

First awards for targeted IT training

An innovative new program to address the unique training needs of Information Technology employees in high level positions is now in operation statewide. The Economic Development Board approved the first IT Training Fund awards to the following companies:

APAC Customer Service Inc., Cedar Rapids – \$5,000 to train six employees

Clipper Turbine Works, Inc., Cedar Rapids – \$1,158 to train one employee

Geonetric, Cedar Rapids – \$2,902 to train 20 employees

TeamQuest Corporation, Clear Lake – \$5,010 to train five employees

Integrated DNA Technologies, Inc., Coralville – \$5,537 to train eight employees

Alliance Technologies, Des Moines – \$467 to train three employees

ACT, Inc., Iowa City – \$1,263 to train two employees

“Our technology driven companies are dependent on ever-changing IT applications,” said Michael Tramontina, Director of the Iowa Department of Economic Development (IDED). “Providing technology training to Iowa companies will help our workers stay connected to the latest innovations.”

Applications for the IT Training Fund are being accepted by IDED. Over the next year, \$500,000 is available to supplement the training costs for Iowa IT firms and

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McGraw-Hill opens global headquarters

McGraw-Hill Higher Education has officially opened its new environmentally-friendly global headquarters on the Mississippi riverfront in Dubuque. Harold “Terry” McGraw III, chairman, president and CEO of The McGraw-Hill Companies hosted the ribbon cutting and opening ceremonies for the \$32 million building.

“We are excited that this state-of-the-art facility provides a new home for our talented and

dedicated workforce as we continue to help students around the world reach their full potential,” said McGraw. “That is something we can all be proud of.”

In the new four-story, state-of-the-art building, nearly 400 McGraw-Hill Education employees provide editorial, production and marketing services focused on the development of higher education textbooks, digital products

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McGraw-Hill Higher Education’s new headquarters in Dubuque incorporates a number of eco-friendly features, including preferred parking for hybrid vehicles, a white roof to reduce absorption of solar heat, plumbing fixtures that reduce water consumption, and energy efficient heating and cooling. The Corporation is applying for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification, a nationally recognized benchmark for high performance green buildings,



Exporting workshops

A series of 10 International Exporting seminars across the state provide opportunities for Iowa businesses to learn more about the “Mechanics of Exporting” from experts in banking, finance, logistics, and export compliance.

Co-hosted by the Iowa Department of Economic Development, sessions are planned for Mason City, Oelwein, Spencer, Fort Dodge, Creston, Denison, Marshalltown, Ottumwa, Burlington and Clinton. Other sponsors are the Iowa Agribusiness Export Partnership, U.S. Small Business Administration and U.S. Department of Commerce.

The workshops are planned for the following dates and locations:

Nov. 7: North Iowa Area Community College (PappaJohn Center), Mason City

Nov. 8: Northeast Iowa Community College, Oelwein

Dec. 11: Iowa Lakes Community College, Spencer

Dec. 12: Iowa Central Community College, Fort Dodge

Jan. 8: Southwestern Iowa Community College, Creston

Jan. 9: Western Iowa Community College, Denison

Jan. 15: Iowa Valley Community College, Marshalltown

Jan. 16: Indian Hills Community College, Ottumwa

Jan. 29: Southeastern Community College, Center for Business & Industry Services, Burlington

Jan. 30: Eastern Iowa Community College, Clinton

The \$25 registration fee includes continental breakfast and lunch. Registration begins at 8:00 a.m. Workshop is 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Interested participants may register at <http://www.iowalifechanging.com/register> to sign-up. Registration deadline is the Thursday prior to each session. For more information, contact Micah Kiel at micah.kiel@iowalifechanging.com or 515.242.4801.

Major expansion at Quaker Oats

Quaker Oats, whose smiling Quaker Man is one of the nation’s oldest cereal trademarks, is planning a more than \$16 million expansion of oat milling capacity in Cedar Rapids.

To compete with other Quaker locations out of state for the project, the Iowa Economic Development Board approved tax benefits from the Enterprise Zone program. As a result, the expansion will begin next May and create 11 jobs.

“This plant is the largest cereal mill in the world and one of Quaker’s top performing operations,” said Don Chizek, plant manager. “The expansion will extend the foundation for potential future investment in this community.” The plant has a 134-year history in Cedar Rapids.

Situated on 30 acres with 22 buildings and 1.9 million square feet under roof, the Cedar Rapids plant is the largest of six Quaker Oats plants in North America and operates continuously with 35 packaging lines. Growing demand for oat-based cereals is driving the new expansion. Quaker Oats is a unit of PepsiCo.



Ruthven’s Pallets Are No Lightweights

Lightweight, environmentally-friendly pallets made from recycled corrugated cardboard are being embraced by shippers around the globe. Ruthven’s newest manufacturer, Farmers Corrugated Solutions, is expanding to take advantage of this growing trend.

To expand and create 116 new jobs, Farmers Corrugated was awarded \$410,000 from the Economic Development Set-Aside (EDSA) program and Enterprise Zone tax benefits by the Iowa Department of Economic Development.

The new subsidiary of Farmers Co-op Elevator Company will expand into a new 18,000 square foot building and purchase equipment to automate the pallet-making process.

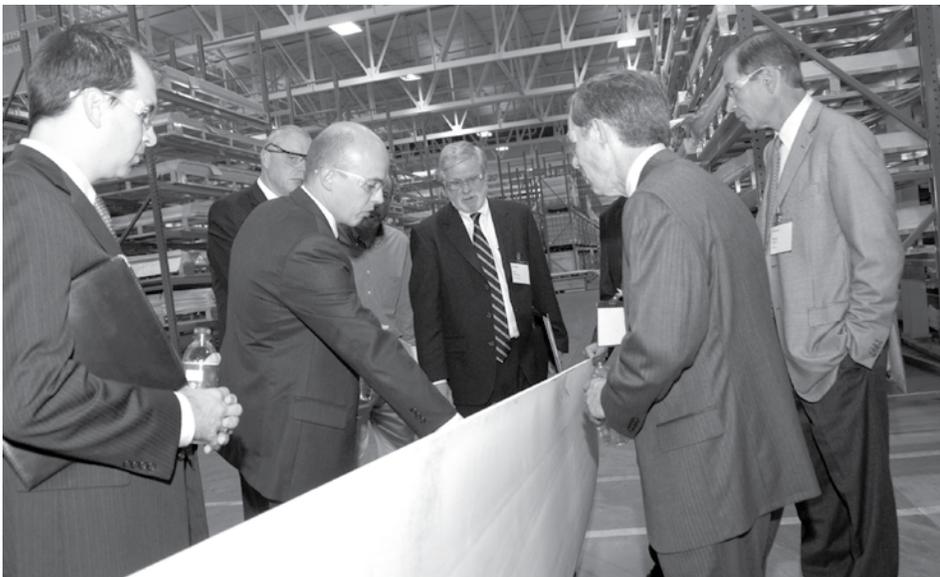
Farmers Co-op general manager John Steinkamp says community leaders in Ruthven were looking for manufacturers or other employers to come to the area. Around the same time, he became aware of an Arkansas company that was selling its corrugated pallet manufacturing division. “The more we researched the industry, the more we became convinced that this type of operation would thrive in Ruthven.”

“Our lightweight pallets are ideal for exporting, as well as domestic shipping of products made by all industries. At one-fifth the weight of a wooden pallet, they are by far the cheapest way to ship,” explains Steinkamp.

Wind Energy Recruiting



Governor Chet Culver is the only elected official from the United States to be given the opportunity to address the The Husum Wind Conference, the largest wind energy trade show in Europe. He is shown at the conference with Sigmar Gabriel, Germany's Federal Secretary of Environment. Governor Culver's presentation was part of a business promotion mission to Europe organized by the Iowa Department of Economic Development. The state of Iowa has recruited new facilities of three leading manufacturers of wind energy equipment--Siemens, Acciona, and Clipper--from ongoing marketing activities.



Grand opening attendees touring the new IDED assisted manufacturing facility in Fort Madison examine a giant wind blade. Siemens Power Generation is expected to produce approximately 600 wind turbine blades per year, which will be shipped to U.S. wind farms.

Insurance plays big role in Iowa economy

Statistics on Iowa's insurance industry, which is a targeted sector of state economic development strategies, show the increasing importance of insurance and related financial services jobs to the Iowa economy.

In 2005, Iowa's insurance industry output as a percentage of the state's total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was 8.19 percent, ranking it second highest among the 50 states. For comparison, Connecticut was first with 8.63 percent, Delaware third with 7.53 percent while Nebraska was fourth with 6.31 percent and Wisconsin fifth at 3.89 percent. The insurance industry nationwide accounts for 2.39 percent of the total U.S. Gross Domestic Product, according to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.

In terms of the absolute size of the industry, Iowa is 11th largest among the states with an insurance industry annual economic activity of over \$9.6 billion in 2005.

In the past 19 years, the State of Iowa has added 15,300 net new jobs in the insurance industry. Employment growth in Iowa's insurance industry has been almost four and a half times faster than other sectors of the state economy.

Insurance companies currently expanding and adding jobs in Iowa include Cottingham & Butler Inc., Kunkel, Bounds & Associates, and Sedgwick Claims Management Services in Dubuque; Nationwide/Allied Insurance, Aviva, and The Principal Financial Group in Des Moines; AEGON USA in Cedar Rapids; and CUNA Mutual Group in Waverly.

CALENDAR

Nov. 7 - Jan. 30 Mechanics of Exporting
Multiple workshops and locations
See page 2 for more information

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IT departments of companies in targeted industries.

Information Technology (which includes insurance and financial information) is a targeted industry for development efforts of the Iowa Department of Economic Development. Other targeted industries are Advanced Manufacturing and the Biosciences.

Companies must demonstrate that they will invest two dollars of other funds in the training for every dollar received from IDED.

For more information on the IT Training Fund, contact Mary Klemesrud at 515-242-4808 or visit: www.iowalifechanging.com/business.

McGraw-Hill opens global headquarters

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and other content for the critical subjects of science, engineering, math and allied health.

City of Dubuque and Iowa Department of Economic Development financial awards and tax benefits helped bring the McGraw-Hill expansion to the Port of Dubuque area. In return, at least 24 jobs will be created.

Employees moved to the new 139,000 square-foot office building in August from a leased facility on Kerper Boulevard in Dubuque.

To help mark the occasion, McGraw announced the launch of the William C. Brown/James H. McGraw Greater Dubuque College Scholarship Competition. Two \$10,000 grants will be awarded to Greater Dubuque-area high school seniors to get college degrees in science, engineering or math.



"Our new facility in Dubuque serves as an important gateway for developing the textbooks and education materials needed by tomorrow's scientists, engineers, mathematicians and health professionals," said Harold "Terry" McGraw III, chairman, president and CEO of The McGraw-Hill Companies.