



a love story:

MEET IOWA COUPLES
WHO'VE FOUND SUCCESS
IN LOVE & BUSINESS

STEVE AND MICHELLE CASSABAUM,
owners, 21st Century Rehab



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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



Lori Schaefer-Weaton

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**Member couples show teamwork
leads to success**

This edition of Business Record Iowa has a fun feature story. It focuses on romance and partnerships among ABI business leaders.

Make no mistake, keeping a business going successfully is tough to do unless your spouse is a full partner! In our family, both Nate and I are involved in leading operations for separate companies. If we aren't working together, our companies — and our family — would face even greater challenges. I hope you enjoy this month's feature, and I hope you will share with us your own stories of love and romance as you work to build your business.

With the arrival of February, ABI enters the eighth month of its fiscal year. Thanks to your support and leadership, our association is enjoying one of its strongest years ever.

Public policy, foundation programs, and ABI member meetings and events are all surpassing metrics of past years. Last

month's ABI Legislative Briefing and Reception was the biggest and best yet, with more ABI members than ever before. In addition, Gov. Terry Branstad, Lt. Gov. Kim Reynolds, other state officials and more legislators of both parties and both chambers attended than ever before. On behalf of the board of directors, thank you for your participation.

In just four months, you will see another key metric, and that is a terrific annual conference. I assure you that the 2017 conference will be the best one ever!

Make plans now to join your ABI colleagues in Dubuque June 6-8 for the ABI Taking Care of Business Conference. Fantastic venues, terrific nationally known speakers and the very best business networking anywhere will all be a part of ABI's 114th annual meeting. You do not want to miss it! Register now at www.iowaabi.org.

Thank you once more for your support.

JOIN US



JUNE 6-8, 2017 / DUBUQUE

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION OPENS FEB. 22

It may seem hard to believe, but it's time to start making plans for the 2017 Taking Care of Business Conference in Dubuque. The conference is just four months away and registration opens later this month!

There are several reasons to register early:

- 1. Receive the early bird discount.** Those who sign up during the first few weeks of registration receive a steep discount on the price. Saving money on great programming and great networking? That's a no brainer.
- 2. Ensure your spot at our alternate activities.** Each year, ABI offers unique opportunities to participate in behind-the-scenes tours of local companies, golf at world-class courses and a variety of other fun activities. However, spots fill up quickly! Sign up early to ensure you're able to attend the activities of your choice!
- 3. Select your top workshops.** The 2017 Taking Care of Business Conference will have 16 workshops offering expert advice on everything from effective philanthropy to selling your business or growing your workforce. These workshops are filled on a first-come first-serve basis.

Once you've registered, or even before, make sure to book your hotel room. Space is filling up fast. One of our two conference hotels, the Hotel Julien, is already full. Reserve your rooms now at the Grand Harbor Resort. Visit www.iowaabi.org/events/annual-conference to learn more.



◀ EVENT REWIND

ABI Legislative Briefing and Reception

JANUARY 11 | DES MOINES



More than 500 ABI members and Iowa lawmakers from across the state gathered to network and discuss top priorities for the 2017 legislative session. The event started with a briefing from ABI's public policy team about top issues and expectations for the coming year.



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◀ EVENT REWIND

Leadership Iowa JANUARY 11-13 | DES MOINES



The Leadership Iowa class kicked off 2017 with an inspirational and eye-opening session on the topic of government in our state. Throughout their time in the Des Moines area, class members saw all sides of government, from a simulation on running for office to interactive discussions with state legislators, lobbyists and the media professionals who cover all things Iowa politics. The group ended its session at Camp Dodge, where members stepped into the shoes of our men and women in uniform, taking part in a variety of activities, most notably a ride over Des Moines in a Black Hawk helicopter.

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a love story:

MEET IOWA COUPLES
WHO'VE FOUND SUCCESS
IN LOVE & BUSINESS

Steve and Michelle Cassabaum, 21st Century Rehab, owners

PHOTO BY DUANE TINKEY

They work side by side most days and have used their marital and professional union to build successful businesses that prosper through each partner's strengths. Here are the stories of three Iowa couples who have found triumph in business, but most importantly love.

Steve and Michelle Cassabaum, owners of 21st Century Rehab, headquartered in Nevada

The Cassabaums were living in St. Louis in the mid-1990s. Steve was working as a physical therapist, and Michelle was a pharmacist. They wanted to return to Iowa, and devised a plan in which they would start their own business. Steve would work with clients; Michelle would run the business side while she raised their young family.

"We both came from family-owned businesses," Michelle says. "We both had parents who worked together, so it seemed like a natural thing for us to do." Steve says: "It made sense, and of course, (Michelle) was someone I could trust and not have to worry about things being done wrong."

The Cassabaums started their physical occupational speech therapy and occupational health services business in Iowa in 1995. Michelle was to be in charge of the finances, human resources and marketing; Steve would work as the physical therapist. The two have been married for 25 years.

Eventually, Michelle received her master's degree in health care administration. The business started with two employees and has grown to 75. The Cassabaums have three minor partners who have joined them.

The Cassabaums say working together has been one of the best things they could have done. Their personalities complement each other: Michelle is strategic, straight forward and practical; Steve is more emotional and the visualizer.

"I always played the devil's advocate. Steve was always gung-ho and ready to try anything," Michelle says. "I think we were really good at balancing each other."

Steve says: "I'm the idea person, and she brings it down to earth and looks at it from the practical perspective."

Being spouses and business partners also gives an added element of trust because they know the other will do what is best for the practice and its employees, Steve says.

One challenge, they say, to owning a business with your spouse is when the business conversation creeps into home life.

"The big thing was we didn't know when to turn it off," Michelle says. "It isn't 8 to 5. All of a sudden,



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Bob and Sharman Wersen, Tassel Ridge Winery, owners

SUBMITTED PHOTO

you're sitting at home at dinner, and it turns to business talk. ... It's impossible not to (talk about work at home). It's just part of who we are. Usually when one of us says, 'OK, that's enough,' then we turn it off."

Steve says the couple has been rewarded by the long hours they've put in, but sometimes there have been rocky roads at work when they've had to compromise to come to an agreement.

Because of their duties, the Cassabaums don't see each other during the workday except for a couple of days a week. Michelle works in the business office, while Steve sees clients in the clinic Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. They conduct business the other two days of the week.

"Having the separation is good, but there are times I wish he was here more often because I have something I would like to bounce off of him," Michelle says.

Communication is key when being in business together, as is making sure one does not take things personally, Michelle says.

"You have to make sure you don't make it personal when everyone else is in the room," she says. "Over the years, we've learned to communicate in a different way at work than you would at home."

Bob and Sharman Wersen, owners of Tassel Ridge Winery in Leighton

The Wersens owned extra land they intended to one day use for Bob's other business, Interpower Corp. However, Bob was struggling to find the workforce he needed to expand his company that supplies power system components. The couple decided to turn the land, which was rotating between corn and beans, into a vineyard in 2002.

"I jokingly say it was temporary insanity," Bob says with a laugh. "But it was a time when crop inputs just didn't justify what you were going to get out of them, and I was afraid it was going to be like that forever. I really wanted to keep the land and I thought, 'Well, we can plant grapes on it.'"

They've enjoyed the business, though Bob admits it's the type of business where every dollar put in sucks more money and more time.

The winery opened for business in May 2006. Sharman oversees the regulatory side of the winery and ensures everything is in compliance with federal laws. She also handles marketing and plans winery events. Bob is the overall strategic planner and oversees sales to retailers in Iowa.

"Our strengths complement one another pretty nicely," Bob says. "That's the good news. The bad news is when you have two people with different strengths, you can really get on each other's nerves pretty easily because we look at the world differently. There's the yin and the yang."

The couple will have been married 38 years in March. They work about 10 feet apart and converse when needed. Sometimes they just need to decompress with one another; other times they need to think separately.

Bob says the two try to talk out disagreements and come up with a solution. Sharman jokes that Bob wins.



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*Eugene and Mary Sukup,
Sukup Manufacturing*

PHOTO COURTESY OF IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION

“You have to work really hard to work together and live together at the same time,” she says. The winery has consumed almost all of the Wersens’ time. Sharman says they might get a break once a year. She says it’s a full-time commitment and that being married to Bob meant being a part of his business endeavors.

“I don’t think we juggle it,” Bob says of their personal and professional lives. “We just do what we need to do for the business, and there’s not much time left over for the personal stuff. I wish I could say the very romantic view that we juggle it. If you’re going to run a business, especially the wine manufacturing business, it’s brutally competitive. It’s very challenging. There’s nobody sitting out there waiting for our wine. We have to work at it to be successful.”

Bob will turn 75 in April and says he has no plans of slowing down because he truly enjoys his work.

“Bob’s never going to retire,” his wife says.

*Eugene and Mary Sukup, Sukup
Manufacturing in Sheffield*

The Sukups have worked side by side for almost 65 years. They operated a family farm when they were first married in 1952. Mary was a schoolteacher at the country school in Sheffield but still worked alongside Eugene in the hog lot, cleaning out the barn or working in the field.

Eugene needed a better way to dry his corn and came up with a design to construct an auger that would stir grain, so it could better dry and not overheat and spoil. Thus, Sukup Manufacturing was founded in 1962. Initially, the Sukups worked with the local blacksmith. Eugene has always been the idea man and worked with their three initial employees to design and produce the company’s products. Mary served as bookkeeper.

“We’ve always worked as equals,” Eugene says. “Mary has as much say in the company as I do, and that has just worked out real well. That way we discuss it 24 hours a day.”

Sukup Manufacturing now sells 1,000 machines of different types including grain bins each year and employs 520 people. The Sukups are proud of their family business. Mary and Eugene still work every morning – their offices are across the hall from each other – but they’ve transitioned most of the work to sons Charles and Steve, who serve as president and vice president of the company.

“We still go to work every morning and work till noon or 1, and listen to what’s going on,” Eugene says.

The couple’s strengths have meshed well together throughout the years. Mary has always been a dedicated accountant and told Eugene when they were in trouble and when they were doing well. Mary credits Eugene with having an “inventive mind” and being dedicated to selling their product and making a name for their business.



“We’ve always worked as equals,” Eugene says. “Mary has as much say in the company as I do, and that has just worked out real well. That way we discuss it 24 hours a day.”

Mary says the couple loves the company’s employees and clients and considers them the best part of being in business together. Two of the couple’s six grandchildren and three grandchildren-in-law also work for the company.

The couple says they’ve been able to agree on almost everything with the business, though Eugene jokes that if he’d known how successful the company would have been, he would have stayed a farmer.

“I always enjoyed farming. That was my pride and joy,” he says.

One of the advantages of working with

your spouse is being able to understand the joys and the difficulties they may have had throughout their day or knowing when there’s a problem at work they may be struggling with, Mary says.

The two credit much of their success in love, health and work to their faith and their commitment to God and church. Mary is 83, and Eugene is 85.

“Can you imagine two people who live together for 65 years and start with absolutely nothing, and the Lord has blessed us with all of this and the health we have?” Eugene says. ■

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BY THE NUMBERS

71.1 percent of Iowa high school graduates enrolled in **college** and **training programs** within *one year of high school graduation*, according to the recently released Postsecondary Readiness Reports from the state of Iowa.

That's compared to an average of **67 percent** of U.S. high school graduates nationwide.

However, nearly **25 percent** of the Iowa students took at least one **remedial math** or **English course** within the first year, and *less than half* of Iowa's 2010 class had completed a **degree** or **program** within five years.

Helping students prepare for postsecondary education and introducing them to career opportunities within Iowa has long been a *top priority for ABI*, through programs like **Business Horizons, Leadership Iowa University and Elevate Advanced Manufacturing.**

Now the state is placing a renewed emphasis on this as well with its **Future Ready Iowa initiative**. The initiative's main goal is for **70 percent** of Iowans in the workforce to have education or training beyond high school **by 2025**.

Source: Postsecondary Readiness Reports, Iowa Department of Education



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS



FEBRUARY 10

Legislative Update Teleconference (Members Only)

Teleconference | 8:00 AM

MARCH 2

Connecting Statewide Leaders

Kinnick Stadium (McCord Indoor Club) | 825 Stadium Drive | Iowa City
3:00 PM - 5:30 PM

MARCH 2-3

Leadership Iowa Session V: Healthcare

Iowa City

MARCH 3

Legislative Update Teleconference (Members Only)

Teleconference | 8:00 AM

MARCH 13

Iowa Business Day on the Hill Reception

Scenic Route Bakery | 350 E. Locust St. | Des Moines
4:30 PM - 6:30 PM

MARCH 14

Iowa Business Day on the Hill

ABI Office | 400 E. Court Ave., Suite 100 | Des Moines
9:00 AM - 11:15 AM

MARCH 14

March Board Meeting

ABI Office | 400 E. Court Ave., Suite 100 | Des Moines
1:30 PM

MARCH 30

Workers' Compensation: Best Practices and Lessons Learned

ABI Office | 400 E. Court Ave., Suite 100 | Des Moines
9 AM

MARCH 31

Legislative Update Teleconference (Members Only)

Teleconference | 8 AM

APRIL 28

Legislative Update Teleconference (Members Only)

Teleconference | 8 AM

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

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<p>Huxley 88,000 sq ft</p>	<p>Dunlap Industrial Park Dunlap, Iowa</p>
<p>Webster City 109,000 sq ft</p>	<p>East Lake Industrial Park Spirit Lake, IA</p>
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AHEAD OF THE CURVE

LEADERSHIP IOWA'S VALUE REMAINS LONG AFTER CLASS ENDS



Kay Snyder

Leadership Iowa graduate, 2012-13

*Iowa Area Development Group
ksnyder@iadg.com*

Leadership Iowa has provided value far beyond what I could have imagined during my opening session five years ago. I feel very fortunate to have had the opportunity to experience two years of Leadership Iowa — first as a part of the 2012-2013 class, followed by a year as a program co-chair. From the beginning I could feel that I was a part of something larger. To this day I am still realizing what a tremendous resource access to over 1,100 incredible people can be through my Alumni Society membership.

The magic of the Leadership Iowa alumni network is that we share this very strong and positive Leadership Iowa experience and mindset, which instantly elevates a chance meeting, call for help, or opportunity for collaboration from a cold call to a conversation with a friend. The openness to meet, the kindness and the support that comes from fellow Leadership Iowa alumni are amazing.

As an Alumni Society member, here are some of the ways I continue to stay engaged with the LI Alumni Network:

- Attending a monthly lunch with classmates from my Leadership Iowa years and other alumni events throughout the year.
- Serving on the Leadership Iowa Board of Governors and committees.
- Participating in professional training classes offered by LI alumni sponsors and members.
- Visiting classmates and Leadership Iowa alumni when traveling the state.
- Collaborating professionally, hiring different organizations to support work endeavors.

I've become aware of and supported many civic organizations and efforts of Leadership Iowa friends and provided guidance for a new business venture and support to several projects. I even traveled to Italy with Leadership Iowa friends.

My annual Alumni Society dues provide additional benefits to all past participants and allow me to pay it forward by supporting future participants so they can have the same amazing experiences I had.

If your interest has been piqued, here is what you need to do:

- If you have not been through Leadership Iowa and are interested, learn more and apply for the program at www.leadershipiowa.com.
- If you are a Leadership Iowa graduate and are looking to engage with the LI network, the ABI Foundation is preparing to introduce five regional councils that will make Leadership Iowa easier to access in all areas of the state. Watch for more information on the website, Facebook page or Leadership Iowa newsletters.
- If you are an engaged graduate, thank you! Please continue to reach out and encourage as many people as possible to be involved with the ABI Foundation programs. As with all relationships, a little intention and nurturing can return big benefit.



GET TO KNOW

MEET OUR NEWEST ABI MEMBERS

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BASF Corp.
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Integrity Technology Systems Inc.
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www.iowaabi.org/membership/why-abi.



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COUPLES CAN USE BEST PRACTICES TO REACH SUCCESS IN BUSINESS, LIFE

As we near Valentine's Day, the focus turns to couples. Not just couples in the romantic sense, but also in the operating a business with a significant other sense. At CLA, one of the largest segments of our business is dealing with entrepreneurial, privately held, family-owned companies. In many instances, these businesses are run by couples, some very successfully, some not so much. In our experience, there are some basic tips that set the couple-owned business up for success (many of the following are basic good business practices):

- 1 **RUN THE BUSINESS AS A BUSINESS, NOT AS A MARRIAGE.**
 - a. While not "romantic," documentation and process is critical to business success.
 - i. This can include a buy/sell agreement (yes, even for couples).
 - ii. Job descriptions (see below).
 - iii. Risk tolerance understanding.
 - iv. A strategic plan that establishes the joint vision of your business.
- 2 **SET SPECIFIC WORK HOURS.**
 - a. Establish clear work hours and "couple time" hours. While a work conversation can, of course, pop up during couple time, make sure ground rules are established to minimize that. No significant other enjoys having a Saturday be interrupted by a work call. So if you happen to work with your significant other, the same irritation could be present if work is discussed.
- 3 **SEPARATE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.**
 - a. Be sure to play to your individual strengths, discuss and establish who does what role and document.
 - b. Ensure these roles are allowed to operate without interference.
 - c. This can include responsibilities within the home as well.
 - d. TRUST each other and let your significant other flourish in their role while you flourish in your role.
- 4 **OPEN AND HONEST COMMUNICATION.**
 - a. As with any good relationship, being honest, respectful and open in communication (and feedback) is critical. If there are business challenges to address, emotions need to be in check and conversations focused on solutions, and not on past actions.
- 5 **HAVE FUN!**
 - a. Working with your significant other can be very rewarding. However, setting parameters up-front maximizes the potential for your business (and your relationship) to go for the long haul.

Mark Wyzgowski

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CAPITOL BUSINESS



PROMOTE IMPORTANT ISSUES AT IOWA BUSINESS DAY ON THE HILL



Emily Schettler

Communications Director, ABI

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The 2017 legislative session is a little over one month old, and already many proposals have come forward that could have a profound effect on Iowa businesses – both positive and negative.

It is important that legislators hear from Iowa business leaders and keep business issues front of mind as they weigh these pieces of legislation. Iowa Business Day on the Hill offers a perfect opportunity to communicate with your legislators at the Statehouse next month.

For the third straight year, ABI is partnering with other business organizations, including the National Federation of Independent Business of Iowa and the Iowa Chamber Alliance, to host this event to provide both businesspeople and lawmakers with even greater awareness of the issues affecting Iowa businesses.

Those who attended last year's event played a significant role in helping to convince legislators of the importance of coupling state and federal tax law and clarifying Iowa's tax code as it relates to consumable supplies used in the manufacturing process. The legislation was passed that same day.

This is also an opportunity to celebrate and promote the important role Iowa businesses play in their communities and the state.

This year, Iowa Business Day on the Hill will begin Monday, March 13, with a networking reception with members of partner organizations and legislators.

On Tuesday, March 14, participants will receive an update on activity at the Legislature before heading to the Capitol to meet with lawmakers.

Legislators need to hear firsthand from employers and employees in their districts about how decisions being made at the Statehouse are affecting everyday Iowans. Join us March 13 and 14 to help educate Iowa's elected officials on the issues important to Iowa businesses.

WHAT Iowa Business Day on the Hill
WHEN March 13-14, 2017
WHERE ABI Office, 400 E. Court Ave., Des Moines
TO REGISTER Visit www.iowaabi.org/events



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NEED TO KNOW

Iowa Clinic, Tero join ABI Advisory Council

The Iowa Association of Business and Industry is pleased to introduce two new members to its Advisory Council, a select group of members who advise ABI on trends and critical business issues.

Tero International, a renowned training provider, and the Iowa Clinic, Central Iowa's largest physician-owned multispecialty group, joined the Advisory Council in 2017.

Advisory Council members provide their knowledge and expertise to help ABI stay at the forefront of business issues and best practices to ensure the organization can deliver the best possible programming to members.



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The Iowa Clinic's Executive Health Program is a concierge program for Central Iowa executives that provides a highly personalized, integrated approach to health care that allows patients to proactively take control of their health.

To learn more about ABI's Advisory Council, visit www.iowaabi.org/membership/advisory-council.



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The beginning of the year is when most teams take time to reflect on the past year of activities and are energized to plan for the year ahead. Despite the excitement, many planning sessions end up in frustration and with a sense of disengagement. Here are three suggestions to keep your team energized and your strategic plan on track:

- 1. Have the right people in the room.** Often people are invited to participate in strategic planning sessions to avoid conflict. The larger the group, the more difficult it can be to stay on track, come to agreement, and get the highest level of participation from everyone. Limit your group to the people who are going to be accountable for execution of the plan.
- 2. Have a clear target that is compelling.** Is your vision clear, known and understood by all? If the answer is yes, use your company's vision to help you create a compelling one-year target. You will know if it is compelling if it is exciting but scares you just a little bit. If it doesn't make you "feel" something, keep working until you do.
- 3. Don't get lost in the weeds.** Don't get distracted by minutia. Keep your strategic plan focused on initiatives and activities that are going to drive your company forward. Keep your target in mind. If the activity isn't something that is going to help you hit your target, it shouldn't be in your plan.

Once you have your target and activities established, don't throw your plan in a drawer. Use it as the centerpiece for communicating with your employees and driving activities throughout the entire organization.

EYE ON INDUSTRY

Companies open doors and enter classrooms to attract future workforce

Alexandra Monaghan

Program Coordinator, Elevate Advanced Manufacturing | amonaghan@measuredintentions.com

Companies can no longer sit back and expect potential employees to knock on their doors. Iowa manufacturers are not only finding ways to set themselves apart and attract workers now, they are also starting to introduce their company to school-age kids. They hope these efforts will result in a future work relationship.

The statewide nonprofit initiative Elevate Advanced Manufacturing is coordinating these efforts through its ambassador program. Elevate's mission is to promote careers in advanced manufacturing, and the best way to do this is to give young people an insider's look into manufacturing companies.

"We need to show young people that inside the plain-looking warehouse walls around the state are real Iowans, just like them, working at exciting jobs and making great money," said ambassador Ryan Junge of Lennox Industries in Marshalltown, who worked his way up from a production worker to a supplier quality engineer and believes strongly in manufacturing career opportunities.

"Younger manufacturing workers can better connect with middle and high school students while communicating to them that these kinds of careers could be right for them too," Junge said.

Typical Elevate ambassadors are employees of manufacturing companies around the state who are engaged in skilled work such as welding, computer numerical control, robotics and tool-and-dye.

More than 100 ambassadors help spread the message that manufacturing jobs can mean great pay, great opportunities and a great life.

"Many people still think that working in manufacturing means backbreaking work without real advancement opportunity," said ambassador Dane Dermody of Highway Equipment in Cedar Rapids. "The truth is, these are high-wage jobs, and if you show some initiative, Iowa companies are excited to help you move up the career ladder. I love my job, and it has afforded me the life I want."

If you are interested in learning how to be involved with the Elevate Advanced Manufacturing program, contact Michele Farrell at mfarrell@measuredintentions.com or Alexandra Monaghan at amonaghan@measuredintentions.com.

Ryan Junge of Lennox Industries in Marshalltown



YEAR AT A GLANCE

In 2016, Elevate Advanced Manufacturing made an impact on Iowa's manufacturing industry, including the following:

- 100 ambassadors shared 500 presentations or more a year.
- Distributed 12 scholarships to high school seniors.
- Assisted in planning 150 manufacturing day events.
- Distributed STEM curriculum to 70,000-plus students.
- Department of Education announced advanced manufacturing programs at Iowa community colleges increased by 14 percent between 2014 and 2015.

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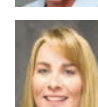
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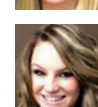
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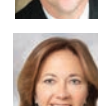
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