

Century Businesses honored Economic, Workforce Impact Cited

For more than 100 years Iowa's businesses have been a significant economic force. Their long-standing service to their local communities were honored by the Iowa Department of Economic Development at the first-ever "2002 Century Business of Iowa Recognition" on December 9 at the historic Hoyt Sherman Place in Des Moines. Over 180 businesses from across the state were recognized. Approximately 350 people representing over half of these century businesses attended.

The Century Business of Iowa Program was created by the Iowa Department of Economic Development to recognize the importance of long-term Iowa businesses to our economy. Any business that began operation in or before 1902 was encouraged to self-nominate or be nominated by its community by providing information about its history, including ownership, location, products and services, as well as annual dollar volume and size of workforce.

"Iowa's century businesses annually contribute billions of dollars to our state and national economies and employ thousands of people," said Governor Thomas J. Vilsack. "Their stories are compelling, not only in their economic significance, but also in describing the innovation and tenacity that sustained them over the past hundred years."

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Blouin leads Iowa Department of Economic Development

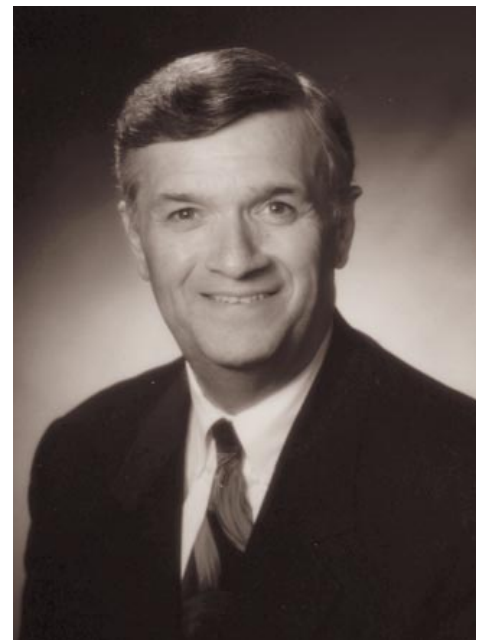
Calling economic development one of the top priorities of their second term, Governor Tom Vilsack and Lieutenant Governor Sally Pederson named Michael T. Blouin as Director of the Iowa Department of Economic Development. The decision reflects the administration's intent to make higher paying jobs and business start-ups a major focus.

"Beyond his outstanding experience and leadership in working to create jobs and spur economic growth, Mike Blouin has earned the trust of community leaders across the state," Governor Vilsack said. "From his work in the Statehouse, at the U.S. Capitol and on Main Street, he knows that Iowa's success depends upon our ability to take bold steps to get our state's economy moving."

"In his new role, Mike Blouin will work to expand economic opportunity to all corners of Iowa, from rural areas, to small towns, and to regional commercial centers," said Lt. Governor Pederson.

With more than 30 years of public service and community development experience, Blouin brings a strong understanding of Iowa's economic needs and opportunities. Blouin comes to IDED from the Greater Des Moines Partnership where he was President and CEO. After arriving in Des Moines in 1999, he oversaw the consolidation of four economic and community development groups into the Partnership.

Before his service in Des Moines, Blouin was affiliated with the Cedar Rapids Chamber of Commerce from 1987 to 1999,



...serving most recently as the organization's president. "His efforts in Iowa's top two economic regions provide him the ability to replicate that vision and success all over Iowa," Vilsack said.

Blouin also brings a decade of elected government service to the job-experience that will help him strengthen public-private partnerships in all levels of government. From 1975 to 1979, he served two terms in the U.S. Congress, representing Iowa's second congressional district. Before his election to Congress, Blouin served in both the Iowa House of Representatives and the State Senate.

Blouin is a graduate of Loras College in Dubuque.

IDED assists P.A. Braunger growth

A \$75,000 state investment to assist the expansion of P.A. Braunger Food Service into a larger building in Sioux City was approved by the Iowa Department of Economic Development Board. The project funded by the Community Economic Betterment Account (CEBA) program will create 19 jobs.

The company has outgrown existing facilities and is moving into an existing 205,000-sq. ft. building to accommodate business growth in new marketing and distribution channels. Braunger will occupy 115,000 sq. ft of the building and lease out the rest to other companies.



IDED board member Julie Carlson of Spencer said,

“P.A. Braunger is planning a \$1.7 million expansion to grow as a leading value added supplier of high quality meats in the Midwest region. The company is striving for a new level of growth as an extension of 114 years of doing business in Sioux City.”

P.A. Braunger Food Service plans to pursue national Internet and direct marketing of cut steaks and new retail channels of distribution, such as convenience stores and supermarkets.

Founded in 1887, Braunger presently distributes full menu lines of meats to hotels, restaurants and institutions in a four-state area.

If you would like to explore assistance with a business expansion, visit IDED's web site at www.iowasmart.com.

Peosta plant expands with IDED assistance

An expansion of Mi-T-M Corporation of Peosta to produce appliance components will receive a \$180,000 investment from the Iowa Department of Economic Development. The Economic Development Set-Aside program investment from federal funds is tied to the creation of 60 jobs.

Owned by A. J. Spiegel, Mi-T-M is purchasing over \$2 million in robotic welders and other machinery and equipment to provide the Frigidaire plant in Webster City with a pedestal for its new horizontal washing machine. The equipment will be installed after remodeling an existing building.

Mi-T-M has a complete metal fabrication facility, powder-coating and assembly operation in an ultramodern 260,000-sq. ft. plant in Peosta and is a leading manufacturer of pressure washers for consumers, industry and agriculture. More than 230 persons currently work at the plant.

If you would like to explore assistance with a business expansion, visit IDED's web site at www.iowasmart.com.

University researchers develop back support

The Iowa Spine Research Center at the University of Iowa and Chase Ergonomics Inc. have collaborated on the development of a new back support to reduce the risk of back injury. Their success is a telling example of how the university works with industry. The new ergonomic device, called the Accupressure™ Back Support, is designed to significantly reduce the over-contraction of back muscles during the work day. Chase Ergonomics was the co-applicant with the university for the patent held by the University of Iowa Research Foundation and has exclusively licensed rights to the device.



Century Businesses honored

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The annual dollar volume, reported by slightly more than half (97) of the century businesses, totaled \$106.5 billion; employment numbers, reported by 158 companies, totaled 76,475. In reporting, the

businesses made no distinction between in-state and worldwide sales volume and workforce numbers.

For a list of the 2002 Century Business of Iowa nominations, visit the IDED website at www.iowasmartidea.com/index.html.

More Competitive than ever

A new national index from the Beacon Hill Institute shows Iowa made a four place jump in competitiveness for 2002 and is moving closer to the top ten.

Iowa is ranked the 12th most competitive state for 2002, up from a ranking of 16th in 2001.

Iowa rose to 4th in the nation from 8th in one of nine subindexes of the Beacon Hill study—human resources, which measures workforce factors.

Iowa scores at the top in human resources because the state has a high percentage of the population with health insurance, high school diplomas, and jobs. Iowa also has a lower infant mortality rate than most states.

Other subindexes cover government and fiscal policy—where Iowa rose to 19th from 23rd the previous year—security (14th), infrastructure (15th), technology (28th), finance (21st), openness (38th), domestic competition (45th) and environmental policy (20th).

Beacon Hill Institute (BHI) of Suffolk University in Boston developed the index of competitiveness for all 50 states using objective data to measure the long-run competitive position of a state. A full report was not issued this year because BHI said there were only minor shifts in the rankings for the top and bottom ten states from 2001 to 2002. Delaware, Massachusetts, and Washington rank first, second, and third.

“A state is competitive if it has in place the policies and conditions that ensure and sustain a high level of per capita income and its continued growth,” according to BHI. “To achieve this, a state needs to be able to attract and incubate new businesses, and to provide an environment that is conducive to growth of existing firms.”

Iowa's New Horsepower

For most of us, it's fairly easy to see the economic impact of industries such as insurance, farming and manufacturing. Yet have you ever stopped to think about the horse industry?

Unless you're actually involved with horses, you might be apt to pass it off as a pastime that's isolated to dreamy-eyed preteen girls. Read on before you stick with that assumption.

Did you know there are currently 7.1 million people in the U.S. alone who are actively involved with the horse industry? Did you know that, according to a study by the American Horse Council, the horse industry directly produces goods and services valued at \$25.3 billion? And, last but certainly not least, did you know that Iowa now has some of the premier horse facilities in the U.S.?

The Iowa Equestrian Center -located on the Kirkwood Community College campus just east of Cedar Rapids - is causing quite a stir in local, regional and national equine circles. The multifaceted \$5.3 million educational and show facility is drawing visitors, horse shows and students from all over the U.S. and, at the same time, earning rave reviews.

In its first year of operation the Equestrian Center hosted more than 40 major weekend events and shows.

A number of state and community-based grants helped to make the Equestrian Center a reality. The facility received a \$1 million challenge grant from Mary McLeod of Cedar Rapids, as well as a \$250,000 Vision Iowa Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT) grant from the Iowa

Department of Economic Development.

The Equestrian Center encompasses roomy, modern facilities for student working and riding laboratories, a 100 ft. by 200 ft. indoor riding arena with seating for 300 spectators, a sleek new indoor stall barn with overnight accommodations for more than 200 animals, and of course, an indoor staging and warming arena. Additionally, seven acres of grounds provide plenty of parking, an R/V camper area and an outdoor arena.

According to Dave Halverson, Equestrian Center manager, “the number-one key factor in making this facility so desirable is the fact that it's climate-controlled and all under one roof. I've been told by people born and raised in the horse industry that it's the best facility they've ever shown in.”

Halverson goes on to say that “a facility of this caliber also provides an incredible educational opportunity for the students in the Horse Science Program. It gives them the chance to interact with people in the industry, and ultimately, set up a better internship.”

During the first year of their two-year program, students study genetics, breeding, horsemanship, training, nutrition, management and judging. They also study communications, accounting, human relations, computer science, math and merchandising to become well-rounded professionals.

As well as providing an exceptional opportunity for students, the Center is quite a feather in the cap of the Cedar Rapids community. In addition to providing a new recreational outlet, the Center is bringing valuable tourism dollars to the local business community.

State Food Procurement and Networking Seminar

Planning is under way for a state food procurement and business-networking seminar in mid March 2003. Information about the procurement process and what food products are purchased by state agencies will be presented to companies

interested in selling to state government. For more information, contact Jennifer Porter, Domestic Value-Added Foods Manager at the Iowa Department of Economic Development, 515-242-4871 or Jennifer.porter@ided.state.ia.us

Calendar



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200 East Grand Avenue
Des Moines, Iowa 50309
Phone: 515.242.4700
Fax: 515.242.4809

First Class Mail
U.S. Postage
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Des Moines, IA
Permit No. 1195

- March** **2-8** Mexico Trade Mission
- March** **13** Venture Network of Iowa
Statewide ICN locations
- May** **1** SMART Economic. Development Conference
Polk County Convention Complex
Des Moines

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TWO IOWA COMPANIES ON BEST PLACE TO WORK LIST

Fortune magazine has named Pella Corporation and the Principal Financial group to the annual "100 Best Companies to work for" list.

Window and storm door manufacturer Pella Corporation is number 12 on the list. Insurer and financial services company the Principal is ranked 100.

Nationwide Pella Corp. employs more than 6,500 workers and the Principal has more than 14,100 employees. The Principal is headquartered in Des Moines and Pella Corporation in Pella.

Pella Corporation has manufacturing in Pella, Carroll, Story City, Clear Lake, Sioux Center and Shenandoah.

Iowa gains population

New population estimates released by the U.S. Census Bureau show that Iowa's population has increased by nearly 4,800 people in the past year.

Iowa's estimated population for 2002 is 2,936,760, an increase of .2 percent over

2001. That's 4,793 more people than the previous year.

During the same time period, the nation's population increased by 1.1 percent. The U.S. population is estimated at 288.4 million for 2002.

Health ranking puts Iowa 7th in U.S.

According to state health rankings released by the United Health Foundation, Iowans are getting healthier. Iowa moved from 10th place in the previous report to a seventh place tie with Colorado in the 2002 ranking.

One of the rankings in the report should impress employers. Iowans were absent from work for health reasons less than people in any of the other states.

The report adds up scores on 18 health factors covering such matters as percentage of citizens without health insurance, death and disease rates and healthy lifestyles. Iowa has the smallest percentage of citizens without health insurance in the U.S.

New Hampshire finished first in the report, Minnesota second, and Massachusetts third.

International Update



UPPER MIDWEST HOSPITALITY AND LODGING (UP) SHOW (FEBRUARY 23 - 25, 2003) MINNEAPOLIS CONVENTION CENTER - MINNEAPOLIS, MN

A Taste of Iowa® will host an 800 square-foot pavilion with seven Iowa companies at this upcoming foodservice show. Show exhibitors in the A Taste of Iowa® pavilion include:

Whitaker Foods - Custom value-added meats from Evansdale

Bee Lor, Inc - All natural pork products from Brunsville

Heartland Fish - Farm-raised rainbow trout from Manning

Log Chain Honey - Honey, crème honey and beeswax products from Allerton

Swiss Valley Farms- Milk and other dairy products from Davenport

Falk's Classic Homemade Ice Cream Company - Ice cream from Council Bluffs

American Family Farms - Whole-some meat products from Elkader

A Taste of Iowa® also collaborated with Food Service News on a feature article about the pavilion and a special listing in the show directory for all the companies in the Iowa pavilion. For more information, contact Jennifer Porter (atasteofiowa@ided.state.ia.us) at 515.242.4871.

Legend:



Manufacturing



Food



Grain



Meat

NILES LEAVES IDED, BLOUIN TAKES THE HELM

Governor Tom Vilsack accepted C.J. Niles' resignation as the director of the Iowa Department of Economic Development on November 27. Niles, who joined the IDED in 1999, has been a strong supporter of economic growth in the state. Beginning mid-month, Mike Blouin will take the reins as director of the agency. Blouin has worked for major economic development organizations in Cedar Rapids and Des Moines. He has also served in the United States Congress and the Iowa Legislature.

Calendar



A TASTE OF IOWA BUSINESS ASSISTANCE FOR SMALL FOOD BUSINESSES AND ENTREPRENEURS SEMINAR - (JANUARY 22, 2003) - STONEY CREEK INN, JOHNSTON

This seminar is perfect for those looking to break into the food business or for those looking to expand their current business! Tentative agenda includes: Arlis Burney, Marketing Manager for the Food Processing Center at University of Nebraska-Lincoln speaking on the center and the services they offer and providing an overview of the "From Recipe to Reality" Seminar. A Taste of Iowa® staff will discuss scholarships available to attend this seminar. Bob Haxton, Program Manager at the Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals will discuss food safety. Alan Neidermeier from Todd's Ltd. will discuss custom packaging and manufacturing. Donna Lowery, Targeted Small Business Specialist from the Iowa Department of Economic Development will provide an overview of the financial assistance resources available through IDED. Registration Fee is \$25.00 and is limited to 30 attendees. For more information, contact Dionne Makila (atasteofiowa@ided.state.ia.us) at 515.242.4751.



A TASTE OF IOWA® AT THE CAPITOL (WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2003) 1ST FLOOR ROTUNDA, STATE CAPITOL BUILDING - DES MOINES

The A Taste of Iowa® at the Capitol Event features A Taste of Iowa® companies and restaurants sampling A Taste of Iowa® treats for the Iowa Legislature and visitors to the Capitol. Last year over 800 people attended. For more information, contact Dionne Makila (atasteofiowa@ided.state.ia.us) at 515.242.4751.



VIV ASIA 2003 - BANGKOK, THAILAND (MARCH 5 - 7, 2003)

The Asia/Pacific region is home to over 3 billion people and an important region for intensive animal production. Companies in pig and poultry production, feed, veterinary services and meat processing have relied on VIV Asia to showcase their products and technology. Join us in us in the Iowa Pavilion and showcase your products and services at this premier agricultural event for all of Asia. Contact Kathy Hill (k.hill@ided.state.ia.us) at 515.242.4741 for more information.



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MEAT TRADE MISSION TO JAPAN (APRIL 5 - 13, 2003)



Japan is the largest export market for Iowa beef and Iowa pork, and is creating new niche opportunities for all Iowa meats. This Iowa meat mission will involve several Iowa meat sectors - beef, pork, turkey and chicken. Individual appointments will be arranged for Iowa processors to meet Japanese importers, processors and retailers. This will mark 15 years of expanded meat trade in Japan since the beef market was liberalized in 1988. IDED is planning to host an Iowa reception to celebrate this success with the Japanese trade. Iowa companies are invited to participate and may qualify for ETAP assistance. Contact Mark Fischer (mark.fischer@ided.state.ia.us) at 515.242.4760.



STATE FOOD PROCUREMENT AND NETWORKING SEMINAR

Planning is under way for a state food procurement and business-networking seminar in mid March 2003. Information about the procurement process and what food products are purchased by state agencies will be presented. For more information, contact Jennifer Porter (jennifer.porter@ided.state.ia.us) at 515.242.4871.



FOOD MARKETING INSTITUTE (FMI) SHOW - CHICAGO, ILLINOIS (MAY 4 - 6, 2003)



Currently, all booth space for the 2003 FMI Show has been sold. However, there sometimes are cancellations. If you would like to be placed on a waiting list, please contact Dennis Leland (dennis.leland@ided.state.ia.us) at 515.242.4763.



BALTICS AND FINLAND TRADE MISSION - LITHUANIA, ESTONIA, LATVIA AND FINLAND (JUNE 3 - 12, 2003)



Designed for an experienced exporter, which has the desire to capture a virtually untouched market, the Baltics mission will allow you to gain access to a region that has incredible market growth potential. Now is the time to establish your contacts and acquire market share in the region. Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia have been tapped as entrants into the EU by 2004. This means increased ease of doing business with the region and increased investment into the region. Finland is an open economy with about 40 percent of its GDP is a result of trade. Its proximity and history also provides many opportunities in trading with Russia and the former Soviet countries. Join your Iowa colleagues for individualized appointments in each market to gain market share in the region. Financial assistance is available while funds last. Contact Kelly Halsted (kelly.halsted@ided.state.ia.us) at 515.242.4713.



GROWTH INDUSTRIES USA 2003 - BRAZIL, ECUADOR AND PANAMA (JUNE 2 - 13, 2003)

The IDED in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Commerce will be sponsoring catalog exhibitions in Porto Alegre and Belo Horizonte, Brazil; Guayaquil, Ecuador and Panama City, Panama. Multi-State Catalog Exhibitions offer an inexpensive yet excellent means of gaining initial market entry information for your products in each specific country and/or marketing region. They serve as an introduction of your international objectives to appropriate importers and distributors, all procured through advertising and direct mail campaigns in each country. IDED will represent your company at each location. Contact Peggy Kerr (p.kerr@ided.state.ia.us) at 515.242.4745 to receive information.



ALIMENTARIA - MEXICO (JUNE 3 - 6, 2003)



Mexico will become the world forum of food and beverages at Alimentaria Mexico 2003. Mexico is Latin America's largest economy and ranks in the top 10 in international trade. Mexico is the USA's second largest trading partner and the US ranks first in food imports to Mexico. And Import tariffs were eliminated starting January 2003. Additionally and perhaps most exciting,

Pedro Alvarez will be attending Alilmentaria. Mr. Alvarez is the Chairman and CEO of Alimport, Cuba's governmental import agency. Mr. Alvarez will be using his visit to Alimentaria to correspond with the US companies who participated in Havana in September and to make new contacts as well. For more information on exhibiting at Alimentaria, contact Dennis Leland (dennis.leland@ided.state.ia.us) at 515.242.4763.



IOWA ELEVATOR GRAIN MERCHANDISER MISSION - MEXICO (JUNE 15 - 22, 2003)

Iowa grain elevators and industry representatives will have one-on-one meetings in Guadalajara and Veracruz, Mexico. For more information, contact Dick Vegors (r.vegors@ided.state.ia.us) at 515.242.4796.