



*manufacturing*  
**remains strong in Iowa**

DREW VOGEL, *Chairman & CEO, Diamond Vogel Paint*



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**Iowa Association of  
Business and Industry**

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



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Manufacturing Has Huge Impact on Iowa's Economy

Here at Stellar Industries in Garner, manufacturing is what we do. Our people make the highest-quality and most innovative products in our industry. We are not alone. Iowa is a manufacturing state, and there are people all across Iowa making innovative products to fulfill critical needs all over the world.

Manufacturing and its huge positive economic impact on Iowa is what this edition of Business Record Iowa is all about. You'll find stories inside packed with information about manufacturing's importance to Iowa. I hope you enjoy it.

In keeping with the theme of Iowa manufacturing, ABI, Agri-Industrial Plastics Co., CIRAS, DMACC, IEDA and Kreg Tool Co. last month served as lead sponsors for the 2017 Iowa Advanced Manufacturing Conference. That event, and the third annual Legends in Manufacturing Dinner (sponsored by ABI's Elevate Advanced Manufacturing initiative)

that was held the preceding evening, were a true celebration of Iowa manufacturing. If you missed these events, you missed terrific programming. I hope you'll make plans to attend next year.

Speaking of next year, it's not too early to finalize your plans now to attend two other important events. On Jan. 10, 2018, ABI will hold its annual Legislative Reception. This event draws hundreds of Iowa business leaders and more state officials of both parties than any other similar event. And June 5-7 is the date for the 2018 Taking Care of Business Conference, ABI's 115th annual convention. This is simply Iowa's very best business event of the year. Go to [www.iowaabi.org](http://www.iowaabi.org) often for more information.

In the meantime and as always, thank you for your support of ABI!

Manufacturing Matters in Iowa

The Iowa Association of Business and Industry (ABI) has proudly joined Gov. Kim Reynolds, the Iowa Economic Development Authority and Iowa State University's Center for Industrial Research and Service (CIRAS) in Iowa's Year of Manufacturing efforts in recognition of the importance of the advanced manufacturing industry to Iowa's economy.

With 6,100 manufacturers employing 200,000 Iowans, manufacturing is incredibly important to the state. Manufacturing contributes \$31 billion to Iowa's economy, which places the state consistently within the top 10 nationally of percentage of GDP derived from manufacturing. To strengthen this integral industry, the goal of the Year of Manufacturing initiative is to increase Iowa's manufacturing GDP from \$31 billion to \$32 billion by 2022. The primary areas of focus include improving global competitiveness, promoting innovation and R&D, and building a skilled workforce.

ABI is involved in each of the areas, including ramping up its existing peer-learning program through adding an Operational Excellence Roundtable. The newly formed Operational Excellence Roundtable programming is of value for those leading the operations disciplines within their companies. It enables manufacturers to share best practices, collaborate on challenges and develop deeper business relationships. ABI members interested in this very unique and important avenue to strengthen manufacturing operations within Iowa are encouraged to reach out to ABI or visit [www.iowaabi.org](http://www.iowaabi.org).

Many ABI members are already aware of the Elevate Advanced Manufacturing initiative, a marketing effort to improve the perception of manufacturing and to promote manufacturing as a preferred career choice to Iowa students, parents, educators and guidance counselors. Visit [www.elevateiowa.com](http://www.elevateiowa.com) for more information about the Elevate Advanced Manufacturing initiative.

Finally, manufacturers are also encouraged to visit the online tool kit for a myriad of additional resources available to manufacturers at [www.iowamfg.com](http://www.iowamfg.com).

We at ABI appreciate all of these people and programs. Together, they help continue to advance advanced manufacturing in Iowa.



**Kathy Anderson**

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◀ EVENT REWIND

# ABI Executive Open

AUGUST 28 | WEST DES MOINES



The annual ABI Executive Open — Iowa's premier executive golf event — was held Aug. 28 at the Des Moines Golf and Country Club. Participants spent a casual day networking with 144 of Iowa's foremost business leaders.





**Rowena Crosbie**

President, Tero International

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## THE LAW OF THE PACK

Are millennials narcissistic and lazy, believing they are entitled to rank and privilege they haven't earned? Or does their ambition make them eager to leave behind what they perceive to be an outmoded framework for career growth and success?

Rank can be consciously or unconsciously assigned. Take a look at the law of the pack as it pertains to dogs.

Buster comes to his new home from a humane society shelter. As a dog, he is automatically programmed to relate to his owners as either his parents or siblings. What do his owners do? They gush over him and talk to him in a high-pitched voice that sounds to Buster more like a sibling than someone responsible for him. When he gets excited, they allow him to jump, charge through doors, drag them down the street or claim privileges of higher rank. His position is set. He is in control. Buster outranks his owners.

What does this tell us about how each new generation is indoctrinated into the workforce? One of the greatest challenges faced by organizations is providing a work environment and benefits that attract the best employees yet don't foster a culture of entitlement.

Leaders in organizations never intend to communicate that the comfort and personal equity of the employee take priority over what he or she is tasked to do. Yet what is the interview candidate or new employee

expected to think when the tour includes a visit to a state-of-the-art fitness facility, no formal dress code, game rooms, compensated meals, convenient flex hours and optional educational programs? Add to this the promise of lavish bonuses when the company is profitable, regardless of individual contributions.

Is there a problem with companies seeking to create a state-of-the-art workplace and exemplary employee benefits?

No. The problem lies in incomplete communication. Many organizations offer their employees a unique and upscale work experience. Zappos and Disney are two examples. What they communicate, yet many organizations fail to, are the expectations of their employees.

Zappos provides a unique organizational culture that appeals to many individuals. New employees spend several weeks in orientation being educated on the organization's goals and the expectations of each employee. Zappos is famous for "the offer," a \$3,000 take it or leave it choice to stay or go after the company has outlined its expectations. Employees have the opportunity to publicly affirm they are signing on to the expectations or they are walking.

Disney has a similarly intensive new employee orientation program that not only covers the many benefits of working for the organization, but also describes the hardships employees encounter, such as unattractive

shifts, strict dress codes and the requirement to be pleasant in every situation — even when you don't feel like it.

Like Buster the dog's new owners, the intentions of the organization are good. They set out to create a wonderful experience for the new employee in the hopes that performance will follow. Instead, entitlement is the result.

What is the employee to think when amenities rather than job responsibilities are the focus of the first day walk-through? We know how Buster responded. How is the new employee going to respond?

In their attempt to sell the benefits of the company, organizations often fail to put performance expectations at the forefront and help the employee see the many benefits on offer are in exchange for top performance.

*Rowena Crosbie is president of Tero International, co-author of "Your Invisible Toolbox: The Technological Ups and Interpersonal Downs of the Millennial Generation" and co-host of the show "Your Invisible Toolbox." Since 1993, Tero has earned a distinguished reputation as a premier research and corporate training company. Tero has been voted among the Best Training and Development Companies by readers of the Des Moines Business Record every year since the category was introduced in 2007.*

Is there a problem with companies seeking to create a **state-of-the-art workplace** and **exemplary employee benefits**?



# Manufacturing Leaders Recognized at Statewide Event

*Elevate Iowa Honors Significant Contributions to the State's Economy*

In its third annual Legends in Iowa Manufacturing event, Elevate Iowa, a program of the Iowa Association of Business and Industry (ABI), recognized leaders in manufacturing at an awards dinner on Sept. 20. Nearly 200 people attended the event at the Prairie Meadows Hotel & Conference Center in Altoona.

Awards were presented to the following individuals, companies and organizations:



Fred Buie of Keystone Electrical Manufacturing Co. was the Legend chosen from among leaders of companies with fewer than 100 employees.



Todd Sommerfeld of Kreg Tool Co. was the Legend chosen from among companies having 100 to 300 employees.



David Zrostlik of Stellar Industries Inc. was the Legend chosen from among companies with more than 300 employees.



Dr. Ron Cox and Michael O'Donnell of Central Industrial Research and Services (CIRAS) were chosen as the 2017 Manufacturing Champions.



Gary Vermeer, formerly of Vermeer Corp., whose daughter Mary accepted the Posthumous Legends award.



Kelly Barrick of CIBC was chosen for the Ambassador of the Year Award.



Dennis Murdock of Central Iowa Power Cooperative (CIPCO) was awarded the Honorary Ambassador of the Year Award.

“As one of Iowa’s largest industries, manufacturing contributes \$31 billion annually to the state’s economy,” said ABI President Mike Ralston. “It’s an honor to recognize the founders and leaders of these amazing Iowa companies, and to thank them for the outstanding contributions they make to our state.”

**LEGENDS WAS SPONSORED BY THE FOLLOWING COMPANIES:**

**Gold sponsors:** Agri-Industrial Plastics, Iowa Economic Development Authority, CIRAS, Kreg Tool Co. and DMACC. **Silver sponsors:** Commerce Bank, Accumold, Impact 7G, QPS Employment and Emerson. **Bronze and supporting sponsors:** M2K Marketing Group, Indian Hills: Midwest Photonics Education Center, Bank of America Merrill Lynch, Aureon, United Equipment Accessories Inc., Iowa Lean Consortium and Stellar Industries Inc.

**Additional sponsors included** Bankers Advertising and Tru Art Color Graphics (gift hats), CIBC (music), and Kirkwood Community College (centerpieces).

Elevate Iowa ([www.elevateiowa.com](http://www.elevateiowa.com)) is a statewide, integrated marketing campaign to promote careers and educational pathways in advanced manufacturing. The initiative is directed by a coalition of all 15 Iowa Community Colleges, the Iowa Association of Business and Industry, the private manufacturing sector and the state of Iowa. Elevate Iowa offers resources to the public and educational institutions to educate unemployed/underemployed Iowans, U.S. veterans, and K-12 students and their families about the opportunities in advanced manufacturing.



**Legends**  
Honoring Iowa's  
Manufacturing Leaders



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**Stan Askren**  
chairman, president & CEO  
HNI Corporation



**Drew Vogel**  
chairman & CEO  
Diamond Vogel Paint

## manufacturing remains strong in Iowa

Manufacturing is critical to Iowa's economy. So much so that former Iowa Gov. Terry Branstad earlier this year declared 2017 as the year of manufacturing in Iowa.

The industry is the single largest sector of the state's economy and represents 18 percent of Iowa's gross domestic product. Advanced manufacturing contributes \$29 billion each year to Iowa's economy. Iowa's 6,000 manufacturers employ more than 213,000 people, according to the Iowa Economic Development Authority.

"We're a manufacturing state. There's no way around it, and that has been helpful in diversifying our economy from a state perspective," said Debi Durham, director of IEDA.

State and economic development officials hope Branstad's declaration to boost manufacturing and increase its contribution to \$32 billion by 2022 will help it grow even more; spark innovation, research and new products; and bring attention to resources available to manufacturers to help them succeed, such as the Center for Industrial Research and Service (CIRAS) at Iowa State University.

CIRAS provides a variety of experts with the knowledge to help companies with many aspects of their business, from reducing manufacturing and inventory costs to improving the quality of products and the innovation process. The center

works one-on-one with manufacturers and conducts broader educational programming.

Mike O'Donnell, the program director for CIRAS, said manufacturing companies across the state are growing and hiring workers.

"Well-run companies are excelling right now regardless of what sector they're in," he said.

### Growth occurs for companies in many areas

HNI, with manufacturing facilities in Mount Pleasant and Muscatine, employs more than 4,000 Iowans through its production and sales. The company is the world's largest manufacturer of hearth products and second-largest for office products.

"We like Iowa a lot," said Stan Asken, chief executive officer of HNI. "It's been our legacy. We like the work ethic. We like the culture that the state has. The state has a lot of positives. ... The state leadership legislative branch works hard to make sure Iowa is a good place to live and work, and that makes an attractive place to do business here."

Advanced manufacturing in Iowa is growing in the area of medical devices, which is a relatively new niche and would allow for partnerships with research institutions, as well as the creation of renewable chemicals from bioproducts, which could replace petrochemicals or products that derive from petroleum.

Diamond Vogel Paint works nationally with manufacturers and provides specialty coatings for manufacturing companies; household paints and stains that are sold through service centers; automotive paints; farm repair products and coatings; and traffic coatings for road striping use.

Drew Vogel, chairman and chief executive officer, said the company's business has been strong, particularly in powder coatings, which has led to a large \$20 million expansion of the company's powder coating facility located in Orange City.

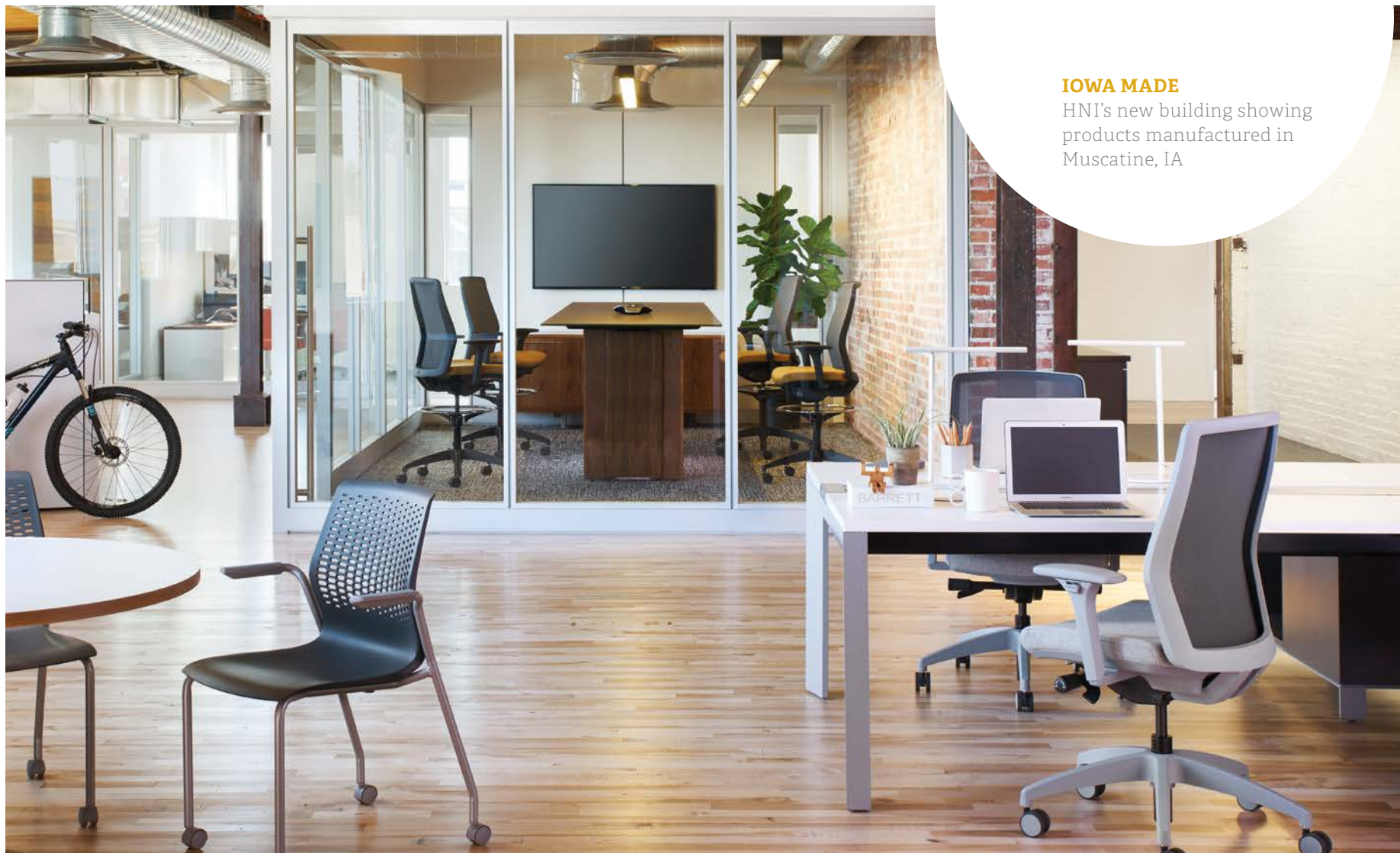
The company has service centers in 13 states and eight manufacturing sites in five states. Four of those eight are in Iowa, where 70 percent to 80 percent of the company's output is created.

The company also has seen growth from its customers in the construction business and general transportation, as well as recreational companies and other businesses that are creating new products and need to protect them with paint and coatings.

The company's customers who produce agriculture equipment and products – about one-third of Diamond Vogel's industrial coatings business – have seen a decline in business as commodity prices have declined and input costs have increased, Vogel said.

Company President Jeff Powell agreed and compared it to the supply and demand of the oil





**IOWA MADE**

HNI's new building showing products manufactured in Muscatine, IA



industry. Farmers are waiting for better times before they purchase new equipment.

“Manufacturing is strong with the ag sector being soft,” he said. “We see it coming back, but it’s not at its highest points.”

The future of manufacturing also looks strong in Iowa, both men said, but with the possibility of some challenges. Powell said there could be continued consolidations of companies with mergers and acquisitions. This is both a risk and an opportunity, depending on whether the parent company decides to continue using technology that utilizes Diamond Vogel products or eliminates it, he said.

Diamond Vogel, in its 91st year with four generations of the family working for the company, will continue to grow by meeting the needs of its customers and partnering with them on their coating needs. Much of this future growth in technology will come in the area of powder coatings, Powell said.

**Officials seek ways to increase workforce**

O'Donnell said the manufacturing industry will experience significant shifts in the next five to 10 years. Some of this will happen within the workforce.

Officials, through collaboration with businesses and service providers, also want to expand educational opportunities for prospective manufacturing employees to provide the skills needed

for today’s manufacturing jobs and to fill the void where there are gaps in employees.

“People need to know that manufacturing is alive and it’s growing and will be around for a long time,” O'Donnell said.

More than 100 manufacturers will open their doors to students and the public this month (October) to celebrate manufacturing and show their plant floor, technologies and more.

Iowa has low unemployment, O'Donnell said, so there’s much discussion about how to create more workers with the necessary skills, how to pull people from other industries, and how to make workers more productive. There also will be a generational shift within the leadership structure of companies, as baby boomers retire and millennials move into leadership roles.

He said he doesn’t anticipate this meaning a change in leadership philosophy but rather an introduction to more technology in manufacturing with digital natives in charge.

“They’re going to be more open to implementing technologies, and I see them demanding this throughout their companies,” O'Donnell said. “Your first answer is not what is the right answer, but it’s why are we not doing digital. It’ll go from trying out new digital technologies to digitizing as a priority.”

School districts and colleges can help the industry by investing in robotics, artificial intelligence

and other programs and courses that will create a base of well-skilled workers, Askren with HNI said.

Kirk McCollough, president of Seneca Foundry Inc. in Webster City, said there is a demand for more entry-level product employees and end-skills trades workers. His family’s company makes cast moldings, exhaust manifolds and other casted parts and components. Most of its customers are in the United States, but it also has a relationship with some overseas companies.

**Innovation, technology pave the way**

The future of manufacturing looks bright in the state. The next couple of years will continue to bring more innovation and research and development of new products and ways to make manufacturers grow and compete on a national and global level. Shared services such as the 3-D printer at the Cedar Valley TechWorks Campus will likely expand in the future, so businesses can share the expense of cutting-edge technology.

“Individual businesses can’t always afford the cost on their own, but together they could collectively invest in these types of cutting-edge technologies and offset the costs,” Durham said.

There will be more expansion in digital manufacturing – computer-based and network-based technologies that help manufacturers better design, service and engineer their products, O'Donnell said.



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# “Iowa needs to continue to develop and invest and work on this

This will include more use of 3-D printing for metal and plastics, as well as virtual and augmented reality, where manufacturers could overlay a 3-D model in front of a piece of equipment on their shop floor and determine a design.

Three-dimensional printing of products will expand beyond the creation of prototypes and be used for low-end production of items, McCollough said. He also foresees less high-volume production of parts because product designs will change and be updated at a quicker pace.

“We won’t necessarily see the tens of thousands of parts,” he said. “The design cycle will go faster. The complexity of the design will increase.”

### Leaders want business-friendly climate

About 95 percent of the advanced manufacturing products produced in Iowa are shipped outside of the United States, so the ability to export is vital to the state’s economy.

“It’s important we put agreements in place that allow us to fairly and competitively export Iowa products around the world,” Durham said.

O’Donnell, the CIRAS program director, said Iowa manufacturers can compete in the global market when they’re on equal footing with other businesses.

For the most part, Diamond Vogel’s customers are in the United States with some in other areas of North America. Any initiative that could return manufacturing jobs to the country from overseas would give the company more opportunities to increase its market share in the industrial coatings business, Powell said.

Since President Donald Trump took office, Powell said there has been a boost among customers in feeling more secure about business having the support of the administration.

Vogel agreed, and added that he’s in favor of increasing manufacturing opportunities within the United States and removing any hurdles that prevent U.S. companies from marketing their products internationally.

“If that happens, generally everyone wins,” he said. “Employment goes up, and the economy become stronger. If manufacturing grows and succeeds, there’s revenues for the government and to fund programs.”

McCollough said there have been some inquiries about products returning to the United States for production, but price-wise it’s still cheaper to produce them overseas, and companies located in the country, his included, charge more to produce them.

There are challenges for all companies regardless of which state they reside in, and businesses want to locate in a place where they can succeed, Askren said. That’s why it’s important for the state to have a strong education system, and a tax structure, regulations and incentives that are favorable toward businesses, he said.

“Sometimes we as a public lose track of the fact that we compete globally, and corporations have alternatives,” Askren said.

HNI has invested more than \$150 million in the state in the past few years in facilities, equipment and technologies.

because the world is moving quickly.”

Stan Askren, chairman, president & CEO, HNI Corporation

“Iowa is a good place for us to do work, but we do take business elsewhere when it’s the most advantageous for cost,” Askren said, adding that the company’s plants in China and India serve customers in those regions.

If there are back trade regulations or policies, they need to be removed, said Askren, who favors free trade and thinks the best value proposition wins. But it’s more important to focus on making Iowa and U.S. companies better than knocking down the global competition, he said.

“Iowa needs to continue to develop and invest and work on this because the world is moving quickly,” Askren said. “The world is ruthlessly efficient. They will go where they can get the best deal. ... We as a state need to keep moving forward. As soon as we stop, everyone else will take us over.”



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS



**NOV. 2**  
**Connecting Statewide Leaders**  
Jefferson

**JAN. 10**  
**Legislative Briefing and Reception**  
4 p.m. | Iowa Tap Room | Des Moines

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TOP TIPS

## Strategies for controlling company health insurance costs



**Mike Teachout**

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Fall is here, which means annual health insurance renewal increase notifications are coming soon.

The majority of Iowa-based employers in the small-to-medium employee size range will soon receive their annual group health insurance renewal notification for a Jan. 1 effective date. Early indications are that rate increases will be in the 10 percent to 18 percent range before any changes to benefits are considered and implemented.

The most common changes are focused on increasing deductibles, out-of-pocket limitations and office visit/prescription co-payments. As of the date of this article, the Affordable Care Act's Health Insurance Premium Tax is set to be re-instituted for 2018, which for some employers will add another 3 percent to their renewal.

As employers grapple with the cost of providing employees an attractive benefit, the following should be considered as a way to keep benefits an important part of their employee retention strategy:

- Have open and frank discussions with employees about the rising cost of health insurance and how these costs affect the business and their personal wages.

- Explore and consider implementing an alternative funding arrangement that sets premiums based upon the health status of employees and their dependents.
- Analyze and evaluate employer and employee contribution strategy to determine if it meets the needs of the employees and the employer.
- Consider offering a Wellness program.
- Research the feasibility of offering employees a health insurance plan that limits access to a narrow provider network.
- Research the cost and benefits of joining a Professional Employer Organization (PEO), which in addition to the human resource administrative services, has a Master Group Health Policy.

Please contact me at Focus OneSource for additional information or to talk through options for your business.

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## EMBARRASSED EXECUTIVE

**Q.** I find myself becoming overwhelmed by the amount of work I have to get done. How do I manage all of it?

**A.** Successful people are often overwhelmed by the number of tasks and people that need their attention. Here are three tips to help you stay focused:



**Rena Striegel**

President, Transition Point  
Business Advisors

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1. Take time to think! A Clarity Break will give you an opportunity to get away from the office to identify and reflect on the strategic things you need to focus on to move your business forward. Clarity Breaks can be weekly or monthly, but the most important thing to remember is that you need to get out of the office and find a place where you are relaxed and feel creative.
2. Prioritize! It is a natural tendency to deal with the problem that seems the biggest or loudest. Don't be afraid to slow things down and deal with issues in order of strategic importance rather than by level of urgency. Ask yourself: Does it really need to be handled right now? Is it something that your team can be empowered to deal with?
3. Delegate! Leaders can find it difficult to turn things over to others. Try the small things first and work up to bigger, more complicated tasks as your trust level with your team members increases. Change your language from "Can I help you?," which opens the door to having tasks come back onto your plate, to "How can I support you?" This small change in wording will allow you to coach your team rather than add tasks to your already full day.

By taking time to prioritize and stay mindful about the tasks and people who need your attention, you will find that your productivity will increase and your team will become more independent.

CAPITOL BUSINESS



# ABI ADVOCATES FOR YOU ALL YEAR



**Nicole Crain**  
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If you're an ABI member, you know ABI has a full policy and political program that operates year-round. You know ABI has a political action committee, as well as a grassroots action tool for ABI members and employees to stay engaged and educated in the political process.

However, when I talk with family, friends and neighbors, I'm often asked, "So what do you do when the Legislature isn't in session?" People tend to think I play a lot of golf and drink a lot of coffee. The coffee part is true, but only because as a member of the ABI public policy team we have some intense rules and regulations that we analyze and comment on before the Administrative Rules Review Committee (ARRC).

The ARRC is the body that reviews all state agency rules that need to be implemented due to legislative or state policy changes. The committee, which is made up of Republican and Democratic legislators, meets once a month and asks many questions of each state agency about the rules. The public also has the opportunity to speak and provide comments at the meeting and to the agencies proposing the rules. This is where the ABI policy team spends quite a bit of time speaking up for members.

The association has commented on many proposed rules this summer, including the Iowa Workforce Development rules that implement legislation from the 2017 session. These rules strengthen the unemployment trust fund and fix an Iowa Supreme Court case. ABI also reviewed Department of Revenue rules that implement changes to the Property Assessment Appeals Board and extend the W-2 online reporting requirement for small businesses.

In addition to formal comments ABI submits to agencies, members of the public policy team spend many hours meeting with state agency officials talking about issues that affect Iowa companies. For example, ABI participated in a months-long stakeholder process with the Department of Natural Resources Air Quality Bureau to look at efficiencies and funding challenges. ABI also works with individual member companies to address regulatory challenges they are facing in their business and to help connect them with the right agency or individual who can help them work through the difficulties.

As employers, we know you're busy running your business and you don't have the time to review rules and legislation to make certain it won't negatively affect your bottom line or your employees. At ABI, we're honored to have the opportunity to represent you and be the voice of job creators in Iowa's 99 counties. If you want to learn more about the rules ABI is tracking on your behalf, check out the ABI website or give me a call. I look forward to hearing from you and seeing if we can help with any challenges you may be facing.

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AHEAD OF THE CURVE

# Leadership Iowa: Connecting the State for 35 Years



**Jessi Steward**

Programs and Marketing  
Coordinator, ABI  
Foundation

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The year was 1982. President Ronald Reagan was serving his first term in the White House, the first issue of USA Today was published and Michael Jackson's iconic "Thriller" album was released. Among these memorable firsts of 1982, there was yet another notable historic beginning: the birth of Leadership Iowa.

It was during this time the Iowa Manufacturers Association (IMA) made the bold decision to broaden its scope of members to include all business types, as well as increase its services to those members. This resulted in the organization changing its name to the Iowa Association of Business and Industry (ABI) and developing a statewide issues-awareness program called Leadership Iowa.

"When the program was formed, IMA leadership had tremendous foresight. They knew that if we wanted the state to continue to grow, then we needed to help motivate our emerging leaders to make a difference," said John McCarroll, who was IMA's director of communications at the time and the individual tasked with coordinating Leadership Iowa, which he did for the first eight years of the program. McCarroll now serves as executive director of university relations at Iowa State University.

Leadership Iowa was one of only four statewide leadership programs in the country at the time, and its initial structure was modeled off of a neighboring program, Leadership Kansas. Its mission was to bring together current and emerging Iowa leaders from a variety of industries to participate in a series of eight sessions that would focus on the issues faced in our state.

After Leadership Iowa's rapid gain in popularity after the 1982-83 year, and the addition of another educational program for high school students called Business Horizons, ABI established the ABI Foundation to oversee and develop these statewide programs.

"Out of all of my careers, this has been one of the most meaningful, largely because I still interact with people today who were part of the leadership classes I was involved with," said McCarroll. "Yes, these sessions have great speakers and discussions, but it's the lasting connections that truly make the

experience. I'm glad that Leadership Iowa continues to serve such an enormous, powerful purpose for our state."

Leadership Iowa has held true to its roots for 35 years, carrying with it a tradition and reputation as one of the nation's most prominent statewide programs of its kind. The program now selects 40 participants from numerous applicants each year, and boasts over 1,000 graduates from across the state. The intent and purpose of the program remain the same, along with its top priority: creating a strong network of engaged Iowa leaders within our state.

"No other program in the state gives participants access to such a broad and diverse network of Iowa leaders," said Deb Neyens, a 2010-11 Leadership Iowa graduate from Cedar Rapids who is serving as board chair of the Leadership Iowa Board of Governors this year.

"One of our focuses for the year will be Leadership Iowa's 35th anniversary celebration," said Neyens. "We intend to offer a variety of activities and events all year long (Leadership Iowa's program year, October through June) that will give alumni the opportunity to reconnect with their classmates and grow their Leadership Iowa networks."

The ABI Foundation and Leadership Iowa are teaming up with program alumni, statewide partners and its parent organization, ABI, to continue to strengthen this huge network and engage former program participants who, through their support, help to make Leadership Iowa the program it is today.

"It's my hope that 35 years from now, Leadership Iowa is inspiring new generations of Iowa leaders and that participants are continuing to use their Leadership Iowa experiences and connections to address and solve the issues and challenges facing the state," said Neyens.

Leadership Iowa kicks off its 35th year with an opening session Oct. 4-6 in Winterset. To learn more about Leadership Iowa, visit [LeadershipIowa.com](http://LeadershipIowa.com) or [IowaABIFoundation.org](http://IowaABIFoundation.org).

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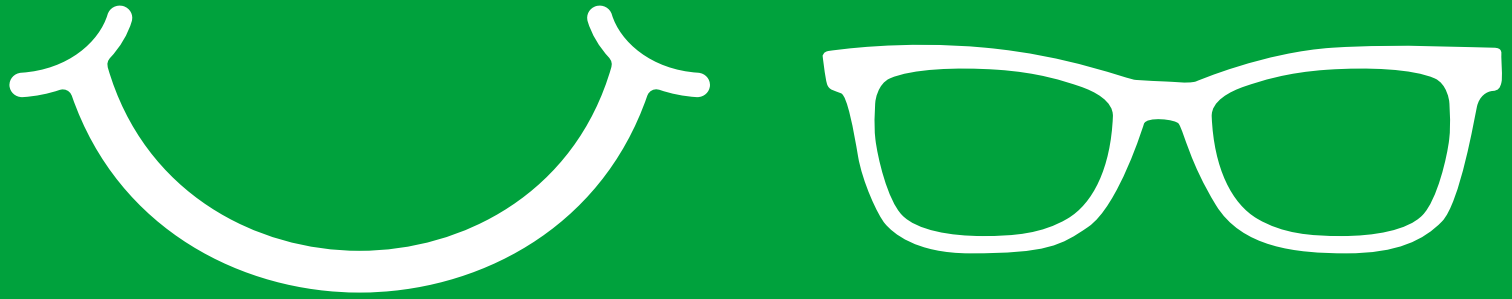


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ABI is Iowa's oldest and largest business network, representing almost **1,500 businesses** of all types and sizes employing **over 330,000 Iowans** in all **99 counties**. If you are not sure if your organization is a member of ABI, contact Dorothy Knowles at 515-235-0568 or [dknowles@iowaabi.org](mailto:dknowles@iowaabi.org).





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