



Promising Partnerships:

The Workforce System and Registered Apprenticeship A Deeper Look into Models of Success

IOWA STATEWIDE APPRENTICESHIP INITIATIVE

OVERVIEW

The State of Iowa has been a leader in supporting the Registered Apprenticeship model of work-based learning. Iowa has low unemployment and a growing business environment, and the state has seen a decline in the young adult population. While this creates excellent career opportunities, it also means Iowa residents will need to be highly trained and fully prepared to fill critical job shortages to ensure the success of businesses throughout the state. Additionally, Iowa youth need guidance and encouragement to enter those occupations most in need of skilled workers.

The state has recognized the value of the apprenticeship model as a key strategy to develop the skilled workforce needed for economic growth and prosperity. As of May 2015, over 700 apprenticeship programs, involving more than 8,000 apprentices, had been registered across the state.

Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) and the Iowa

Economic Development Authority (IEDA) work hand-in-hand on behalf of the business community. Together, they have identified and supported the state's key industry sectors, which include Advanced Manufacturing, Financial Services and Insurance, and Biosciences. Workforce system business representatives also work closely with staff of the Iowa Office of Apprenticeship to market the apprenticeship model to individual businesses and industry associations within these sectors.

In 2014, the Iowa Legislature enacted the Iowa Apprenticeship Act to increase the number of apprentices in Iowa through training grants for eligible apprenticeship program sponsors. In addition to providing employers with a skilled workforce and enhancing training and job opportunities for job seekers, Iowa partners have indicated that implementation of this law is enhancing trust and transparency among the business community, trade organizations and public agencies.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

IEDA and IWD work closely with the Iowa Office of Apprenticeship, the community college system and others to identify employers' workforce needs and to develop solutions to address them. A recent example of the quality of this partnership is their work with the Technology Association of Iowa (TAI). Information technology (IT) firms and other businesses heavily dependent on the IT sector worked with the Iowa Office of Apprenticeship to identify the occupational areas of greatest need. The businesses in the TAI collaborated to develop apprenticeship curricula for these occupations. The resulting Registered Apprenticeship programs for these skills sets are operated in conjunction with internships for Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) and tuition reimbursement programs, which were already in place in Iowa. This endeavor has been so successful that, as IEDA recruits new IT companies to Iowa, the TAI Registered Apprenticeship Program has been one of its selling points.

IWD staff recruit apprentices as they work with job seekers in need of new or updated skills. Depending on each employer's needs, workforce staff may use the National Career Readiness Credential tests or other assessment instruments, provide soft skills training, and provide help with resume writing and other services to prepare job seekers for apprenticeship opportunities.

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Based on experience, workforce system staff have learned that an apprenticeship program is an effective strategy for job seekers interested in an “earn and learn” approach to building a career with solid wages and opportunities for advancement. The workforce system’s close partnership with the Iowa Office of Apprenticeship ensures that all training opportunities, including apprenticeship programs across industry sectors, are explored when counseling customers.

The Iowa Apprenticeship Act of 2014 established a standing annual appropriation of \$3.1 million. All existing Registered Apprenticeship program sponsors are eligible for funding; for 2015, 67 sponsors submitted applications for grant funds. The legislation allows the funds to be used to expand or enhance apprenticeship programs, for such diverse purposes as related instruction costs, purchasing equipment to support the apprenticeship program, developing additional locations to expand apprenticeship training opportunities, and other similar uses. This effort is administered by IEDA in collaboration with IWD.

BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT

IEDA aligns partners to ensure that Iowa’s talent pipeline and regulatory business environment are beneficial for business, while the Iowa Office of Apprenticeship works directly with employers to develop apprenticeship program standards and to register their programs. Partners ensure the process is as simple as possible for participating employers.

The Iowa Office of Apprenticeship has business contacts throughout the state and serves as a tireless advocate for apprenticeship, handling most of the employer recruitment, and working closely with IWD and IEDA. The partners support a variety of businesses as well as industry associations, as illustrated in the description above of the partnership with the TAI.

Some of the larger businesses in the state with Registered Apprenticeship programs include:

- Alliant Energy
- Archer Daniels Midland
- Associated Builders and Contractors of Iowa
- John Deere
- MidAmerican Energy
- Rockwell Collins
- TMC Transportation
- Union Building Trades

PROGRAM PARTNERS

Under the leadership of Iowa’s Governor, cabinet agencies work together as a team to provide quality outcomes for Iowa’s employers and workers. IEDA, IWD, and the Iowa Departments of Education, Human Services, and Corrections align their resources and efforts to the benefit of their shared business and job seeker customers. These state agencies are joined by other key statewide partners – the Iowa Office of Apprenticeship, Registered Apprenticeship program sponsors (including employers and labor organizations), the community college system, the TAI and other industry associations, Veterans Affairs and others – to promote quality apprenticeship programs for Iowa residents.

Some hallmarks of the strong partnerships among statewide partners include the following:

- The State Director of the Iowa Office of Apprenticeship has served as an ex-officio member of the State Workforce Board for several years.
- The job listings for the public workforce system include apprenticeship opportunities in a variety of occupational areas.
- IWD, in partnership with IEDA and the Iowa Office of Apprenticeship, has established a set of robust online apprenticeship resources on the workforce development website.

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Community colleges are typically the lead training partners for apprenticeship programs. While labor organizations have in-house apprenticeship training in several skilled trade areas, they may contract with community colleges, as needed, to provide certain portions of the instructional component of the apprenticeship. The Iowa Department of Education is also a partner at the secondary level, promoting career exploration and awareness of apprenticeship opportunities to youth.

A new initiative underway is Elevate Iowa – a statewide campaign to promote awareness of the vital role that manufacturing plays in the state’s economy. The public/private partners and industry trade associations involved in this initiative have attracted discretionary funding to promote career exploration and to provide training scholarships for apprenticeship programs in advanced manufacturing.

TARGET POPULATIONS

All Unemployment Insurance recipients and other dislocated workers, veterans, youth and public workforce system customers are offered information about apprenticeship opportunities. Women and minorities are actively recruited for apprenticeship programs. As workforce system staff screen customers to determine their needs, those individuals in need of stronger technical skills or better jobs are evaluated to see if they might be a good fit for an apprenticeship program. The specific requirements of employers in the program are among the determining factors in choosing candidates with the right baseline qualifications.

An important focus of Iowa’s apprenticeship model is active recruitment of veterans and returning service members, through the Home Base Iowa program. IEDA, IWD and the Iowa Office of Apprenticeship partner with Veterans Affairs offices, Vocational Rehabilitation and other community organizations to recruit veterans into apprenticeship programs. There is also a statewide direct entry point into apprenticeship through a partnership among Building and Construction Trades, the Joint Apprenticeship Training Council, and Home Base Iowa. Classroom instruction, as well as on-the-job training for qualified veterans and transitioning service members, may be funded through the GI Bill.

The state apprenticeship program provides credit for relevant military training and experience and Home Base Iowa actively recruits returning service members and veterans to move to Iowa.

Ex-offenders also benefit from Registered Apprenticeship programs. The Iowa Office of Apprenticeship is partnering with the Iowa Department of Corrections statewide to ensure that qualified individuals released from the correctional system have solid technical skills that can support businesses’ needs.

There are also several youth programs that promote apprenticeship within the state. In addition to the Elevate Iowa program mentioned above, a highly-acclaimed Registered Apprenticeship program for young Iowans is the Eastern Iowa Community College Culinary Arts program. The local high school partners with Scott Community College to offer high school-aged youth the opportunity to learn culinary skills and earn credits towards an associate degree. Upon graduation from high school, participants may continue in their apprenticeship track and complete their degree. There are currently 80 restaurants in Eastern Iowa participating in this innovative, successful program.

TARGET INDUSTRIES

Registered Apprenticeship programs in Iowa train workers in several targeted industry sectors, including: Advanced Manufacturing, Aerospace, Biotechnology, Construction, Financial Services and Insurance, Healthcare, Information Technology, Transportation and other fields. A new area for apprenticeship of particular importance to Iowa is the biofuel industry. MidAmerican Energy, which has a Registered Apprenticeship program, is a national leader in wind energy.

FUNDING SOURCES AND PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES

FUNDING SOURCES	USE OF FUNDS
<p>CURRENT FUNDING SOURCES INCLUDE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act programs (funded by the U.S. Department of Labor) • State funds from the Iowa Apprenticeship Act • National Emergency Grants from the U.S. Department of Labor • Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) Grant from the U.S. Department of Labor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Related instruction costs for apprentices • Support for apprenticeship program employers (on-the-job training costs, equipment, program expansion, etc.)
PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	OUTCOMES
Number of apprentices enrolled (as of June 2015)	8,259
Number of active Registered Apprenticeship programs (as of June 2015)	711
Apprenticeship completion rate (FY 2014)	60.1%

KEYS TO SUCCESS

- **The strong support of the Iowa Office of Apprenticeship:** The State Director and staff are tireless in their efforts to recruit apprenticeship sponsors and then provide technical assistance to support them throughout the process.
- **Strong partnerships:** Iowa’s public agencies are committed to fulfilling employers’ workforce needs and work closely together to implement and maintain the apprenticeship training model.
- **Communication:** Partners communicate regularly and conduct outreach to both the public and employers, to increase awareness of the opportunities that apprenticeship can provide.
- **Innovative youth programs:** The Eastern Iowa Community College culinary program is a national model for youth apprenticeship, and Iowa has been a leader in developing pre-apprenticeship activities.
- **Business engagement strategies:** The Iowa Office of Apprenticeship, IEDA and IWD work as a team to make employers aware of the benefits that the apprenticeship model provides, and use their successful apprenticeship programs as a selling point when recruiting new businesses to Iowa.

For more information about Iowa’s apprenticeship program, please visit www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/apprenticeshipusa