



**INDUSTRY  
LEADERS  
FLYING  
UNDER  
THE  
RADAR**

WAYNE HANSEN, *President*  
*Computer Installations of Iowa, Inc.*



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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**

*ABI Chair*

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Silent leaders help drive Iowa's economy

As you read this column, ABI is preparing for Iowa Business Day on the Hill 2017. We thank our partners, the Iowa Chamber Alliance and the Iowa chapter of the National Federation of Independent Business, for their participation.

We also thank those of you reading this column in advance for your participation. You know that at ABI, we take seriously our job to advocate on behalf of increasing economic opportunity for Iowans. We have great respect for elected officials, and we believe that educating them about business is some of the most important work we do. So again, thank you.

This edition of Business Record Iowa carries a great cover story about silent leaders in Iowa. I believe you will enjoy this feature on some interesting Iowa companies, companies of which you might not be aware, but that are leaders in their respective industries. Let us hear from you about other silent leaders.

Finally, about a month ago, I led a delegation of ABI leaders to Dubuque. While there, we met with media representatives and others about the upcoming Taking Care of Business Conference. I can share with you that there is great excitement in the tri-state region about ABI coming to town in June.

You can count on Dubuquers to roll out the red carpet to help make your 2017 conference experience the best ever. I continue to be excited about the hospitality, speakers, venues and networking that you will see at ABI's 114th annual meeting.

So, if you haven't already done so, finalize your plans now to join your ABI colleagues in Dubuque June 6-8 for the ABI Taking Care of Business Conference. You do not want to miss it! Register now at [www.abitakingcareofbusiness.com](http://www.abitakingcareofbusiness.com).

Thank you once more for your support.

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LEARN BEST PRACTICES AT UPCOMING WORKERS' COMP SEMINAR

Workers' compensation is a necessary and important responsibility of employers, but it doesn't have to be a burden. ABI's upcoming Workers' Compensation seminar will offer best practices and innovations that can help mitigate risk and help get employees back on the job sooner.

Highlights of this biannual seminar include:

- An update on legislative activity at the Statehouse from ABI public policy team members Nicole Crain and Jessica Harder.
- A presentation by Larry Readout of EMC Insurance Cos. on how to use risk management to control workers' compensation risks. Learn about a framework and tools to iden-

tify, analyze, control and monitor risk within an organization.

- Insight on how to improve your accident investigation program from Chuck Martinek of LMC Insurance & Risk Management.
- Elizabeth Coonan, an attorney at BrownWinick Law Firm, will discuss recent developments in workers' compensation case law.
- Jason Horras of 21st Century Rehab will explain how to reduce recordable injuries in the workplace through proactive early intervention and applied OSHA "first aid."
- A discussion led by Waleed Wadi of Nationwide on the partnership of pre- and post-loss strategies to encourage and facilitate return to work.

**WHAT:** WORKERS' COMPENSATION: BEST PRACTICES, LESSONS LEARNED, AND IDEAS FROM THE INNOVATORS  
**WHEN:** THURSDAY, MARCH 30, 8:30 A.M. – 3:05 P.M.  
**WHERE:** ABI OFFICE, 400 EAST COURT AVE., SUITE 100, DES MOINES  
**TO REGISTER:** VISIT [WWW.IOWAABI.ORG/EVENTS](http://WWW.IOWAABI.ORG/EVENTS)





# The Shoulders of GIANTS



**Rowena Crosbie**

*President, Tero International*

What does it mean to “fly below the radar”? The phrase traces its origins to military aircraft that would fly beneath radio detection and ranging, or “radar,” to avoid discovery by enemies.

In business, the phrase flying below the radar has a couple of meanings:

To describe someone who is trying to conceal bad behaviors from detection.

To describe someone who prefers not to draw attention to him/herself.

It is the latter characterization of flying under the radar that is the focus of this issue on silent leaders.

By definition, leadership is about leading other people. Complete silence is therefore not possible. What we do see and admire across varied industries are leaders who modestly lead with a keen focus on people and goals instead of on drawing attention to themselves.

Consider this enchanting story with a military connection.

The new school year had just begun at Robinson High School in Little Rock, Ark. Martha Cothren, a social studies teacher, taught her students a powerful lesson on that day in September 2005 when they arrived to school to find there were no desks in the classroom.

When the students inquired about their desks, she said, “You can’t have a desk until you tell me how you earn them.”

The young people pondered the question and came up with a few ideas. Some wondered if they earned the desks by getting good grades. Some speculated that they might earn them with good behavior. She told them that was not how they earned the desks.

By early afternoon news of this unusual experiment had spread. A television crew arrived to report on the crazy teacher who had taken the

desks away. Finally the last period came and no one had figured out how they earned their desk. She invited the students to sit around the edges of the room on the floor so she could tell them.

She opened the door to the classroom and welcomed 27 U.S. military veterans, wearing their uniforms, to the classroom. Each veteran was carrying a desk. They placed the desks in rows and then stood by the walls.

The students had their aha moment. They were beginning to understand how the desks were earned. Ms. Cothren said, “You don’t have to earn those desks. These guys did it for you. They put them out there for you, but it’s up to you to sit here responsibly to learn, to be good students and good citizens, because they paid a price for you to have that desk, and don’t ever forget it.”

As Isaac Newton said, “If I have seen further than others, it is by standing upon the shoulders of giants.”

In 2006 the Veterans of Foreign Wars named Martha Cothren as their “Teacher of the Year.”

What tips does this story hold for leaders?

1. **Silent leaders celebrate contributions. They don’t make it about themselves. The teacher in this story tapped her creativity to honor people, in this case veterans, in a meaningful and memorable way.**
2. **Silent leaders inspire people. The leader challenged her students to reflect on those who came before them. It is a powerful lesson that extends far beyond the standard coursework she leads daily.**
3. **Silent leaders mobilize where needed. The veterans featured remind us of the daily examples of leadership through selfless service that we see demonstrated in the careers of men and women in uniform.**

These are important tips for all leaders to remember – both the silent and the not-so-silent.



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PHOTO BY DUANE TINKEY

Brandon Foldes, Principal & CEO, and  
Zane Muntz, Chief Creative Officer  
*SHYFT Collective, LLC*

# INDUSTRY LEADERS FLYING UNDER THE RADAR



Some of the most successful companies in Iowa excel at what they do but often choose to be a silent partner that remains behind the scenes.

"It's not about us; it's about the client making the right decision and helping them execute," says Brandon Foldes, whose uncle started Bluestone Project Solutions, a project management company headquartered in Johnston that does business in 40 states. Foldes has been on board since 2005 and is now the chief executive officer.

Bluestone has evolved from its early days as a real estate planning and project management firm in 2004 to a full-service approach that now includes a strategic planning process, design conception and construction to full project execution from start to finish. This gives Bluestone more options to offer to businesses of all sizes, Foldes says.

Zane Muntz, chief creative officer, says the company developed its wide-scale approach so clients could have one point

of contact and see Bluestone as their trusted adviser. The company's third owner is Steve Reynolds, who serves as the chief operating officer.

"We want to become that constant piece of communication throughout the project," Muntz says. "The owner isn't focused on the project. Their attention is on doing business.

"Our services really aren't unique," he continues. "It's the way we package our services to come together to what, in my opinion, is going to lead the industry."

Bluestone's from-start-to-finish model is unique to the Des Moines and Columbus, Ohio, markets, cities that the company considers its home markets.

"We see ourselves being on the front end and the innovators in how projects are being led," Muntz says.

While the company is known among the real estate and development industries, it intentionally stays behind the scenes. It doesn't have flashy signs at projects advertising its

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name. Most of its growth and advertising is done through word of mouth and customer referrals. Employees are asked to be ambassadors to the community and get involved and engaged in ways that allow them to develop relationships.

Bluestone has served as the project manager for Nationwide Insurance's large Des Moines offices and its offices in other locations. Other clients include Life Care Services, Food Bank of Iowa, On With Life, Pigott, Des Moines Electrical Apprenticeship Training Center and a relocation of Mercy Health Network's corporate office in Des Moines.

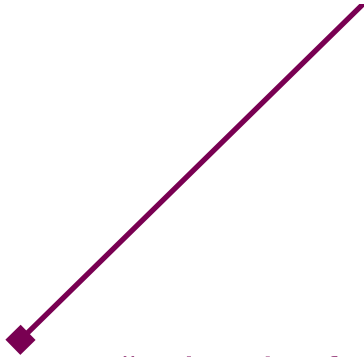
"There's a really strong correlation for (our client) and their success and being able to be that silent leader," Muntz says. "I think if we were out there trying to promote ourselves, I don't think our clients would see us in the same way. Our focus is on having strong relationships and word of mouth. That's been a really awesome way for us to grow, and in my opinion, it's the best way for a company to grow."

Bluestone is currently rebranding the company to SHYFT Collective to bring attention to the "why" of the client's needs and the company's unique set of team members with a variety of talents that come together for projects, Foldes says.

Walk into most large commercial office buildings in downtown Des Moines, and CI3 (Control Installations of Iowa Inc.) is hard at work. The company is behind the scenes to operate and manage aspects of building systems technology and security.

"You don't see the work we do," says President Wayne Hansen, who founded CI3 in 1983. Since that time, he has acquired other companies to expand his services and created an ESOP to prepare for future retirement from the business. "It's above the ceilings, below the floors, in the walls. It's behind the scenes because you don't see our work except for a few sensors on the wall or a camera in the corner, but there might be millions of dollars' worth of equipment in the building."

CI3 plans, installs and services highly technical systems that are used to control a company's office building or campus. These systems include automated building control, security



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**Zane Muntz**

*Chief Creative Officer  
SHYFT Collective, LLC*





systems, video systems, lighting and life safety. CI3 has developed its own software and applications for different security and control systems.

For example, CI3 is in charge of the automatic doors when one walks into an office building. The security software at the check-in station was likely written by the company. The turnstile through which an individual walks is operated by the company, as are the security cameras. The company also is responsible for the heating and cooling comfort of the building, and ensuring energy efficiency is followed.

CI3 is responsible for seeing that individuals only go to areas where they have approved access.

“Everybody has a different security level, and we help with that to get the correct people in the correct places and make sure they don’t go where they’re not supposed to go,” Hansen says.

CI3 has installed the security for 13 casinos in Iowa and surrounding states. The company has more than 700 active clients that include the health care, banking, insurance, technology, manufacturing, government and education industries.

Hansen says he has expanded the company from just himself to 130 employees through relationship building. CI3 has a 95 percent retention rate among its customers.

“For the type of work we do, advertising does not do a lot for us,” he says. “It’s very specialized, and you have to prove what you do.”

CI3 was able to secure a large energy-savings project for the University of Iowa campus and get in with a large Des Moines insurance company 20 years ago that paved the way for its security work. Hansen describes both projects as steppingstones for the company that helped build its credibility.

Kuder Inc. of Adel plays a worldwide role in helping students decide what career they might be interested in, from supporting classroom curriculum to providing professional development. The company takes a comprehensive approach to career assessment and development.

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“We help people discover and achieve what they want to be,” says Bethney Ahrendsen, executive vice president for communications for Kuder, a career guidance solutions provider.

The company’s assessments are based on Dr. Frederic Kuder’s research that dates back to 1938. More than 1 million people worldwide used his Kuder Preference Record as a career guidance tool from the 1950s to 2000. Phil Harrington, Kuder’s president and chief executive officer, acquired the rights to the Kuder name and its research in 1997.

Harrington has taken the company from a paper-based entity into the digital age. The company’s growth occurred in steps starting with surveys of school counselors from across the United States. Harrington wanted to know what resources they needed to advance career development in their schools and to prepare students by using a research-based method.

Ahrendsen says it was quickly determined the system needed to be online. It has grown into an information source that includes the ability to take assessments; explore careers and majors, and learn about the colleges and technical schools that offer them; share an e-portfolio; and create a resume.

“Starting from a mere paper assessment, the capabilities and how everything is interconnected to make that career plan, has grown so much over the years,” Ahrendsen says.

Ahrendsen says the Kuder name is fairly familiar in education, specifically the career and technical area, but will likely take off in Iowa this year. The Iowa Department of Education selected one of Kuder’s programs as the state’s designated career information and decision-making system. School districts will use the program to ensure their students meet state career and technical education standards.

“It will grow with the endorsement,” Ahrendsen says.

The company already has worldwide reach. It’s helped more than 155 million across the globe from Singapore and Australia to Portugal and the Middle East. Ahrendsen says the company’s worldview is to help individuals find their career passion but to also bridge the economic development divides between countries and help countries prepare their workforce to compete in a global economy.

Kuder has programs for the earliest school child to adults, but most of its work is within secondary education, Ahrendsen says. Iowa schools might use Kuder’s curriculum to develop a careers course for students or use the company’s online tools for students to take career assessments. This might include clusters of occupations the student is suited for based on a career interest, an assessment of the student’s skills to generate a career cluster, or a work values assessment so students can learn whether they will like and enjoy their selected career. School counselors use Kuder’s tools in one-on-one guidance sessions with students as they advise about colleges and a career path. Students also can use Kuder’s tools to create a course outline for each year of middle and high school to meet graduation requirements and to prepare for a major.

Ahrendsen says that all of Kuder’s tools and programs are research-based, and that the company’s tools are a consistent resource for school districts and users from the start of their education until they’re finished.

“As you’re working through your educational life and into a career, you can have one consistent resource to guide along the way,” she says. ■

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◀ EVENT REWIND

# Connecting Statewide Leaders

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Dozens of ABI members, Leadership Iowa participants and others gathered at McCord Indoor Club at Kinnick Stadium in Iowa City to hear Dr. Richard Deming, founder of Above + Beyond Cancer, the speaker for the March Connecting Statewide Leaders forum. Dr. Deming spoke about the organization, which helps cancer survivors and caretakers live their best life, including a recent trip to Kenya and Tanzania, where they climbed to the summit of Mt. Kilimanjaro.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS



**MARCH 13**

**Iowa Business Day on the Hill Reception**

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5 – 7 p.m.

**MARCH 14**

**Iowa Business Day on the Hill**

ABI Office | 400 E. Court Ave., Suite 100 | Des Moines  
9 – 11:15 a.m.

**MARCH 14**

**March Board Meeting**

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

**MARCH 30**

**Workers' Compensation: Best Practices and Lessons Learned**

ABI Office | 400 East Court Ave, Suite 100 | Des Moines  
9 a.m.

**MARCH 31**

**Legislative Update Teleconference (Members Only)**

Teleconference  
8 a.m.

**APRIL 28**

**Legislative Update Teleconference (Members Only)**

Teleconference  
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**Lynn Kooker, MS, CHES**

*Client Relations & Wellness,  
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Wellness programs make sense. For years, large employers have realized this and have reaped the rewards of comprehensive wellness programming. Elaborate incentive strategies, online portals, and on-site fitness centers and cafeterias have proved to increase employee well-being and company productivity.

Although the direct impact of wellness programming on health insurance premiums remains foggy, the impact on overall employee health, engagement, productivity and morale has been well documented. Not to mention that adding wellness to a benefit package is a powerful tool to attract and retain highly qualified employees.

Small and mid-sized employers, however, struggle to offer this benefit due to the frustration, time and cost of trying to make a large employer program work for them.

There are options, however:

1. Offer to reimburse or reward employees for participating in programs on their own, such as community events, weight loss programs or tobacco cessation programs.
2. Designate a staff member or committee to implement programming. Incorporate programs such as Live Healthy America that have everything needed for a small business to participate.
3. Partner with a wellness vendor to coordinate and run your program for you. There are programs designed for small and mid-sized groups that rival wellness programs of even the largest employers, including a customized online platform, health risk assessment, employee assistance program, health coaching, on-site programs and more. Programs such as Focus OneWellness, offered by Focus OneSource, also include the services of a wellness professional to relieve the burden of the business owner or staff to plan and implement programming, for minimal cost.

An employee benefit that provides resources for employees and their families, increases productivity, aids in retaining and recruiting valuable employees, helps to contain health care costs, and improves employee morale isn't too good to be true. It just makes sense.



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**Nicole Crain**  
Senior Vice President,  
Public Policy, ABI  
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The first legislative funnel was March 3, and several ABI priority issues moved forward. A funnel is a self-imposed legislative deadline established to minimize the number of bills pending and to help legislators direct their focus on a fewer number of bills. The second legislative funnel is March 31. In order for bills to pass the second funnel, they have to have been voted out of one chamber and out of a committee in the opposite chamber.

Here is a summary of some ABI priority issues that have moved forward. Read ABI's weekly e-newsletter for the most up-to-date information on pending legislation.

**Workforce** – Improving the quality of Iowa's workforce is a year-round goal focused on participation in public-private partnerships like Future Ready Iowa Alliance, Home Base Iowa and ABI members' support of our own Elevate Advanced Manufacturing initiative. There are a few proactive pieces of legislation ABI is supporting.

SF 274 encourages school districts to establish educational standards for students. The legislation also establishes a computer science work group to look at how educational standards would help students excel in math and those fields designated as career and technical education. The work group includes education, business and labor representatives.

**Competitive Business Climate** – Sustaining Iowa's competitive business climate is a main focus of the ABI public policy team this session. There are several pieces of legislation that are pending that will make Iowa a more competitive place for employers.

HF 518/SF 435 brings Iowa's workers' compensation system back into balance and addresses recent Supreme Court and administrative law judge decisions that have eroded the exclusive remedy of Iowa's system. Iowa has gone from fifth best in the country 11 years ago to middle of the pack, in terms of employer premiums. Benefits for employees have not changed, but premiums have increased due to aggressive plaintiff attorneys and activist judges.

HF 295 pre-empts local government entities from enacting wage and benefit legislation. The patchwork that has existed in the state the last two years has been an administrative nightmare for employers. The legislation in the Iowa House will address that issue and reinforce the fact that the state is responsible for setting the policy for wages and benefits, not counties and cities.

**Environmental Investment and Accountability** – ABI staff spends hours working on environmental regulations and working with Iowa DNR throughout the year, not just during the legislative session. The main legislative issue addresses Iowa's water quality and policy that aligns with Iowa's nutrient reduction strategy.

Another piece of legislation, HSB 24/SSB 1044, eliminates duplicative reporting to the Iowa Utilities Board with some forms that are already required by the federal government. ABI supports this regulatory reform bill.

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## NEED TO KNOW

## Meet the 2017 ABI conference keynote speakers

**Robert Richman**

*Culture Strategist and  
Co-creator, Zappos Insights*

Robert Richman, an expert culture strategist who helped harness the winning employee culture at Zappos, will headline the list of keynote speakers at the 2017 Taking Care of Business Conference.

Richman was the co-creator of Zappos Insights, an innovative program focused on educating companies on the secrets behind Zappos' amazing employee culture. He has gone on to teach culture in person at companies like Google, Toyota and Eli Lilly and has pioneered a number of innovative techniques to build culture, such as bringing improv comedy into the workplace.

"We all know in our own businesses that culture really does define whether or not we win or lose," said Lori Schaefer-Weaton, ABI chair and president of Agri-Industrial Plastics during an event announcing the speakers in Dubuque. "It's a huge part of what we drive as leaders, and I'm really excited for the insight that Mr. Richman will be able to provide."

The second keynote speech will come from Tommy Spaulding, who has been teaching heart-led leadership and the art of developing successful, authentic and lasting relationships that build businesses and brand loyalty for more than 20 years. Spaulding's message on heart-led leadership ties directly into an emphasis of this year's conference on giving back.

Spaulding is the founder and president of Spaulding Companies, a leadership development, speaking, training and executive coaching firm in Denver, Colo. His books,

"It's Not Just Who You Know: Transform Your Life (and Your Organization) by Turning Colleagues and Contacts into Lasting, Genuine Relationships" and "The Heart-Led Leader" have both been national best-sellers.

Dr. Bill Withers will provide an Iowa and ABI connection as our third general session speaker. Withers is a professor and leadership fellow at Wartburg College in Waverly. In addition, he was instrumental in the development of the ABI Foundation's Leadership Iowa University program and has spoken to numerous ABI Foundation program participants.

Withers has more than two decades of management and leadership experience in both business and education, and his research has been presented multiple times at the International Conference on Business in Honolulu.

When Schaefer-Weaton heard Withers speak in 2016, she knew he needed to take part in the ABI conference.

"He moved me and my team, and I think he's going to do a great job of tying the components of this conference together and help bring us back to our Iowa roots," she said.

**Registration is Open!**

Sign up now to attend the 2017 Taking Care of Business Conference.

**When:** June 6-8

**Where:** Dubuque

**To Register:** Visit [www.abitakingcareofbusiness.com](http://www.abitakingcareofbusiness.com)

**Dr. Bill Withers**

*Full Professor and Leadership  
Fellow, Wartburg College*

**Tommy Spaulding**

*Founder and President,  
Spaulding*



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BY THE NUMBERS

Recent analysis from ABI's national partner BIPAC found that **83 percent of private employees** found information provided by their employers helpful in deciding **how to vote in the 2016 election**.

**Fifty-two percent of respondents** who got information from their employer said it led them to register to vote, and **65 percent** said it made them **more likely to vote**. **Seven percent** said it made them **less likely to vote**.

Employers also ranked highest in terms of credibility: **34 percent** of those surveyed rated information from their employer as most credible, compared with **32 percent and 14 percent** for information from political parties and labor unions, respectively.

BIPAC conducted the survey Nov. 9-10 of **more than 1,700 employed adults** who participated in the general election.



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ABI's Public Policy team provides live updates throughout the day on activity at the Statehouse and throughout the state:

Mike Ralston

Nicole Crain

Jessica Harder

Brad Hartkopf

@Mike4ABI

@Nicole4ABI

@Jessica4ABI

@Brad4ABI

Follow our other staff for updates throughout the week:

Kathy Anderson

Kay Neumann-Thomas

Emily Schettler

@KathyAnderson

@KMNT

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Learn more about how ABI membership could benefit your company by visiting

[www.iowaabi.org/membership/why-abi](http://www.iowaabi.org/membership/why-abi).



**Your organization. *Your voice.***  
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Iowa needs pro-business lawmakers to help our state's economy thrive.

At ABI, we take seriously the responsibility to vet candidates and provide valuable election resources.

We need your help. Have you made your contribution to IIPAC yet? Do so today to help us maintain our strong voice for Iowa business in legislative matters.

Visit [bit.ly/iipac](http://bit.ly/iipac) to donate.

AHEAD OF THE CURVE

# Business Horizons *Sets Students Up for Success*

It is never too early for high school students to start preparing for their future and taking advantage of opportunities to set themselves apart from the crowd. Fortunately for the students of Iowa, one opportunity is Business Horizons, a program of the Iowa Association of Business and Industry Foundation that has been providing students with essential college and career experience for over 30 years.

Here are five ways that Business Horizons can have a positive impact on high school students you know:

1. Build vital leadership and teamwork skills. During Business Horizons, participants work together as a team with other student-leaders from across the state to take part in exciting challenges and competitions. Students bring out their inherent leadership skills and personal strengths to achieve team goals.
2. Gain resume-worthy college and career experience. Students spend the week living as an independent college student while participating in a program that can earn them college credit and a scholarship. Participation in Business Horizons helps students stand out as young people who are focused and invested in their future.
3. Receive a fresh take on Iowa and career opportunities. Business Horizons exposes students to Iowa businesses and professionals in a variety of fields. Students leave with knowledge of new career opportunities and how they can accomplish their goals right here in our great state.
4. Learn valuable life lessons for a successful future. Dynamic, expert speakers join the program throughout the week, who inspire and challenge students to think differently. They explore topics like creativity in today's workplace, personal communication tactics, how to manage finances in and after college, and more.
5. Return to school even more focused and motivated to succeed. Participants walk away with enhanced confidence in their ability as leaders and the important role they play on a team. The program provides real-world application of knowledge learned in the classroom, creating a greater interest in learning and motivation to work hard when they return to class in the fall.

The ABI Foundation is currently accepting nominations and applications for this summer's Business Horizons program, which will take place **June 25-29 at Central College in Pella.**

Interested students should apply soon. Students who apply before April 10 will receive a \$60 discount on participation.

To learn more, to nominate students and to complete applications, please visit [BusinessHorizonsIowa.org](http://BusinessHorizonsIowa.org).

## 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 330,000 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](mailto:dknowles@iowaabi.org).

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