



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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ABI Announces 2026 Legends in Manufacturing Honorees

DES MOINES, Iowa - The Iowa Association of Business and Industry (ABI) and Elevate Iowa Manufacturing will honor four Iowa manufacturing leaders as the 2026 Legends in Manufacturing Award recipients on October 13 at the Iowa Manufacturing Conference at Prairie Meadows in Altoona. Presented by Nyemaster Goode P.C., the awards recognize leaders whose contributions have strengthened Iowa's manufacturing industry through leadership, innovation and service.

The 2026 Legends in Manufacturing Award recipients are:

- Under 100 Employees: **Steve Anderson**, Merrill Manufacturing (Storm Lake)
- 100-300 Employees: **Lori Schaefer-Weaton**, Agri-Industrial Plastics Company (Fairfield)
- 300+ Employees: **Pat Weiler**, Weiler (Knoxville)
- Manufacturing Champion: **The Honorable Terry Branstad**, Former Governor of Iowa and Ambassador to China

"ABI was founded by manufacturers, so recognizing the leaders who have helped shape Iowa's manufacturing industry is especially meaningful to us," said Nicole Crain, ABI President. "These honorees represent the leadership and commitment that make Iowa manufacturing strong, and we're proud to recognize the impact they have made on their companies and communities."

The Legends in Manufacturing Awards will be presented during the conference luncheon on October 13. The Iowa Manufacturing Conference will bring manufacturers and business leaders together for a day focused on the trends, challenges and opportunities shaping the industry.

Learn more about the Legends in Manufacturing Awards and view past recipients [here](#).

Learn more about the 2026 Iowa Manufacturing Conference and view the full agenda [here](#).

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About Elevate Iowa Manufacturing: Elevate Iowa Manufacturing is a statewide, integrated marketing initiative of the ABI Foundation to promote careers and educational pathways in manufacturing. Learn more at www.ElevateIowa.com.

About the Iowa Association of Business and Industry (ABI): The Iowa Association of Business and Industry (ABI) has been the voice of Iowa business since 1903. Its mission is to provide a strong, unified voice to business and industry on issues affecting Iowa employers. ABI is comprised of member companies representing all industries and sizes in Iowa's 99 counties. ABI members employ more than 330,000 Iowans.