



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Press Release
August 22, 2023

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT
Kelsey O'Connor, Marketing and Communications Director
Iowa Association of Business and Industry (ABI)
515.235.0571 | koconnor@iowaabi.org

ABI Announces Keynotes for Iowa Manufacturing Conference

John Deere Economist Dr. Kanlaya Barr and Retired Navy Commander Dr. Mary Kelly to Headline

DES MOINES, Iowa – Manufacturing is Iowa's primary GDP driver, and the annual Iowa Manufacturing Conference, scheduled for October 4th in Ankeny, will provide a platform for Iowa manufacturers to gather and exchange insights from their peers.

The one-day educational experience will explore issues important to all Iowa manufacturers such as innovative workforce solutions, retaining diverse talent, risk management, and more. The conference will also provide opportunities for operation leaders, company owners, and others to not only learn from each other, but to also be inspired to take their teams and companies to the next level.

Dr. Mary Kelly, the conference keynote speaker, is a retired US Navy Commander and spent over 20 years on active duty in intelligence and logistics. Dr. Kelly learned lessons in leadership in the first and second Gulf Wars and during 9/11. She was also a military professor at the Naval Academy and a civilian professor at the Air Force Academy. Attendees will be inspired to embrace their roles within their organization, surpass their goals, and plan for the future.

Attendees will also hear from Dr. Kanlaya Barr, Corporate Economist for John Deere. Dr. Barr is a graduate of Iowa State University and has experience working in the finance industry in the U.S. and Thailand. She will provide a global economic outlook, including supply chain pressures, rate increases and a harvest outlook.

Legends in Manufacturing will also be celebrated during the conference, as part of ABI's Elevate initiative, which helps raise awareness about manufacturing careers in Iowa. The day will conclude with optional tours of John Deere (Ankeny), EFCO Corp. (Des Moines), and DMACC (Ankeny).

"The Iowa Manufacturing Conference is a great way to kick off Manufacturing Month," said ABI President, Mike Ralston. "As we travel the state, it is clear this industry is thriving, and we want to do everything we can to continue to advance manufacturers and manufacturing careers."

Registration is available here: www.iowaabi.org/abimfg

Pre-event interviews are welcome and encouraged. Media is also welcome at the event.

###

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.