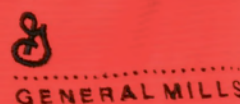


FROM THE FARM FIELD TO THE FAMILY TABLE

KELLAN LONGENECKER
Plant Site Manager, General Mills





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JULY 2015
VOLUME 4 | NUMBER 7



**IOWA ASSOCIATION OF
 BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY**

The Voice of Iowa Business Since 1903.

Iowa Association of Business and Industry. "The Voice of Iowa Business since 1903" is the largest business network in the state (serving as Iowa's state chamber) with a long legacy of advocating for a competitive business climate in Iowa. ABI offers its nearly 1,500 member companies and their employees opportunities to network, learn best practices in lean processes, workforce, workers' compensation, controlling health care costs, employee drug testing, environmental issues and leadership. ABI works "to foster a favorable business, economic, governmental and social climate within the State of Iowa so that our citizens have the opportunity to enjoy the highest possible quality of life."

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A VIEW FROM THE TOP



Paul Gregoire

ABI Chairman

*Emerson/Fisher,
 Marshalltown*

paul.gregoire@emerson.com

2016 Goal: Grow ABI's influence statewide

Last month, ABI hosted the 2015 Taking Care of Business Conference. If you weren't there, you missed a great gathering and the best business meeting of the year. Make your plans now to join us in Sioux City next June for the 2016 conference. You do not want to miss it!

This edition of Business Record Iowa focuses on our state's leadership in food processing. Nearly all of our nation's largest food processors have a presence in Iowa. They are great ABI members and Iowa employers, and I believe you will enjoy reading about these companies and their people.

The July edition of Business Record Iowa also provides my first opportunity to write this column, as I follow my good friend Mark Hanawalt in the role of ABI chair. Under Mark's leadership, and because of your support, ABI just completed another very successful year. My goal over the next year is to take that success a step further. I am both

humbled and honored by the opportunity to serve the state of Iowa and the great members of ABI.

In the meantime, thank you for your investment in and support of ABI. Because of you, our association enters its 113th year in a position of great strength. My company, Emerson/Fisher, is a global leader in innovation and quality and is the largest control valve manufacturer in the world. We are proud of our roots in Marshalltown, and we are proud to be one of ABI's founding members more than a century ago.

As for ABI, growing the association's incredible record of positive impact on Iowa statewide is my goal for our organization. As I said at the recent annual conference, when it comes to leadership across the state, "Why Not ABI?" I look forward to hearing your ideas about how we can work together to make that happen.

EXPERT ADVICE

CONSUMER INTEREST IN FOOD SOURCES GROWS

Regulation of the U.S. food processing sector is an interesting topic in a day and age when consumers are taking a more active interest in the foods they and their families purchase and consume. There are several laws enacted at the federal and state levels that apply to the food processing industry. Federal law applies to all food in "interstate commerce" (moved across state lines) — constituting the bulk of food products in this country. State law only applies to those foods that are "not in interstate commerce." The burden of establishing that the food product sold is not "adulterated or misbranded" lies with the food business selling the food product.

There are two categories of enforcement in federal law with regard to the food processing sector. Meat and poultry processing is overseen by the Food Safety Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, while all other food processors are regulated by the Food and Drug Administration. Of course, the dichotomy in regulation leads to some interesting situations. For instance, questions arise as to which agency regulates a product that contains both meat and other foods. Generally, if the product contains meat,



(L-R) Erin Herbold-Swalwell, Eldon McAfee and Julia Vyskocil of Brick Gentry | contact: erin.herbold-swalwell@brickgentrylaw.com

it qualifies as an animal product and falls under the purview of Food Safety Inspection Service.

There is a wealth of information available in regards to the law of food processing. The Drake University Agricultural Law Center has a 20-year history of working on and studying the law relating to food policy, retail agriculture and food processing. The center's website is at www.law.drake.edu/clinicsCenters/agLaw. The National Agricultural Law Center at the University

of Arkansas has formed the Agricultural & Food Law Consortium, designed to deliver information relating to agricultural and food law research. More information is available at nationalaglawcenter.org/consortium. Finally, the Iowa Pork Producers Association offers a publication titled "Legal Requirements for Marketing Pork Products," and a copy may be obtained by contacting the pork association at 800-372-7675 or info@iowapork.org.

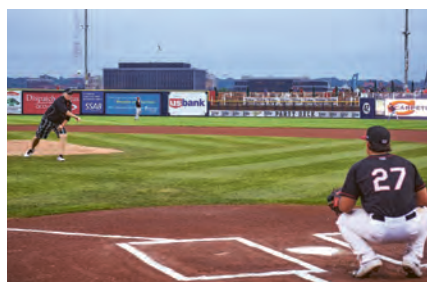




◀ EVENT REWIND

JUNE 10-12 | QUAD CITIES

2015 TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS CONFERENCE



(Clockwise from left): Conference attendees enjoy the Chair's Dinner aboard the Celebration Belle. ABI Chair Mark Hanawalt sings the National Anthem before a Quad City River Bandits baseball game. Past Chair Myron Lynn sings God Bless America during the seventh inning stretch. Incoming chair Paul Gregoire throws out the first pitch.



(Clockwise from bottom left): Cyclists begin their tour of the Rock Island Arsenal. Golfers pause during 18 holes at TPC Deere Run. Kim Didier, Paul Gregoire and Karn Gregoire on the observation deck of the Celebration Belle. Guests enjoy the Welcome Reception at the Hotel Blackhawk.



David Zrostlik, Joan Zrostlik and Leanne Van Oort, all of Stellar Industries aboard the Celebration Belle.



LI alums celebrate the 2014-15 class graduation.



Leadership Iowa graduates Kellan Longenecker, Memorea Schrader and LaNisha Cassell at the Chair's Dinner.

A CUSTOM PUBLICATION FOR ABI

(L-R): Sam Allen, Deere & Co. chairman and CEO, addresses the group. ABI President Mike Ralston, Chair Mark Hanawalt, Bettendorf Mayor Bob Gallagher, Davenport Mayor Bill Gluba and Conference Committee Chair Michele Farrell during the Welcome Reception. Incoming Chair Paul Gregoire receives the gavel from current Chair Mark Hanawalt during the gavel exchange.



(L-R): Attendees pause for a photo while enjoying the Welcome Reception at the Hotel Blackhawk. Dan Houston, president and COO of The Principal Financial Group, speaks to conference-goers on Wednesday. Participants enjoy a laugh during the Welcome Reception.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS



Visit www.iowaabi.org and click the "Events" tab for details on upcoming events.

JULY 21**Elevate Ambassador Training**

ABI Office | 400 E. Court Ave., Suite 100 | Des Moines | 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

AUGUST 9-13**Leadership Iowa University**

Des Moines

AUGUST 11**Employment and Workforce Committee Public Policy Meeting**

ABI Office | 400 E Court, Suite 100 | 11:15 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. (lunch included)

AUGUST 12**Workplace and Product Safety Committee Public Policy Meeting**

ABI Office | 400 E Court, Suite 100 | 11:15 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. (lunch included)

AUGUST 13**Environment Committee Public Policy Meeting**

ABI Office | 400 E Court, Suite 100 | 11:15 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. (lunch included)

AUGUST 17**Economic Growth Committee Meeting**

ABI Office | 400 E Court, Suite 100 | 11:15 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. (lunch included)

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Help shape ABI's 2016 policy priorities

One of the Iowa Association of Business and Industry's greatest responsibilities is to represent and defend the association's policies and Iowa businesses at the Statehouse.

Each year, ABI members play a critical role in developing our policy positions through a member-driven process that begins next month with our policy committee meetings.

This is an excellent opportunity to weigh in on ABI positions in five key areas: economic growth; employment and workforce; environment; taxes; and workplace and product safety.

ABI members will also provide input to the ABI legislative committee and board with recommended priorities to advocate for during the 2016 legislative session and the next election cycle.

These meetings are also your chance to hear from experts and key decision-makers in each policy area, some of whom will be speaking to the organization for the first time.

Do not miss this opportunity to get involved in an important process. Decisions made by Iowa's lawmakers can have a profound effect on your business directly and on our state's business climate as a whole.

Review the list of meetings below, then register online: www.iowaabi.org/en/events_calendar. All of the meetings are located at the ABI office, and lunch is provided.



Nicole Crain

*Vice President,
Government Relations*

ncrain@iowaabi.org

AUGUST 11**ABI Employment and Workforce Committee Meeting**

Time: 11:15 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

GUEST SPEAKER: Beth Townsend, director, Iowa Workforce Development

AUGUST 12**ABI Workplace and Product Safety Committee Meeting**

Time: 11:15 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

GUEST SPEAKER: Joe Cortese, commissioner, Iowa Workers' Compensation

AUGUST 13**ABI Environment Committee Meeting**

Time: 11:15 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

GUEST SPEAKER: Chuck Gipp, director, Iowa Department of Natural Resources

AUGUST 17**ABI Economic Growth Committee Meeting**

Time: 11:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

GUEST SPEAKER: TBA

AUGUST 20**ABI Tax Committee Meeting**

Time: 11:15 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

GUEST SPEAKER: Courtney Kay-Decker, director, Iowa Department of Revenue

TOP TIPS

Money cannot buy happiness at work?

We have all heard the cliché “Money cannot buy happiness.” I think we can all agree there is truth to the statement, except when it comes to our job. Money has been the top priority and motivating factor for employees for many years. As we rise up the corporate ladder, our expectation is that our salary increases, which makes for a more fulfilling career. However, there is a growing trend in employment that shows money is not as important today and cannot necessarily buy happiness.

The website Glassdoor recently revealed some fascinating information about money and happiness. For its latest report on the link between salary and employee satisfaction, it used a sample of 221,000 Glassdoor users who contributed both a salary report and an employer review for the same company since 2014. One important caveat that I think makes its findings more convincing: It didn't include data about earners reporting salaries of more than \$200,000. Here are the employees' most important job attributes:

1. Culture and values of their employer.

2. Career opportunities.
3. Senior leadership.
4. Work-life balance.
5. Compensation and benefits.

Compensation and benefits combined for the fifth most important factor at work, based on the results of 221,000 respondents? Can it be true that money cannot buy happiness at work? Here is what I think:

- Every employee wants to feel financially secure. We want to make our house payment on time and not have to worry about where the next paycheck is coming from.
- We want to be able to provide for our family and also save some money for retirement.
- When we are working hard and trying our best, and our compensation does not provide for our basic needs, we will feel stress and dissatisfaction with our job.
- If you are able to find the equilibrium with compensation, you start to

look in other directions regarding your satisfaction at work.

So what is the advice for organizations on the new notion that money cannot buy happiness? Managers and supervisors need to realize people are coming to work looking for more than a paycheck. Do you provide a means for an employee to:

- Learn and develop new skills?
- Have some flexibility in the weekly work schedule?
- Have a clearly defined career path?
- Understand the vision for where the organization is headed?

While compensation will undoubtedly remain a focal point for any employee, it appears to be time for employers to add additional focal points to their management strategy. With a challenging labor market already in place, none of us can afford to lose our key contributors. Let's spend time understanding our compensation plan and then turn our attention to the other factors that keep employees happy at work.



Jim Roy

QPS Employment

jroy@qpsemployment.com



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PHOTOS:

Awards are presented by Jennifer Kivlin, Vice President, Employee Benefits, Strategic Leadership, Holmes Murphy & Associates.

EASTERN IOWA

1. Genesis Health System award accepted by Renee Stolmeier

CENTRAL IOWA

2. Antea Group award accepted by Brent Puck and Corey Mecham
3. Terracon Consulting award accepted by Cale Wilson
4. Meredith award accepted by Tim O'Neill

WESTERN IOWA

5. Hy-Capacity, Inc. award accepted by Molly and Vouth Varangkounh
6. Stellar Industries award accepted by Teri Powers and LeAnn Van Oort

*Delta Airlines, Eastern Iowa Small Employer winner and Mudd Advertising, Eastern Iowa Mid-Size Employer winner were unable to attend the event.



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PHOTO BY DUANE TINKEY



Kellan Longenecker, Plant Site Manager at General Mills

FROM THE FARM FIELD TO THE FAMILY TABLE

10 LARGEST FOOD PROCESSORS IN NORTH AMERICA

PepsiCo, Inc.
Tyson Foods, Inc.
Nestle
JBS USA
Anheuser-Busch InBev
Kraft Foods, Inc.
Smithfield Foods, Inc.
General Mills, Inc.
ConAgra Foods, Inc.

ALL 10 OF THE LARGEST FOOD PROCESSORS IN NORTH AMERICA (BY SALES VOLUME) HAVE A PRESENCE IN IOWA ACCORDING TO INFORMATION FROM FOOD PROCESSING MAGAZINE.

Iowa is known as a state that feeds the world, thanks to our plentiful crops and livestock, but did you know Iowa is also home to the nation's top food processors?

Many of the products in your pantry were likely made in Iowa, including Healthy Choice entrees, Peter Pan peanut butter, Betty Crocker frosting and Quaker oatmeal.

In fact, all 10 of the largest food processors in North America (by sales volume) have a presence in Iowa, according to information from Food Processing magazine. Some have multiple facilities in the state. They provide everything from meat, frozen foods and spices to alcohol, baked goods and whipped cream.



“GIVEN THE LONGEVITY OF OUR COMPANY, A LOT OF IOWANS GREW UP WITH SUE BEE HONEY IN THEIR HOUSEHOLDS.”

DAVE ALLIBONE

President, Sioux Honey Association

They share the market with many smaller, locally owned companies that also play a significant role in the industry, including the Sioux Honey Association, Wells Blue Bunny and American Popcorn Co.

“When people think farm to table, we are part of that food stream,” said Rue Patel, manager of the General Mills plant in Cedar Rapids, which makes cereal, fruit snacks and Betty Crocker frostings.

Companies cite several benefits to locating in Iowa. Proximity to raw materials and transportation are factors, as are the people.

“The workforce available to us is a great advantage,” Patel said. The Cedar Rapids facility is among General Mills’ largest, and it employs about 750 people. The company also has a facility in Carlisle.



PHOTO BY DUANE TINKEY



Kellan Longenecker with Kent Mayer, Manufacturing Operations Manager, General Mills

"We have great talent that comes in here, that has experience and is educated," Patel said. "Our people are change-ready. As we've evolved as a company, our workforce has evolved as well."

When General Mills built its Cedar Rapids plant in 1970, the proximity to Iowa agricultural commodities was a critical factor, Patel said. Today, the plant receives products from Iowa and around the world and ships them globally as well.

A CUSTOM PUBLICATION FOR ABI

The short distance between General Mills' two Iowa plants means they can work together closely on things like shipping and training development.

The Iowa location also allows for improved partnerships. "With over 25 percent of our state's economy fueled by manufacturing, we don't have a shortage of peers for benchmarking opportunities," said Kellan Longenecker, plant site manager at General Mills' Carlisle facility. "As we aim to become a world class human and food safety organization, there are plenty of peer companies willing to share and collaborate."

Longenecker, a University of Iowa graduate, said she finds working in food manufacturing rewarding because everyone can relate somehow.

"I wanted to use my engineering degrees to solve problems," Longenecker said. "It's exciting and energizing to be able to talk about the breadth of the supply chain connections from field to table."

It may be a national brand, but General Mills takes its role as a good community member seriously, Patel said.

"We're big proponents of making our community richer," Patel said. The company and its employees are significant contributors to United Way of Eastern Iowa. For the past 25 years, General Mills has co-hosted the Especially for You Race Against Breast Cancer that now garners nearly 15,000 participants. It began after a General Mills employee died of breast cancer.

Cedar Rapids is also home to another well-known food processor: Quaker, a subsidiary of PepsiCo.

Quaker's Cedar Rapids facility is the world's largest cereal milling facility, plant manager Brent Bracey said.

"Cedar Rapids has been home to the Quaker plant for over 100 years and we are proud to have a long-standing relationship with the community and employ multi-generational families that are committed to our brand," Bracey said.

Each year, Quaker provides more than 505 million pounds of whole grain oats to the American diet. In Iowa they produce old-fashioned

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oats, Cap'n Crunch and Life cereal, and Aunt Jemima pancake syrups.

Like General Mills, Bracey said Quaker is committed to having a local presence in Cedar Rapids. The company has a unique partnership with the University of Iowa through which Quaker provides unused oat hulls that the school burns for power.

ConAgra, another global leader in food processing, has six plants in Iowa, and its food can be found in 99 percent of American households, as well as restaurants and food service operations globally, spokesperson Nicole Noren said.

ConAgra owns some of the country's most well-known brand names, including Healthy Choice, Pam, Reddi-wip and Snack Pack. Its Iowa plants produce cereal, snacks and frozen foods.

The company employs 33,000 people and provides food to more than 100 countries.

Other major food processors, including PepsiCo, Tyson Foods, Nestle, JBS USA, Coca-Cola, Kraft Foods, Hormel Foods, Pilgrim's Pride and Land O'Lakes, also have a presence in Iowa, either with production facilities or major distributors.

Though these companies are among the country's largest, they do not overshadow Iowa's locally owned food manufacturers.

The Sioux Honey Association, for instance, expects to produce about 45 million pounds of honey this year, which would account for about one-quarter of domestic production, according to Sioux Honey President Dave Allibone.

The association, known for its popular Sue Bee Honey brand, was founded in 1921 by five local beekeepers looking to pool their resources.

It has grown to include 300 members who manage bee colonies all across the country. The Sioux Honey Association is a cooperative responsible for packaging, distributing and marketing the honey provided by its members.

The organization has had to evolve in both production and manufacturing, said Allibone, who has worked for the association since 1974. States like Iowa that were once home to plentiful bee colonies have seen a decline in production following a shift in the agricultural practices here.

Other states, primarily Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota and California, now account for a large portion of the association's honey.

Over the years the association grew to include several manufacturing facilities around the country before consolidating to just a few locations. Today the association has three plants, in Sioux City, Anaheim, Calif.; and Elizabethtown, N.C.

It remains headquartered in Sioux City, and Allibone said that's in large part due to tradition.

"We're actually on the same piece of property we started on in Sioux City," he said.

It's also ideally located near much of its production in Minnesota and the Dakotas, he said.

The association sells about 71 million pounds of honey and honey products, and it ships all over the world, Allibone said. Last year, Sioux Honey exported an estimated 750,000 pounds of honey, with its biggest foreign market being Middle East companies.

It may be sold internationally, but Sue Bee Honey is still very much an Iowa product.

For many current and former residents, Sue Bee Honey is a nostalgic product.

"Given the longevity of our company, a lot of Iowans grew up with Sue Bee Honey in their households," Allibone said. "I talk to people all over now who buy it because they remember having it when they were a child."

LEARN MORE ONLINE

Visit www.iowaabi.org to read a Q/A with Kellan Longenecker of General Mills. Longenecker recently graduated from Leadership Iowa as a member of the 2014-15 class and will represent the class on ABI's Board of Directors.

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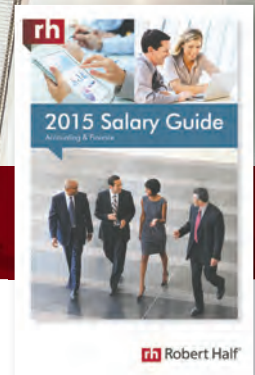
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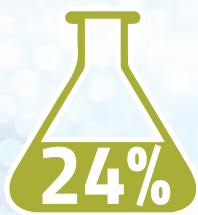
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Adrienne Baughman	President, Forbs Export Services LLC	Des Moines	Des Moines
Beth Bilyeu	Executive Director, Forest City Economic Development	Forest City	Clear Lake
Heidi Burhans	Madison County Auditor, Madison County	Winterset	Truro
LaNisha Cassell	Executive Director, Marion School Foundation & Alumni Association	Marion	Cedar Rapids
Susan Clark	Project Manager/CEO Peer Council Facilitator, Iowa State University - CIRAS	Ames	Hampton
Mark Cohen	Founder/Principal, Colloquy Digital, LLC	Fairfield	Fairfield
Deann Cook	Executive Director, United Ways of Iowa	Johnston	Johnston
Nicole Crain	Vice President, Government Relations, Iowa Association of Business and Industry	Des Moines	Windsor Heights
Gina David	Marketing Director, Transition Point Business Advisors	West Des Moines	West Des Moines
William Downing	Associate Principal, Rohrbach Associates PC	Iowa City	Iowa City
Deonna Fritz	Managing Director, Expense Reduction Analysts	Cedar Falls	Cedar Falls
Kevin Gaul	Engineering Manager, External Affairs and Design Assurance, Pella Corporation	Pella	Pella
Gabriel Gulick	Regional Manager, QPS Employment Group	Des Moines	Urbandale
Susan Hess	Shareholder, Hammer, Simon & Jensen, P.C.	East Dubuque	Zwingle
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Ann Hudson	Managing Director, Principal Financial Group	West Des Moines	West Des Moines
Chris Ingstad	Investment Services Director, Iowans for Tax Relief	Muscatine	Muscatine
Peter Kenne	Director of Corporate Business, Iowa Network Services	West Des Moines	Ankeny
Mark Kilian	CEO, Community Business Lenders Service Company, LLC	Clive	Clive
Kellan Longenecker	Plant Site Manager, General Mills	Carlisle	Urbandale
Matthew McIver	Business Developer, INVISON Architecture	Des Moines	Des Moines
Natalie Merrill	Executive Director, Corporate Finance and Investment Banking, Renewable Energy Group, Inc.	Ames	Des Moines
Allen Meyer	United States Property and Fiscal Officer, Iowa National Guard	Johnston	Johnston
Kiley Miller	President & CEO, Iowa Lakes Corridor Development Corporation	Spencer	Arnolds Park
Kelly Mitchell	Business Consultant, Des Moines Area Community College	Des Moines	Otley
Brandi Mueller	Managing Director, The Overture Group	Cedar Rapids	Cedar Rapids
Mitch Myers	Manager Generation Engineering, Alliant Energy	Cedar Rapids	Marion
Spencer Parkinson	Executive Director, Decision Innovation Solutions	Urbandale	Granger
Aaron Pearce	Associate General Counsel, Farmers Mutual Hail Insurance Company of Iowa	West Des Moines	Des Moines
Ashley Powell	Project Management Consultant, Midwest Project Partners	West Des Moines	Norwalk
Memorea Schrader	Human Resources Generalist, Central Iowa Power Cooperative	Des Moines	West Des Moines
Chad Schreck	President & CEO, North Iowa Corridor Economic Development Corp	Mason City	Mason City
Thomas Schutte	Operations Manager, John Deere Des Moines Works	Ankeny	Ankeny
Joe Stopulos	Account Executive, Holmes Murphy & Associate	West Des Moines	West Des Moines
Carla Werning	Business Development Manager, Skywalk Group	Cedar Rapids	Solon
Teri Wood TeBockhorst	Vice President Marketing, Iowa Lottery Authority	Des Moines	West Des Moines
Amanda Young	VP, Talent & Engagement, Bankers Trust	Des Moines	Ankeny
Dale Zevenbergen	Instructor of Business Administration, Dordt College	Sioux Center	Sioux Center

*Not pictured: Gabe Gulick and Matt McIver

LI HONORS MCMAHON



Tom McMahon (left) of Fairfield was honored during the 2014-15 Leadership Iowa graduation with the Leadership for Iowa award. McMahon, a member of the 1997-98 LI class, has been an active supporter of ABI and its programs for the past 18 years. He has also served in important leadership positions in Fairfield and the state. Steve Simon, chairman of the ABI Foundation Board of Directors and President of Central Bank, presented McMahon with the award.



BY THE NUMBERS

1 in 5 small businesses in Iowa added a new employee in 2014 as a result of increased use of technology.

The **2015 Iowa Small Business Report** conducted by the *Center for Business Growth and Innovation at the University of Northern Iowa* found that **nearly every aspect of business operations** among Iowa business owners is being touched by technology.

While some companies eliminated old jobs last year because of technology advancements, others created new jobs to support new innovations.

Web development was identified as a **top business need**, after marketing/advertising and business strategy development.

You can *view* the Iowa Small Business Report here: <http://bit.ly/1CpA6Xr>.

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EMBARRASSED EXECUTIVE

Q. What strategies should small businesses consider implementing to prepare for the time when their health plan loses “grandmother” status?

A. I recently attended the annual ABI Taking Care of Business Conference. During the week, I had the opportunity to sit down with small-business owners to discuss the possible effects the Affordable Care Act will have on health insurance rates when their “grandmother” status expires. The biggest impact in my opinion for small employers will probably be a dramatic increase in rates driven by “community rating.” Many employers elected to keep their current medical plan status by changing their renewal dates, now known as “grandmother” status. This status is set to expire beginning in 2016 through 2017 unless the ACA rules are again modified. The issue is that many of these plans were underwritten to the extent allowed, and therefore premiums charged were driven by the group’s medical risk profile. Remember asking employees to complete those dreaded statements of health? Healthier groups tended to receive competitive rates, and the opposite was true for unhealthier groups. Since the Affordable Care Act no longer allows carriers to underwrite, every small group will be “community rated” when their status ends. Community rates are based upon age demographics, ZIP codes, and plan benefits and provider networks. Since I have no crystal ball to foresee what the changes to the Affordable Care Act could be between now and 2017 or the future costs of the plans, my advice is to invest in a wellness program and get your employees as healthy as possible so that all options can be explored.



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EYE ON INDUSTRY

Global relationships benefit Iowa business

When Drew Vogel and his staff at Vogel Paint Inc. decided to install new powder coating technology at their Orange City facility, they turned to a peer in Portugal for advice.

The company allowed Vogel's technical staff to tour the facility with cameras and tape measures.

"It helped us affirm many of the things we were planning, and there were definitely some aspects that made us change our minds," Vogel said.

Such partnerships are rare in manufacturing, where protecting trade secrets, processes and equipment is often a critical competitive advantage.

It's an example of how Iowa companies can take advantage of international relationships to succeed in business.

Vogel Paint and the Portuguese company are members of the Nova Paint Club, a unique invitation-only community of 11 regional coatings companies from around the world. Only one company is allowed from each country. Vogel joined about 15 years ago.

Since then, the Iowa business has gleaned new innovations from other members and shared some of its own. It has also shared customers.

One major reason the club can exist at all is that its members do business regionally, Vogel said. Club members generally do not export their products and therefore don't compete with one another.

"Trust is very important," Vogel said. "Confidentiality, integrity — that makes the membership a lot more valuable."

Efficiencies, regulatory pressures and the ever-present demand for new technology have led to considerable consolidation of the industry in recent decades. Vogel estimates that over the past 50 to 60 years the number of independent paint manufacturers in the U.S. has dropped from 4,000 to fewer than 400.

"We compete by being nimble, giving great service and making sure our technology is leading-edge," Vogel said.

Nova members take turns hosting the twice-yearly meetings of company executives where they share best practices and new innovations. Each company, including Vogel, has its own robust research and development department.

The organizations' technical directors gather once a year, and marketing and distribution leaders meet every one to two years.

"The club has not been a critical piece, but it's been helpful," Vogel said. "It's like a lot of things in business; there's not always one or two things that make you successful. It's looking for every opportunity you have to improve yourself or put yourself in a better position to keep your technology on base."

The club has allowed Vogel and his staff to travel all over the globe to Greece, South Africa, Portugal, Germany and other countries. Vogel Paint will host the group in Washington, D.C., this fall.

The group makes good business sense, but there have been other benefits of participation, too, Vogel said.

"For every member of our organization, they would all say the same thing: Culturally it's an expanding and enriching experience," he said.



Drew Vogel

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ARE YOU AN ABI MEMBER? CHANCES ARE THE ANSWER IS YES.

ABI is Iowa's oldest and largest business network, representing almost **1,500 businesses** of all types and sizes employing **over 310,000 Iowans** in all **99 counties**. If you are not sure if your organization is a member of ABI, contact Dorothy Knowles at 515-235-0568 or dknowles@iowaabi.org.

JOIN US

Recognize a manufacturing legend this fall

Manufacturing is Iowa's largest industry. As such, our state owes a great deal to our iconic founders and leaders of manufacturing facilities. On Sept. 29, Elevate Advanced Manufacturing and the Iowa Association of Business and Industry will recognize five outstanding leaders in manufacturing at the inaugural Legends in Manufacturing awards dinner. Awards will be given to outstanding company leaders, past or present, in five awardee categories:

- Under 100 employees.
- 100-300 employees.

- 300-plus employees.
- Manufacturing Champion (a supporter of manufacturing — company or individual).
- Posthumous Awardee (a manufacturing legend now deceased).

Nominate a Legend in Manufacturing at www.elevateiowa.com (click on "About") or contact Robyn Denson (rdenson@iowaabi.org) for more information. Register to attend the event at www.iowaabi.org by clicking on the "Events Calendar."





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