did you know that an estimated six million people were missed in the 2000 census? An estimated \$478 million in federal funds was lost to the states for the 2002-2012 period due to the undercount in the 2000 census. These are just two of the facts from the publication *By the Numbers* prepared by the Nonprofit Voter Engagement Network (NVEN) at [www.nonprofitvote.org](http://www.nonprofitvote.org)

NVEN, Independent Sector (IS) and the National Council of Nonprofits (NCN) encourage nonprofits to work with their constituents to complete and return their census forms. Each of these

organizations lists resources and links to more information on their Web sites.

In a recent issue of their e-newsletter, *Nonprofit Knowledge Matters*, NCN listed these four reasons why an accurate census count is important to nonprofit organizations:

1. Communities could lose money that supports programs important to everyone such as Section 8 affordable housing, Head Start, state Children's Health Insurance Program, water treatment and conservation program, and arts and humanities programs.
2. Nonprofits could lose funding if there is an undercount. Do you provide essential human services, affordable housing, or mentoring programs? If so,

your organization can lose, or gain, money, depending upon census numbers.

3. Nonprofits have access to and credibility with their communities and can engage constituents to complete their forms.
4. Your community could lose political clout by being undercounted. Congressional and legislative districts are redrawn based on the census. An undercount will lead to underrepresentation.

There are ways that nonprofits can help

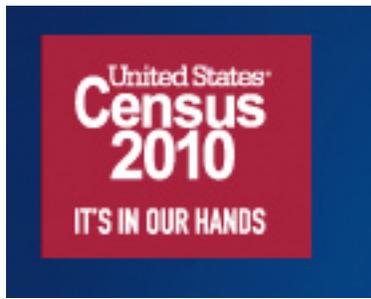
make the census count more accurate such as becoming Census Partners.

For more information, see <http://2010.census.gov/partners/partners/> Find links to information on Census forms in other languages, fact sheets on hard-to-count populations, and more at the NCN Web site at <http://www.councilofnonprofits.org/public-policy/federal-policy-issues/federal-issues-listing/census-2010>

The IS Web site also offers information at

<http://www.independentsector.org/programs/gr/census2010.htm>

For general information on the census, go to <http://2010.census.gov/2010census/how/index.php>



## Save the Date! 2010 Iowa Nonprofit Summit



This year's Iowa Nonprofit Summit is scheduled for November 15-16 at the Scheman Building on the Iowa State University campus in Ames.

The theme is *building the capacity of our charitable sector through volunteer management and nonprofit effectiveness*.

The summit is being organized by these collaborative partners: GEM\$ (Grant Enterprise Management System), the Iowa Campus Compact, the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service, the Iowa Council of Foundations, the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs, the Larned A. Waterman Iowa Nonprofit Resource Center, and United Ways of Iowa.

Watch the INRC Web site and our monthly updates. More information and registration options will be shared as it becomes available.

# Training Opportunities

## Iowa State University Nonprofit Management Academy

**Mediation, Facilitation, and Counseling**  
April 8

**Leveraging Social Technology**, April 29

**Mobilize Your Board to Raise More Money**, May 20

**Engaging Boards**, June 24

**Managing Challenges During Tough Times**, August 26

**Financial Performance**, September 30

All courses meet 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Thursdays and are held at the Coral Ridge Mall Community Room, 1451 Coral Ridge Avenue, Coralville.

Registration deadline is five working days prior to each class meeting. For more information, see [www.extension.iastate.edu/johnson/news/NonProfit+Management+Academy+2010.htm](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/johnson/news/NonProfit+Management+Academy+2010.htm)

## About Our Organization

<http://inrc.continuetolearn.uiowa.edu/>

The Larned A. Waterman Iowa Nonprofit Resource Center is a University of Iowa interdisciplinary collaboration created to make more accessible educational and service programs focused on strengthening the operational capacity of Iowa nonprofit organizations.

The INRC works collaboratively with government agencies, nonprofit organizations and educational institutions to impart new knowledge through activities and provide information and training resources to help nonprofit organizations and interested persons throughout Iowa. We seek to build the capacity and develop the effectiveness of community-based organizations and enhance the overall effectiveness of local organizations in building communities. The Center also introduces students to the nonprofit sector and develops their sense of public and community service.

## Iowa Nonprofit Resource Center

**Starting an Iowa Charitable Nonprofit**  
Saturday, April 24  
9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

**Presenter:** Richard Koontz, Director,  
Larned A. Waterman Iowa Nonprofit  
Resource Center

Registration form at <http://inrc.continuetolearn.uiowa.edu/updates/2010/StartNPOregformApr24.pdf>

To register by telephone or for more information, call 866-500-8980 (toll free) or 319-335-9765.

The session will meet in Room 265 of Boyd Law Building, University of Iowa College of Law, Iowa City.

## Community Impact United Way of Johnson County

**6th Annual Volunteer Administrators' Network: Growing and Sustaining Community Partnerships with Volunteers**

**Presenter:** Patti Fields  
9:00 a.m. - 2:20 p.m., Friday, April 9  
Coralville Public Library  
1401 5th St., Coralville, IA

Registration Fee: \$40 for VAN members;  
\$60 non-members

Register by April 5  
Agenda and registration form at:  
[www.volunteeradministratorsnetwork.com/uploads/2010\\_conference\\_brochure.pdf](http://www.volunteeradministratorsnetwork.com/uploads/2010_conference_brochure.pdf)

## INRC staff:

**Richard Koontz**, INRC Director  
**Mary Kay McCune**, Staff Support  
**Brenda Steinmetz**, Program Assistant  
**Diane DeBok**, Program Associate  
**Cory Lasker**, Research Assistant

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The Larned A. Waterman  
Iowa Nonprofit Resource Center  
130 Grand Avenue Court  
Iowa City, IA 52242  
1.866.500.8980  
<http://inrc.continuetolearn.uiowa.edu/default.asp>