



COMMUNITY COLLEGE LEADER BULLETIN

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Inside this issue

- [Career Academy Incentive Fund grants awarded to two community colleges](#)
- [Iowa's community colleges focus on data to support guided pathways and equity](#)
- [Updated Faculty Qualifications Guide now available](#)
- [Volunteer Framework of Accountability data vetting process begins for Iowa's community colleges](#)
- [Alliance to Foster Equity and Inclusion announces priorities](#)
- [CTSO expansion opens doors to exciting career and technical education opportunities for students](#)
- [Career conversation training aims to engage, explore and empower](#)
- [Register Now: Iowa Adult Education and Literacy Summer Conference](#)
- [Division welcomes new education program consultant](#)
- [Varner elected NCSDCC vice chair](#)
- [Harden elected to Advance CTE Board of Directors](#)
- [Harris provides leadership in two national adult education organizations](#)
- [Fletcher elected to NACTE board](#)
- [Division makes progress on CTE administrative consultant and FCS consultant positions](#)

Career Academy Incentive Fund grants awarded to two community colleges



the workforce.

Western Iowa Tech Community College was awarded a \$1 million grant to increase access to career academy programs in high-demand fields through a new regional center in Denison. Indian Hills Community College was awarded \$500,000 for an expansion of the Hills West Regional Center in Centerville. Students in partnering school districts will benefit from industry partnerships, earn high school and college credit and gain technical and traditional academic skills offered through career and technical education (CTE) programs. This is the fourth round of awards.

Western Iowa Tech's grant will be used to create a new regional center in Denison that will serve students from five rural districts in western Iowa: Denison, Boyer Valley, Maple Valley-Anthon Oto/Charter Oak-Ute (MVAOCO), Odebolt-Arthur-Battle Creek-Ida Grove (OABCIG) and Woodbine. The regional center will provide students with access to career academy programming in agriculture, business, electrical and education.

Indian Hills will use the grant to expand career academy programs at the Hills West Regional Center. The college was originally awarded a \$1 million grant for the initial development of the regional center in February 2021. Business, health sciences (nursing/certified nursing assistant), social work and sports medicine academies will be added to the current programming, which includes agricultural sciences, construction technology, industrial maintenance and welding technology.

"Expanding access to programming in high-demand fields through these innovative regional centers will help more students leave high school prepared for the workforce or ready for further postsecondary education and training," said Iowa Department of Education Director Ann Lebo. "I am thankful to these community college, school district, business and community leaders for working together to help more students access high-quality, capital-intensive programs that would be cost prohibitive for individual schools to provide on their own."

Gov. Kim Reynolds and the Iowa Department of Education have awarded \$1.5 million in competitive grants through the Career Academy Incentive Fund to prepare more high school students for success in college, postsecondary training and

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Iowa's community colleges focus on data to support guided pathways and equity.



Iowa's community colleges united on May 16 to learn about high-impact strategies to strengthen college approaches to guided pathways through a data and equity convening hosted by the Iowa Department of Education at the FFA Enrichment Center. Davis Jenkins and John Fink from the Community College Research Center (CCRC) led teams from all 15 of Iowa's community colleges through a series of sessions focused on increasing enrollment and improving student onboarding and outcomes by using data with an equity lens for planning and

decision making. [Recordings of the event sessions can be viewed here.](#)

Vlad Bassis of the Department presented outcomes information available to colleges via the [Iowa Student Outcomes website](#), and Roy Salcedo, Director of Equity and Inclusion at Community Colleges for Iowa, presented information and updates on statewide equity efforts for the community colleges.

Since 2018, Iowa's community colleges have been learning about the national guided pathways movement and implementing strategies to put them into place locally. Each college has a unique work plan and strategy and has also been a part of a statewide initiative to learn and share ideas with each other through a grant received by the Iowa Department of Education in 2019 from Ascendium. This in-person convening was the final event made possible by the guided pathways implementation grant that complemented a previous series of technical assistance webinars that functioned as a way for the colleges to learn from each other as well as from national research and speakers.

For more information, contact Kelly Friesleben, Education Program Consultant (kelly.friesleben@iowa.gov or (515) 868-2847).

Updated Faculty Qualifications Guide now available

The Iowa Department of Education has released an updated *Iowa Community Colleges Faculty Qualifications Guide* which serves as a one-stop resource for Higher Learning Commission and State of Iowa faculty standards. This comprehensive guide also includes recommended procedures for faculty evaluation and recording, a list of qualifying credentials for course instructors and resources for faculty review. The Faculty Qualifications Guide is available on the [Department's website](#).

For more information, contact Amy Gieseke, Bureau Chief (amy.gieseke@iowa.gov or (515) 858-2234).



Volunteer Framework of Accountability data vetting process begins for Iowa's community colleges



Despite the year-long delay caused by VFA's system update, the Department has uploaded all cohort data for 2022 on May 20 ahead of the June 1 deadline. Iowa's community colleges currently have more time than previously scheduled to vet the data before its scheduled publication in late August 2022.

The Department finalized the data submission for 2021 and reported it to Voluntary Framework of Accountability (VFA) following a data vetting process by Iowa's community colleges. This data was published on the VFA site on May 16, thus finalizing the data reporting season for the past year.

The Volunteer Framework of Accountability (VFA) opened a newly updated system for annual data submission in mid-March of 2022. VFA, a product of the American Association of Community Colleges, collects data from nearly 200 community colleges nationwide to provide colleges with comparable metrics related to a wide range of student performance measures, enabling colleges to benchmark against their peers.

For questions or more information, contact Vlad Bassis, Administrative Consultant (vladimir.bassis@iowa.gov or (515) 326-1718) or Jeff Fletcher, Education Program Consultant (jeffrey.fletcher@iowa.gov or (515) 321-7309).

Alliance to Foster Equity and Inclusion announces priorities



The Alliance to Foster Equity and Inclusion (Alliance) steering committee, a collaboration between the Iowa Association of Community College Trustees, Iowa's 15 community colleges and the Iowa Department of Education, announced the group's priorities at the May 23 meeting. These priorities include the following:

- **Data, Research and Trends** - Identifying equity gaps, challenges, trends, and statistical irregularities currently impacting Iowa's community colleges using the colleges' data. National trends that may be or will impact Iowa will also be identified. The priority will be led by Ambé White of Iowa Western Community College.
- **Male Student Enrollment** - Improving male student enrollment, which has decreased almost 20.0 percent in a five-year span in some of Iowa's community colleges. This priority will be led by Dr. Vincent Boyd of Iowa Valley Community College District.
- **Aligning Credit & Non-Credit** - Aligning credit and noncredit courses, including addressing inequities of access to certain services and supporting each of Iowa's community colleges on alignment initiatives. This priority will be led by Dr. Amy Foley of Eastern Iowa Community College.
- **Community College Affinity Networks** - Creating affinity networks to support faculty and staff from underrepresented or underserved groups and establishing a diversity, equity and inclusion think tank to identify future Alliance priorities. This priority will be led by the Alliance steering committee.

For more information, contact Amy Gieseke, Bureau Chief (amy.gieseke@iowa.gov or (515) 858-2234).

CTSO expansion opens doors to exciting career and technical education opportunities for students

Starting last fall, Ankeny High School opened their local chapter of [Future Business Leaders of America](#), commonly known as



FBLA. As the largest business [career and technical student organization \(CTSO\)](#) in the world, FBLA has an annual roster of over 230,000 members worldwide who, like Tyler, are interested in business, career preparation and building leadership skills.

“FBLA is great,” said Michael Mertz, Ankeny High School FBLA adviser. “It challenges kids to get outside of the school and out of their comfort zones to apply what they’ve learned. They’ve had to take initiative and work on things like public

speaking, networking, fundraising and leading events.

“There are a lot of opportunities for them to grow.”

The recent addition of FBLA at Ankeny High School is the result of a requirement that all [career and technical education \(CTE\)](#) program areas have a CTSO by 2024-25. CTE programs provide valuable education and preparation to students for future careers in high-demand job fields. The goal of the new CTSO requirement is to ensure that Iowa students have equitable access and more uniform experiences with CTE opportunities. In response, CTSO chapters are booming with expansion across the state.

“We forecasted to have 121 new CTSO programs onboarded this year,” said Chris Dzurick, education consultant at the Iowa Department of Education. “We nearly doubled that number by February and anticipate adding another 700 programs over the next couple of years.”

A CTSO is more than just an extracurricular activity or school club. It is an integral part of a course curriculum and applies a combination of experiential learning, leadership development and classroom enrichment for its members. Students can use what they have learned in the classroom and apply it to real-world applications through projects, coordinated events, conferences and competitions provided through CTSO experiences.

“A CTSO is the vehicle to show students how applicable their education really is,” Dzurick said.

[READ MORE](#)

For more information, contact Chris Dzurick, Education Program Consultant (chris.dzurick@iowa.gov or (515) 419-4792).

[Career conversation training aims to engage, explore and empower](#)



Iowa Meaningful Career Conversations trainings were held throughout the state during the month of May, giving school personnel the valuable opportunity to learn more about how to engage students, parents and community partners on career development. These half-day trainings provided techniques for staff to have purposeful conversations with learners to help them better understand the relationship between education and employment. Conversations like these can be vital for shaping [individual career and academic plans](#) and assisting students to become future ready.

“Career conversations strengthen what students need to know about themselves, their career interests, passions and aptitudes,” said Katy Blatnick-Gagne, education consultant at the Iowa Department of Education. “The information learned from these trainings can help

staff point students in the right direction for careers and can provide support throughout the pre-K-12 education system and into postsecondary learning.”

Meaningful Career Conversations trainings take an inclusive approach and any school staff member who serves in a mentor role or takes part in career conversations with students and learners in pre-Kindergarten through post-graduation (grade 20) was invited to enroll in the class.

“This training is important for not only faculty,” said Sue Schirmer, [Heartland Area Education Agency](#) consultant for school counseling and future ready. “It is also for those who interact with students like bus drivers, lunch room staff, administrative assistants and others.”

Iowa Meaningful Career Conversations is a joint project between the Iowa Department of Education, [Iowa's Area Education Agencies \(AEA\)](#) and over 30 educators and business partners.

There were 388 school personnel registered for the Iowa Meaningful Career Conversations trainings this month. Those who completed the training have been invited to a “train the trainer” event that will take place this fall. This event will support

attendees in sharing their knowledge of Meaningful Career Conversations with their colleagues.

“This is a great opportunity to not only help students engage, explore and empower their next steps,” Blatnick-Gagne said. “It’s also a chance for educators, coaches, custodians and others to feel successful and prepared to help students on their career paths.”

For more information, contact Katy Blatnick-Gagne, Education Program Consultant (katy-blatnick-gagne@iowa.gov or (515) 681-6733).

Register Now: Iowa Adult Education and Literacy Summer Conference



The Iowa Department of Education and Iowa Literacy Council are inviting adult education administrators, staff and instructors to attend the Iowa Adult Education and Literacy Summer Conference July 26-28, 2022. We are excited to return to an in-person event and plan to celebrate as we move forward with this year's theme: *Facing the Future Together*. The event will be held at the FFA Enrichment Center in Ankeny. Conference workshops will take place on July 26 from 1:00 - 4:00 PM with the full-day conference event scheduled for July 27 and 28.

Registration is live. Please click [HERE](#) to go to the Summer Conference website.

For more information, contact Elizabeth Johnson (elizabeth.johnson2@iowa.gov) or Helene Fein (ilcexecutivedirector@iowa.gov).

Division welcomes new education program consultant



The Division of Community Colleges and Workforce Preparation is pleased to announce that Erica Woods-Schmitz will join the Career and Technical Education team on June 3 as the education program consultant for career and academic planning.

Prior to joining the Division, Erica served as a counselor at Johnston High School.

Within the Division, Erica will be responsible for all aspects of career and academic planning for students as they move through their secondary education and make plans for postsecondary education and/or career and workforce opportunities.

Varner elected NCSDDC vice chair



Jeremy Varner, Administrator of the Division of Community Colleges and Workforce Preparation, has been elected vice chair of the National Council of State Directors of Community Colleges (NCSDDC).

For nearly 50 years, the council has served as the only entity representing the collective interest of state agencies and state boards of community colleges. Affiliated with the American Association of Community Colleges, it serves as a forum for state directors to exchange ideas and address changes in attitude and policy toward community colleges at the federal, state and local levels.

Harden elected to Advance CTE Board of Directors

Dennis Harden, bureau chief of Career and Technical Education, was recently elected by his peers to serve a three-year term on the Advance CTE Board of Directors.

Advance CTE is the longest-standing national nonprofit that represents state CTE directors and state leaders responsible for secondary, postsecondary and adult career and technical education across all 50 states, the District of Columbia and U.S. territories.



Harris provides leadership in two national adult education organizations



Alex Harris, administrative consultant, will soon begin his second term as chair for the National Association of State Directors for Adult Education (NASDAE). NASDAE is organized by state directors of adult education to coordinate, develop and conduct programs of professional development for state adult education leadership; serve as a catalyst for public policy review and development related to adult education; and to disseminate information on the field of adult education.

Mr. Harris will also soon begin his second term as the state director representative for the national Coalition on Adult Basic Education (COABE). COABE exists to provide leadership, communication, professional development and advocacy for adult education and literacy practitioners to advance quality services for all adult learners.

Fletcher elected to NACTEI board



Dr. Jeffrey Fletcher, education program consultant, was elected to the board of NACTEI as the Region III representative covering Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri and Wisconsin during the 2022 National Association for Career and Technical Education Information (NACTEI) annual conference in Savannah, GA.

The [NACTEI](#) annual conference provides professional development and training for recipients of the federal Carl D. Perkins program with an emphasis on career and technical education information, finance and accountability systems. Additionally, the association provides the opportunity to exchange ideas; discuss and recommend policy; promote the establishment of effective local, state, and federal career & technical education information systems; and contribute to a national career & technical education communication information network.

Division makes progress on CTE administrative consultant and FCS consultant positions



The Department is in the process of adding a new career and technical education administrative consultant and a new Family and Consumer Science education program consultant to our team. We look forward to announcing these new team members soon.

Iowa Department of Education

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