



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Eight Scholarships Awarded for Manufacturing Training Across Iowa

DES MOINES, Iowa – Elevate Iowa, a program of the Iowa Association of Business and Industry (ABI) Foundation, has awarded eight \$500 scholarships to recent Iowa high school graduates who are pursuing manufacturing-related education at one of Iowa's 15 community colleges.

The scholarships are part of Elevate Iowa's mission to promote careers in advanced manufacturing—an industry that continues to evolve through innovation in technology, robotics, and automation. According to the National Association of Manufacturers, Iowa's manufacturing sector supports 217,000 jobs and accounts for \$43.8 billion added to the economy each year.

"These students represent the future of Iowa's workforce," said Nicole Crain, ABI President. "Manufacturers across the state continue to invest in talent and innovation. We're proud to support young Iowans who are preparing to lead in this critical sector."

The 2025 awardees are:

1. Austin Downs, Louisa-Muscatine High School – Eastern Iowa Community College
2. Colton Vander Wiel, North Mahaska High School – Hawkeye Community College
3. Garin Schaffner, English Valleys High School – Indian Hills Community College
4. Gideon Goodpaster, Mediapolis High School – Southeastern Community College
5. Jenna Koons, Hampton-Dumont High School – North Iowa Community College
6. Maxwell De Jong, Unity Christian High School – Northwest Iowa Community College
7. Sawyer Toft, Audubon High School – Des Moines Area Community College
8. Vainqueur Okonga, Iowa City High School – Kirkwood Community College

These scholarships aim to encourage more students to explore high-demand careers in manufacturing and help meet the workforce needs of Iowa's leading industry.

Student headshots available upon request.

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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.