



JACKSON COUNTY ECONOMIC ALLIANCE

JCEA Newsletter Winter 2014-15

Observations from the Director

by Dave Heiar

Economic development has many, many facets. It includes workforce development, job growth, capital investments, housing and quality of life factors just to name a few. It is this variety that keeps me intrigued and passionate about economic development. In this past few months, our office has been involved with initiatives that cover much of this varied spectrum.

Making sure that our local industries have access to a well trained workforce is a critical element of our economic development efforts. Over the past year I have had many conversations with industries and our local schools to discuss ways we can open lines of communication to make sure our high school graduates, even those who are going on to college, are being prepared for the workforce of the 21st century. I am pleased to say that all the school officials I have had the opportunity to meet are very open to modifying the curriculum to address any concerns that have been identified by local industries.

At the request of Bellevue Superintendent, Tom Meyer, we are taking this open communication to the next level. I have coordinated site visits to three Jackson county industries for a teacher in-service on **January 19th**. The high school faculty will have an opportunity to tour Sedgwick CMS, Rockwell Collins and Precision Metal Works, and to meet with their plant managers and/or human resource directors to talk about how each of these companies go through the hiring process. This will provide teachers with the information they will need to make sure students graduate with the required skill sets.

Housing is a perceived need in many of the Jackson County communities I have visited. As I met with potential housing developers the first question they ask is, "Does the community have a need for additional housing." The truth is we don't really know.

The City of Maquoketa is facilitating a discussion with the East Central Intergovernmental Agency (ECIA) and other interested Jackson County cities about the possibility of a county-wide housing study to help determine what if any housing needs exist in various parts of the county. The meeting will be held on **January 15th at 6pm** at Maquoketa City Hall.

Over the past few months two manufacturing businesses have launched new product lines in Jackson County. The first was Blue-9, located in Maquoketa. This company created a training table designed for dogs (<http://www.blue-9.com/>). The second is the Tyme iron, which is a revolutionary new hair tool invented by Jacynda Smith, of Bellevue, that both curls and straightens hair (<http://www.tymehair.com/>).

Congratulations to both of these new companies on the launch of their new product lines. It is very exciting to see this entrepreneurial spirit in Jackson County.

Our office has also played an active role in the Parks to People regional efforts to enhance the recreational opportunities and the quality of life in our region. I refer you to page 5 of this newsletter to learn how you can have input in the planning for this pilot program.

Wishing all of you a wonderful and successful New Year.

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**HELPING IOWA BRING
WORKFORCE HOUSING
TO DISTRESSED AREAS**

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Social Media: See Us Socially



The Jackson County Economic Alliance is now on Facebook and LinkedIn. The JCEA will use these social media outposts to better connect with the business community, as well as the general public. This presence on social media will help direct users to our website, where we continue to promote the JCEA's programs and resources.

As a reminder, the JCEA website allows local employers to promote their employment opportunities by submitting a listing through our "Submit a Job" portal. Persons seeking employment can use our "Submit a Résumé" page to submit résumés for

local businesses to review. They can also browse job postings in Jackson County, as well as those linked to other area job posting websites.

The JCEA Facebook and LinkedIn pages will allow us to better promote business and industry news, available sites and buildings, and promote the JCEA office's activities in the County.

Visit our website (thejcea.org) and like us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/jacksoncountyeconomicalliance) and LinkedIn

(www.linkedin.com/company/jackson-county-economic-alliance).

THEJCEA.ORG

"The JCEA Facebook and LinkedIn pages will allow us to better promote business and industry news, available sites and buildings, and promote the JCEA office's activities in the County."

Our Small Business Development Center Partner

Marsha Rinetti, Director of the Eastern Iowa Small Business Development Center, offers **FREE**, confidential and individualized counseling sessions. This service is a part of the SBDC's mission nationwide to have a positive impact on the economy by providing the highest quality assistance to current and future businesses and by collaborating with other federal, state, local and private resources to ensure maximum benefit to clients.

So whether you have a business and are looking for assistance in creating a meaningful cash flow analysis, or are an aspiring entrepreneur with a product idea but need help with your business plan, Marsha Rinetti and the SBDC are here to help.

***To schedule a free, confidential one-hour session, please contact Kathy at the SBDC at (563) 336-3401.**

SBDC SERVICES

- New business guidance
- Business planning and modeling
- Loan proposal assistance
- Financing opportunities
- Market research services
- Export assistance
- Cash flow projections
- Business growth and succession strategies
- Strategic planning Business continuity planning

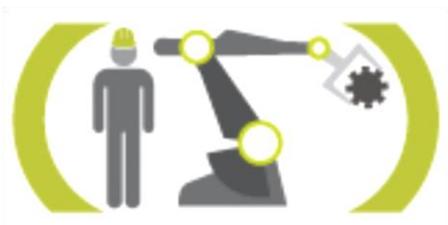




Workforce Housing Tax Credits

by Nicolas Hockenberry

PROGRAMS IN PLACE OF "EZ" PROGRAM



High Quality Job program

Business owners may qualify for this program providing businesses tax credits and direct financial assistance to locate, expand, or modernize.



Workforce Housing Tax Credit

Developers building or rehabilitating housing in Iowa may be eligible to receive certain state tax incentives.

Earlier this year, HF 2448 repealed the Enterprise Zone (EZ) program. This bill shifted business incentives to the High Quality Jobs program and established the Workforce Housing Tax Credit program (WHTC).

The High Quality Jobs program provides businesses tax credits and direct financial assistance to off-set some of the costs incurred when locating, expanding, or modernizing an Iowa facility. The assistance package includes loans, forgivable loans, tax credits, exemptions and/or refunds. The requirements for this program can be found [here](http://www.iowaeconomicdevelopment.com/Finance/HQJ) (www.iowaeconomicdevelopment.com/Finance/HQJ). In Jackson County, the wage threshold requirement to qualify for the program is \$15.99/hr.

Although the WHTC program was established as of July 1st of this year, the administrative rules, operating procedures, and project application are in the review process. The proposed rules and requirements for the program can be reviewed [here](http://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/aco/arc/1628C.pdf) (www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/aco/arc/1628C.pdf).

To qualify for Workforce Housing Tax Credits, projects must meet one of four criteria listed below:

- Located on a grayfield or brownfield site.
- Repair or rehabilitation of dilapidated housing stock.
- Upper story project.
- New construction in a community with *demonstrated workforce housing needs*.

One notable requirement for new construction is that a community must have a third party housing assessment completed. This study must be less than three (3) years old. As such this study must show a "severe housing shortage", which is to say the community has low vacancy rates or rising housing costs combined with low unemployment.

The application will be evaluated on a point system. Points will be awarded on a range from zero (0) to ten (10) in ten different categories. To be designated as a distressed workforce housing community, the applicant community must have a total score of 70 points or more.

The Iowa Economic Development Authority will accept applications on a continuous basis and will review applications in the order received. Each fiscal year the IEDA will allocate a maximum of \$20 million for this program.

The tax incentives in this program include: refunded state sales, service, or use taxes paid during construction; investment tax credit up to 10% of investment for the first \$150,000 of value of the home or housing unit. Investment tax credits are fully transferable. A summary of the requirements for this program can be found [here](http://www.iowaeconomicdevelopment.com/Community/WHTC) (<http://www.iowaeconomicdevelopment.com/Community/WHTC>).

Thomson Prison: Relocation Guide

by Nicolas Hockenberry

As the Federal Thomson Prison in Thomson, Illinois prepares to open, the JCEA and Jackson County communities are preparing to welcome new residents from across the country.

Bureau of Prison (BOP) staff tend to be a professional and diverse group of individuals. They are encouraged by the Bureau of Prison to engage in the communities where they live. These characteristics are among the many reasons Jackson County communities like Preston, Miles and Sabula are such attractive places to call home.

Jackson County offers close knit communities with family values and strong community identity. They are welcoming places to live with great schools, homes and scenic landscape rich in history.

In addition to the influx of Bureau of Prison

staff, many Jackson County residents can take advantage of the career and contracting opportunities the Thomson Prison offers.

Bureau of Prison professionals' median income is estimated between \$50,000 and \$75,000. This range is above the average median household income for Jackson County currently. Positions with the BOP include correction officers, doctors, nurses, accountants, administrative professionals, mechanics, IT professionals, and janitorial among others.

The opportunity for new retail and commercial sales is also there for our Jackson County businesses. There is an opportunity for an estimated \$61 million in contracted business sales.

The process to become a Federal



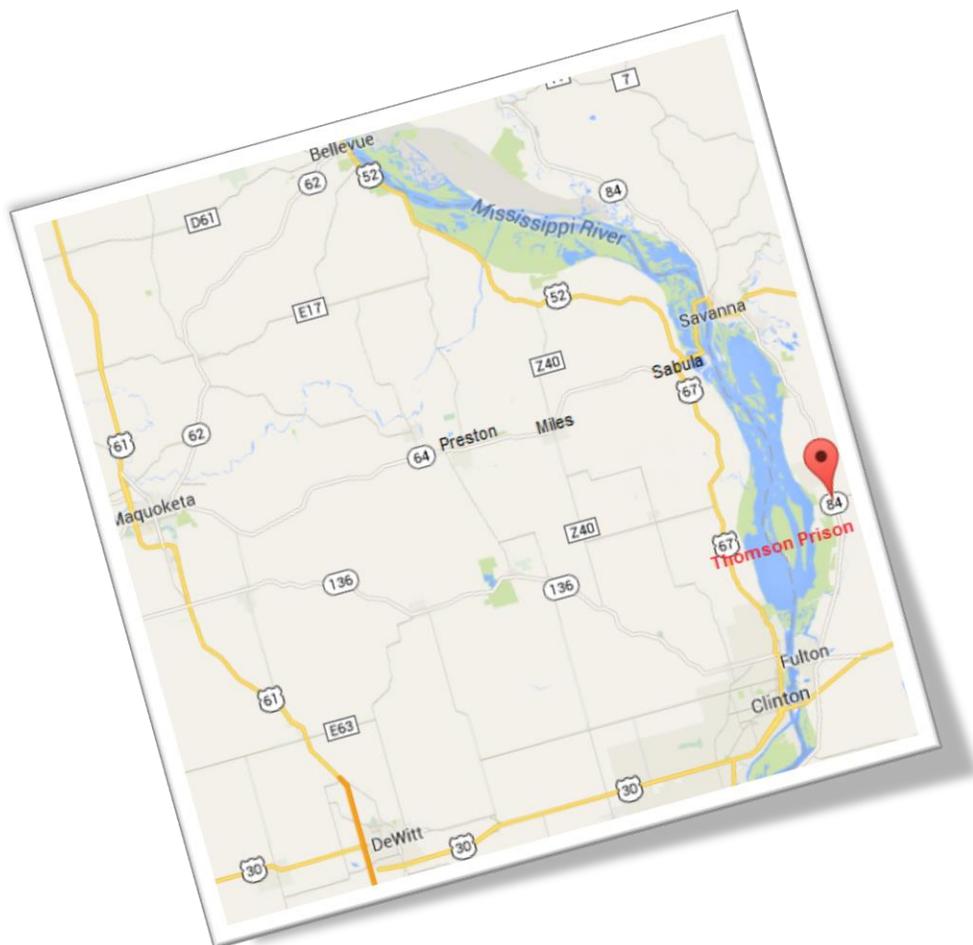
Government Contractor can be daunting, but offers great potential. Our partners at CIRAS are a great resource for investigating this possibility.

- Click [here](#), you can view a Thomson Prison **factsheet**
- Click [here](#), you can view a government contractor **PowerPoint**.
- Click [here](#), you can view a government contractor **factsheet**.

Click [here](#) (<http://thejcea.org/jackson/employment/thomson-prison>) to visit the JCEA's Thomson Prison Relocation Guide to learn more.

FAST FACTS

- Prison population: 1,600 – 2,000
- Operating expenses: \$122 million
- Local business sales: \$61 million
- Potential Employees: 900 - 1,100



UPDATE: Parks to People

Gov. Terry E. Branstad, the Iowa Parks Foundation and the Green Ribbon Commission - a special commission charged with developing a long-term and sustainable strategy to revitalize Iowa's State Parks systems – announced at the end of September that the Grant Wood Mississippi River Region was selected as the location for the first strategic Iowa parks pilot project. The region consists of Jones, Jackson, and Dubuque counties, which includes four state parks (Wapsipinicon, Maquoketa Caves, Bellevue State Park and Mines of Spain), scenic byways (Grant Wood Scenic Byway and the Mississippi River Parkway or Great River Road), and potential for land and water trail development. The Grant Wood Mississippi River Region plans to expand infrastructure; create connections; and improve the structural, economic and community connections to state, county and city parks.

The pilot project will be a public-private partnership - funded by the State Legislature at \$1.9 million and matched 5:1 by local companies, non-profits and citizens. The pilot project will set the precedent for what can be accomplished in a region with dedicated strategic planning and sustainable funding. The region already has a history of successful partnerships that will prove to be helpful in this pilot project.

Lt. Gov. Reynolds stated that the advancement of Iowa's parks system would help improve education and health in Iowa. "We're pleased to announce the Grant Wood Mississippi River Region as the first pilot region and are eager to see the process expand throughout Iowa. Better parks will encourage more Iowans of all ages to get outdoors, learn, and become healthier."

Gov. Branstad believes that the Iowa Parks Foundation and the Green Ribbon Commission's strategic recommendations can create a lasting legacy for Iowa. The Iowa Parks system will celebrate its hundredth anniversary in 2020, and Gov. Branstad sees a great opportunity with park development and beautification in the next several years. "The long term, sustainable success of Iowa's parks will attract successful people to our state, grow jobs, and create a healthier population."

The Grant Wood Mississippi River Region will be hosting public input sessions throughout the three county area in mid-January. Each of the open house sessions will provide an opportunity to learn more about the goals and expectations for this pilot region. These input sessions will also be an opportunity for the public to share their ideas of how to enhance and share our regional recreational resources.

Dave Heiar, Director of the Jackson County Economic Alliance, commented, "The initial phase of the planning process has already creating improved lines of communication and cooperation among the various partners within our three County region. Working collaboratively, we can accomplish much more than we could individually. We are eager to expand this collaborative process by getting input, feedback and ideas from the public."

The regional open house/input sessions will be hosted as follows:

COUNTY	LOCATION NAME	ADDRESS	CITY	DATE	TIME
Jackson Co.	Hurstville Interpretive Center	18670 63th Street	Maquoketa	1/21/2015	5pm-7pm
	Water Street Market	118 North Riverview Drive	Bellevue	1/22/2015	5pm-7pm
Jones Co.	Calkins' Barn	104 East Main Street	Wyoming	1/13/2015	5pm-7pm
	Lawrence Community Center	600 East Main Street	Anamosa	1/20/2015	5pm-7:30pm
	Veteran's Hall	220 E. First St.	Monticello	1/23/2015	11am-2pm
Dubuque Co.	Grand River Center	500 Bell Street	Dubuque	1/21/2015	6pm-8pm
	Dyersville Community Center	625 3rd Avenue Southeast	Dyserville	1/22/2015	6pm-8pm



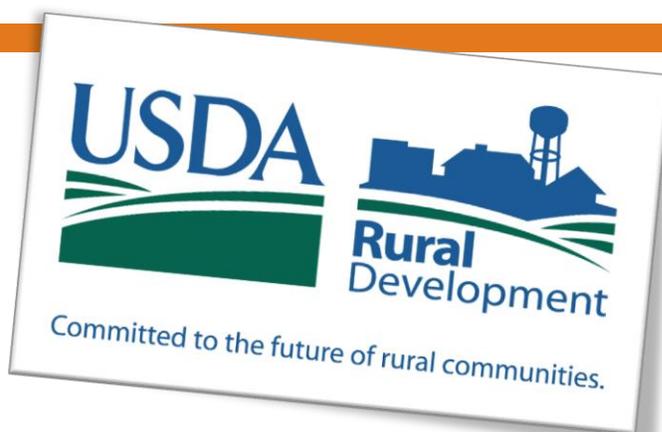
If you are unable to attend, but wish to share your ideas, please email hockenberry@thejcea.org.

Rural Energy for America Program (REAP)

The USDA Rural Development's 'Rural Energy for America Program' (REAP) is designed to help reduce energy costs and consumption and help meet the nation's critical energy needs. REAP is a guaranteed loan and/or grant program to help rural, small businesses purchase and install renewable energy systems and make necessary energy efficiency improvements.

Previous Year's awards have included: Building insulation, geothermal heating and cooling, wood fired wood kiln dryers. The grant portion of the program is for 25% of the eligible energy project costs. The program is competitive nationally with applications being scored and funding starting with the top score and moving down until the funds are gone.

Grants wishing to compete for \$20,000 or less must apply by April 30, 2015 and grant requests over \$20,000 have a deadline of June 30, 2015. The program cannot be used for any residential use. The REAP program also has a guaranteed loan component that can guarantee partial financing of the project through the applicant's lender if needed.



Steve Lacina, USDA Rural Development Specialist, is making a presentation on this program to the Jackson County Innovation Alliance (JCIA) on **February 10th** at **4:30pm** at Clinton Community College's Maquoketa Campus.

For more information on the USDA's 'Rural Energy for America Program' click [here](http://thejcea.org/media/userfiles/subsite_110/files/Rural%20Energy%20for%20America%20Program%20(REAP)%20Grants.pdf).
([http://thejcea.org/media/userfiles/subsite_110/files/Rural%20Energy%20for%20America%20Program%20\(REAP\)%20Grants.p](http://thejcea.org/media/userfiles/subsite_110/files/Rural%20Energy%20for%20America%20Program%20(REAP)%20Grants.pdf)
[df](http://thejcea.org/media/userfiles/subsite_110/files/Rural%20Energy%20for%20America%20Program%20(REAP)%20Grants.pdf)).

U of I offers IT expertise

UI Partners was created by The University of Iowa specifically to help small Iowa companies innovate and grow. They work directly with businesses to solve their information technology (IT) challenges, using practical insights and ideas drawn from University faculty, staff, and students.

The UI Partners are working to create a statewide network of integrated engagement centers to assist small businesses. They provide a whole host of services: Technical Training, Technology Assistance, and Business Strategy.

Technical Training

The UI Partners provide web development, computer programming, and software training through their Dev/Iowa program.

Trainings include – HTML/CSS, JavaScript, Node.js, SQL/PHP, Angular JS, MongoDB/NoSQL, Python, and Ruby on Rails

Technology Assistance

The UI Partners offers a wide array of technical solutions to make your company more profitable.



Services include – Free IT assessment, Website design, Virus removal, Data backup systems, Advanced networking, Hardware installation, Custom development.

Business Strategy

UI Partners work with John PappaJohn Entrepreneurial Center (JPEC) to bring leading edge informatics expertise and business training to startups and established businesses.

Services include – Market research, Social media marketing, Technology commercialization, Project support.

Contact

www.uipartners.uiowa.edu
uipartners@uiowa.edu

1-844-UIPartners (1-844-847-2786)



BUILD YOUR LEADERSHIP CAREER AT AN OHNWARD BANCSHARES BANK!



"Since I have joined the company, I have had three different assignments, each with increasing responsibilities and expectations. Ohnward is a great organization for people to grow their careers."

– Jake Bowman,
Internal Auditor and Compliance Officer,
St. Ambrose University graduate

Ohnward Bancshares Inc., a \$1 billion bank holding company in eastern Iowa, is offering five eight-week, paid internships this summer that emphasize leadership development and banking operations.

Interns will work in either operations, deposits or lending and will receive the added benefit of leadership training, executive roundtables, community service opportunities and project discovery and presentation.

Ohnward Bancshares is composed of four local banks: Ohnward Bank and Trust, First Central State Bank, Gateway State Bank, and Maquoketa State Bank. One internship will be available at the holding company and one each at each Ohnward bank.

Ohnward Bancshares is a family-owned company focused on building strong communities through outstanding customer service, community involvement and business development.

Apply for this unique opportunity at ohnward.com

Thank You

Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Jackson County Economic Alliance (JCEA) to facilitate, lead and promote organized economic growth in order to improve the quality of life and to protect and create jobs through innovative and conventional programs within our community. The Jackson County Economic Alliance is responsible for developing and implementing an overall economic development plan for Jackson County. The objective of this plan is to permanently bolster economic climate through the county and fully utilize the county's assets to enhance economic growth.

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Jackson County Economic Alliance

119 S. Main St, STE 5
Maquoketa, IA 52060

Web: thejcea.org
Phone: 563.652.4549
Fax: 563.652.4446