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Gov. Reynolds Announces Future Ready Iowa Employer Innovation Fund Awardees

DES MOINES – Today, Governor Kim Reynolds announced 13 awardees of the **Future Ready Iowa Employer Innovation Fund**, a matching grant designed to help employers carry out solutions to help their employees achieve postsecondary training and education. A total of \$385,516 in funds were awarded to employers, nonprofits, and employer consortiums across the state. It is estimated that the grants will serve 2,665 Iowans. The purpose of the grant is to provide opportunities for Iowans to earn non-credit and for-credit postsecondary credentials leading to high-demand jobs.

“As we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, it’s critical that we help Iowans receive the necessary training for high-demand jobs available today,” said Gov. Reynolds. “The Employer Innovation Fund supports the incredible efforts of Iowa employers who are strengthening their own talent pipeline by helping Iowans work toward a life-changing career path. This program as part of the Future Ready Iowa Initiative is changing the way we look at workforce as we provide even greater opportunity for Iowans.”

The grants can be used to cover the cost of training and supplies as well as provide much needed wrap around support that addresses the other barriers some Iowans face when trying to obtain skilled training. Award amounts range from \$1,000 to \$50,000. Support services can be used to cover expenses related to childcare, transportation and provide stipends to meet basic necessities while in training.

“This year marks the second Employer Innovation Fund opportunity and Iowa’s businesses, nonprofits and educational institutions make effective programs happen when they work together to address local workforce challenges,” said Director Beth Townsend, Iowa Workforce Development. “Creative business solutions are more important than ever and this grant empowers employers to invest in programs and resources that help working Iowans achieve necessary job skills training.”

The Future Ready Iowa goal is to have 70 percent of Iowans in the workforce with education and training beyond high school by 2025. Approximately 60 percent of Iowa’s current workforce meets this education and training criteria. For more information about the Future Ready Iowa, visit www.FutureReadyIowa.gov.

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