

# Iowa Workforce Monthly



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- Larry Gearheart took advantage of the Trade Adjustment Act assistance after being laid off. ...pg. 2
- Iowa Workforce Development ended a week of Food Bank activities with a BBQ from on Friday, June 19<sup>th</sup>, on the east lawn of IWD ...pg. 2
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## Amusement Park Safety Reminders

Many families will be visiting amusement parks this summer. Amusement parks and carnivals can be a fun and safe experience but only if riders pay attention and follow all the safety rules.

- Take responsibility for your own safety. There are no mandatory child safety regulations on amusement park rides. Iowa does inspect rides but it's up to you to make sure you and your family are following the rules.
- Don't board a ride that looks unsafe - even though parks and carnivals pay attention to safety, exceptions can occur. Make sure to follow your instincts and don't ride something that troubles you.

- Keep your arms, legs, feet and head inside the ride at all times - sometimes, hands and feet that are dangling out of the car can get caught between the moving car or surrounding structures. Make sure seat belts and lap bars are locked tight - ask for help from the ride operator if you need help.
- Parents should be aware many rides approved for children are designed to fit adult bodies and may leave small riders vulnerable to falls or forceful ejections. Make sure you pay attention to the posted weight and height restrictions.

If you would like more information, visit [www.iowaworkforce.org/labor/amusement.htm](http://www.iowaworkforce.org/labor/amusement.htm).

## Statewide Unemployment Data

Iowa's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate jumped to 5.8 percent in May from 5.1 percent in April, confirming the labor market's current weakness. The state's jobless rate stood at 4.0 percent for the same month one year ago. The U.S. unemployment rate reached 9.4 percent in May, up from 8.9 percent in April, and 5.5 percent in May 2008.

"A surge in new labor force entrants combined with a drop in employment pushed the state's unemployment rate to a 22-year high in May," said

Elisabeth Buck, director of Iowa Workforce Development. "While unemployment may continue to rise for some time, job losses are expected to progressively lessen in the months ahead."

The total number of working Iowans dropped to 1,583,100 in May from 1,589,900 in April. Total employment was 25,400 higher in May 2008 at 1,608,500.

This is the highest level of unemployment experienced in the state since July 1986, when the number was reported at 97,700.

# One On One



with Elisabeth Buck, IWD Director

I hope everyone's summer is off to a good start. We kicked summer off last week with a tour to the southeast region of the state. I had the opportunity to meet with local leaders, press and staff at several of the IWD offices. Amusement parks will be very busy this summer and as may have read on the previous page, please take a minute to think about safety while at a park. While rides

can be fun, they are also very large machines that can malfunction. Remember to use your instincts – if something doesn't seem safe to you, don't ride it. At IWD, we are always trying to promote a diverse workforce. Below, you can read about a successful task force that is meeting in Waterloo. It is our goal that every region will implement these easy goals in trying to increase diversity.

Finally, June brings a big fund-raising drive for the Food Bank of Iowa. IWD was able to work with Famous Dave's who donated 500 lunches to this worthy cause. The community supported this huge effort and IWD was able to raise over \$4,000. Thank you to everyone who helped organize this event.

## Community Partnership working to remove employment barriers

Over the last year, Iowa Workforce Development and the Waterloo Commission on Human Rights met with several community sources to address continued divide and gaps in unemployment ratio's between blacks and whites in the Cedar Valley area.

Multiple strides have been made in removing these barrier issues. The task force recently announced the following milestones:

- Career Access Points have been established including the Eastside Ministerial Alliance (EMA), Jubilee Church (the HUB), and other sites are in the works. Job coaches and volunteers have

been identified in assisting the process at the centers. If interested in joining as a volunteer contact the local IWD Office.

- Tax Credits; the task force has identified over 190 employers in the region that have utilized tax credits available to employers for the hiring of ex offenders and welfare recipients. The task force continues to develop instruments and a comprehensive plan to encourage employers in this area.

- The task force worked to identify resources available to fund youth employment projects. Fortunately, the

economic stimulus package included funding for the region to create an estimated 150 youth jobs for this summer. The program is being administered by Hawkeye Community College low@Work.

The task force will continue to meet in order to address ongoing issues, set targets and goal and to implement additional strategies. If you are interest in more information or would like to join the task force, contact the Waterloo Workforce Center at (319) 291-2546.

## TAA Success Story

Larry Gearheart took advantage of the Trade Adjustment Act assistance after being laid off. He enrolled in Northeast Iowa Community College to obtain a Business Specialist degree.

Gearheart sent the following message to IWD:

"Thank you for the opportunity that your staff and the good taxpayers from the State of Iowa, so that I could receive my AA degree. with this valuable training and self-confidence, I can accomplish anything I pursue now and in the future."

In order to earn his degree, Gearheart had to work his "number one stumbling block" - writing. He was determined to achieve above average grades and thanks to his hard work, he accomplished just that!

## Social Security Work Incentive Workshop

July 9<sup>th</sup> - 1 - 4:30 p.m.

CCC Technology Center, Rm 15

1951 Manufacturing Dr.

Clinton, IA 52732-7040

Attend this workshop to hear valuable information regarding how an individuals Social Security Disability Insurance or SSI benefits will be affected by working. This workshop will help those who are receiving services through Iowa Waiver Programs. Admission is free and open to the public.

For more information, contact (888) 409-0283.

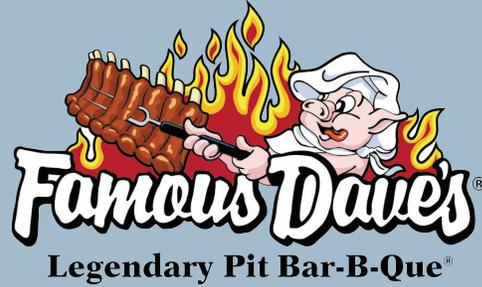
# IWD Proudly Supports Food Bank of Iowa

Iowa Workforce Development ended a week of Food Bank activities with a BBQ from on Friday, June 19<sup>th</sup>, on the east lawn of IWD. Almost 500 lunches were served raising over \$2,500 for Food Bank.

“Thanks to our friends at Famous Dave’s, we were able to serve a delicious lunch and raise money for a good cause at the same time,” stated Iowa Workforce Development Director Elisabeth Buck. Famous Dave’s provided Georgia chopped pork sandwiches, corn bread and sweet tea. Chips and Blue Bunny ice cream sandwiches were also provided.

During the seven-day Food

Bank drive, IWD raised over \$4,000 in donations. A few of the other events during the drive included an ice cream sundae bar, pastries from Jaarsma Bakery, Brugger’s Bagel breakfast and a Dessert Challenge.



## Disabled Veterans receive discount from Des Moines Area Transit Authority

After many months of working toward the goal of getting reduced bus fares for Veterans, one key first step has been established. Veterans with a service-connected disability can now receive discounted bus fare from the Des Moines Area Transit Authority. To receive a the fare

discount, you must complete an application form. You may use your VA card as proof of your service-connected disability. Call DART at 283-8111 to have an application mailed to you. You may also take your card to the DART office located at the address below.

Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority  
1100 DART Way  
Des Moines, IA 50309  
Phone: (515) 283-8111



# Noteworthy Employee Acknowledgements and Accomplishments

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

- Heidi Wicks sent a note of thanks to **Christine Nilles (Des Moines)** for taking the time to meet with

QA staff and Central Office PROMISE JOBS staff to offer IWorks tips. "This was very beneficial to us and will help the QA team in more ways than can be described. I cannot thank you enough for sharing your knowledge of the system"

- Marcia Tope sent an e-mail thanking **Heidi Wicks (Des Moines)** for providing great information

through a Report Summary. "With the Quality Assurance plan reflecting what is being done to focus on improvement, this report aligns well with that and then takes it a step further so that each region/county has a better understanding of how well they are doing or where they need to be to reach their goal."

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

## Iowa Workforce Monthly

1000 E. Grand Ave.  
Des Moines, IA 50319  
(800) 562-4692

For Deaf or Hard of Hearing, call Relay 711

*Iowa Workforce Monthly* is intended to help keep Iowa employers, job seekers and IWD employees informed about critical employment issues affecting Iowa. For more information, contact Kathryn Hommer via e-mail at [kathryn.hommer@iwd.iowa.gov](mailto:kathryn.hommer@iwd.iowa.gov) or 515-281-5407.

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**Auxiliary aids and services are available to individuals with disabilities upon request.**

## Employee News

### Anniversaries

#### 5 Years

Aaron Sauerbrei  
Margaret Wilcox

#### 10 Years

Brent Camery  
James Desmidt

#### 15 Years

Deadra Erickson

#### 20 Years

Jens Nissen  
Debbie Fisher

#### 25 Years

Daniel Anderson  
Carol Harberts-Morgan

#### 30 Years

Sandra Kokke

#### 45+ Years

Karen Conant

### New Hires

Randolph Adcock  
Chrisella Barkema  
Anthony Burns  
Thomas Edler  
Shamika James  
Tyler McCaleb  
Marianne Parker  
Brandon Pringle  
Zachary Vreeland  
Nicholas Wuebker  
Kristi Zeransky

### Promotions/ Transfers

Douglas Brooks  
Robin Plummer  
Laura Prettyman  
Ellen Fritz  
Randall Stephenson



### Retirements

Leanna Fritz  
Marvin Martens

