



## **Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Helps Mingo Man Find Independence at Work**



More than 10 years after his first conversations with a vocational counselor, Mark Baldwin finally feels like he's arrived at where he wants to be – in a job where he can be just another part of the team.

“I just have always wanted to be an independent worker,” he said. “I just wanted to be a fulltime worker.”

Baldwin has been working for just over a year at Accumold, an Ankeny plastic injection molder, overseeing an automated machine and using a microscope to check for defects in very small parts. The role is a good fit, Baldwin believes, because it allows him to work at an active-but-reasonable pace, lessening the anxiety that can come when his Asperger's Syndrome makes it difficult to keep up in a high-stress environment.

“It keeps me so busy, and it's a good work environment,” he said of Accumold. “I like a good work environment where nobody's yelling at you for making a slight mistake.”

Mark launched his journey to vocational independence in October 2009, when he first began working with Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS) while attending Colfax-Mingo High School. [Under a recently approved state government reorganization plan, IVRS will become a division within Iowa Workforce Development effective July 1 – thereby expanding and improving Iowa's ability to offer a wide variety of workplace services to the people who need them most.]

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## VIDEO: EMT Apprenticeships



Boone High School recently received a grant from the Iowa Health Careers Registered Apprenticeship program to fund training and equipment for an EMT Apprenticeship program. Students regularly visit the fire station to learn about first responder careers in Boone. [Click the image above to watch our video.](#)

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# RA Grants Total \$13.5M for Health Care Careers

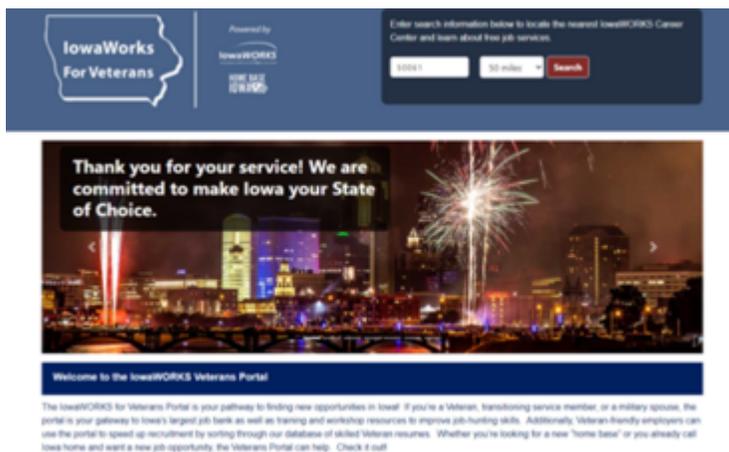
Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds this month awarded \$13.5 million in grants to fund apprenticeship programs aimed at expanding health careers across Iowa.

Money from the Health Careers Registered Apprenticeship grants will go to 21 RA programs, expected to support a total of 1,463 apprentices. Awardees include hospitals, community colleges, school districts, and assistant living facilities.

In a news release, Reynolds said the grants represents “a meaningful step toward growing our high-demand health care workforce.”

Programs will support the development of Nursing, Emergency Medical Responders, Behavioral Health & Substance Abuse Specialists, and other critical areas.

Awardees are required to provide an industry-recognized credential



## IowaWORKS Unveils New Web Portal for Veterans

IowaWORKS this month unveiled the launch of a new online portal that will make it easier for Veterans and their families to find a new career in Iowa.

The new portal, [www.IowaWorksForVeterans.gov](http://www.IowaWorksForVeterans.gov), was created to help Veterans connect with one-on-one job search assistance and to aid employers with locating and hiring people who have experience from the armed forces.

[IowaWorksForVeterans.gov](http://IowaWorksForVeterans.gov) provides access to the valuable career-enhancing tools and resources offered by IowaWORKS and Home Base Iowa while also containing a variety of information about the benefits Iowa provides to Veterans. The goal is to make Iowa a top employment destination for Veterans and their families.

“Iowa’s economy needs Veterans – mission-oriented people who know how to work hard and get a job done,” said Beth Townsend, Director of Iowa Workforce Development. “Whether you’re transitioning out of the service and looking for a new place to call home or a native Iowan who’s simply looking to better your economic prospects, Home Base Iowa and IowaWORKS are here to help you get connected with the Iowa employers who need you.”

Veterans and their spouses can use the new portal to create an IowaWORKS account, search for open jobs, attend online workshops, and/or register for one-on-one

that can also be stackable and used by apprentices to advance a career in health care.

concierge services. Iowa businesses likewise can register themselves as “veteran friendly” employers and receive access to resumes from a broad pool of Veteran applicants.

**For more information on the grant program and who received funding, [visit this page](#).**

**To tour the site, visit [IowaWorksForVeterans.gov](http://IowaWorksForVeterans.gov) or view a [video walk-through](#).**

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## Learn by Listening



More than 35,000 downloads so far by listeners around the world. Hosts Ben Oldach and Kathy Leggett will introduce you to a host of workforce programs and people making a difference.

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# Navigating Ageism: Workshop Gives Advice to Job-Searching Older Iowans



Clayton Coder worked in pharmaceuticals for 25 years before a company reshuffling late last year reorganized him out of a job.

Alarmed by his sudden unemployment, the 57-year-old Coder applied for every suitable open position he could find. After submitting roughly 300 job applications without an interview, he says he began to notice a pattern in the rejection letters.

“I was getting the same response,” Coder said. “It was almost the exact same wordage in every letter except for the name of the company. That’s when I began to realize that something was going on here.”

Exactly what, however, didn’t become clear until he attended *Navigating Ageism in Your Job Search*, a monthly IowaWORKS workshop in Davenport and Des Moines and available on Zoom across the state.

[Click here to continue reading.](#)

## Scenes from "Build My Future," which Gives Students a Taste of the Trades



Students from roughly 100 Iowa school districts assembled Wednesday on the Iowa State Fairgrounds to explore careers in a wide range of building trades and other occupations. Iowa Workforce Development Director Beth Townsend (above) addressed a group of the students during a signing event intended to announce commitments by some of them to careers in trade occupations.

Throughout the event, participating businesses demonstrated the ins and outs of life in their particular professions. Among other things, students were given the chance to operate both real and simulated machinery and practice what it's like to be an EMT. Sophie Shuckahosee, a 16-year-old sophomore from Tama who wants to be a dentist, pronounced it easier to intubate than she expected. (She's the one below, attending to the dummy.)







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## IWD Wins National SIDES Award



Iowa Workforce Development was recognized this week for its work to preserve integrity and efficiency in a critical area of its unemployment insurance system. The national award applauds IWD for its strong integration of the **State Information Data Exchange System (SIDES)** to better serve employers and claimants and signifies Iowa's position as one of the top 13 best-performing states in its usage of SIDES to improve UI administration.

It was presented Wednesday by the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) at a national SIDES seminar in Indianapolis.

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## Upcoming Events / Opportunities

