



# 2020 LEGISLATIVE PREVIEW:

IOWA LEGISLATORS SHARE AGENDAS  
FOR UPCOMING SESSION

**MATT WINDSCHITL**, *House Majority Leader*  
**PAT GRASSLEY**, *House Speaker-select*





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The Iowa Association of Business and Industry (ABI) is the voice of Iowa business. It is Iowa's oldest and largest business network, representing 1,500 businesses that employ more than 333,000 Iowans. ABI benefits members by advocating on their behalf at the statehouse, connecting them with decision-makers to share ideas and services, offering solutions and best practices for issues that affect their businesses and developing our state's business and civic leaders.

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### A VIEW FROM THE TOP

# Leading Organizations are Always Looking Ahead

2019 was a busy and successful year at ABI, but leading organizations are always looking ahead, putting their future in focus. One of the things to which ABI is looking ahead is the 2020 session of the Iowa General Assembly. This edition of Business Record Iowa highlights the upcoming session and issues that will be considered by the Iowa Legislature this year.

At Collins Aerospace (and at other ABI companies), our people make some of the highest-quality and most innovative products in the world. We share that story with elected officials at every opportunity. We know our legislators, and we invite them into our plant often. We appreciate their public service, and we follow their votes.

Not just during session, but all year long, one great resource for objective, nonpartisan information about the candidates and issues is found at IAVotes.com. IAVotes.com is ABI's award-winning voter resource and issues website.

Go to IAVotes.com to find information about the Iowa caucuses, legislator voting records and issues. You can also find information about your local officials and a great deal of other data and information.

Finally, ABI will hold its second largest annual event, the Legislative Briefing and Reception, on Wednesday, January 15. Over 500 Iowa business people and elected officials will participate. The largest annual event is the annual conference. The 2020 ABI Taking Care of Business Conference will be held in Cedar Rapids on June 9-11. See you there! ■



**Cindy Dietz**  
*ABI Chair*  
*Collins Aerospace*  
*Cedar Rapids*



2019 was a busy and successful year at ABI, **but leading organizations are always looking ahead, putting their future in focus.**

— Cindy Dietz







## CULTIVATING IOWA'S TALENT CONTINUUM



# Leadership Iowa Class Halfway Through Eight-month Program:

Commitment to Make Connections and Advance Iowa Continues

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For 40 leaders from across the state, this month marks a milestone. After added hours on the road, more days away from the office and home, and only a few months in each other's company, the Leadership Iowa Class of 2019-20 is halfway through the accelerated experiential program.

"At its core, Leadership Iowa is about building relationships," said Brian Aust (Graham Construction), a graduate of the 2018-19 class now serving as a 2019-20 program co-chair. "The wide-ranging curriculum coupled with the Leadership Iowa network, developed over 38 years, continues to attract the outside experts needed to inform and facilitate the dialog within each of the sessions."

Since October's opening session in Perry, participants have continued their commitment by taking part in two-day monthly sessions, diving into issues and opportunities facing Iowa while gaining first-hand perspectives, connecting with a variety of leaders, and leveraging one another's expertise. Thus far, the class has explored the topics of agriculture and renewable resources in Iowa Falls and education in Fort Dodge. Now for January, class members will gather in Des Moines to discuss government.

Among the highlights of this month's session will be attending the back-to-back events of ABI's Legislative Briefing and Reception and the Leadership Iowa Alumni Society Dinner and Celebration on Wednesday, Jan. 15. Class members will also take part in a congressional election simulation, gain an inside look at Iowa's top legislative priorities and political landscape, learn about the state's judicial processes and experience military training as a 'soldier for a day' at Camp Dodge.

"This class is taking what they're learning from each speaker and truly asking of themselves and as a class 'what we can do to help' to affect powerful change in each community," said Jacqueline Kiple (John Deere), program co-chair alongside Aust. "This solidifies the strength of this program and exemplifies what it means to be a leader in Iowa."

The New Year will bring sessions on manufacturing and community vitality in Muscatine, economic development in Glenwood and Council Bluffs, and healthcare in Waverly. The program concludes in June at the ABI Taking Care of Business Conference in Cedar Rapids, where the Class of 2019-20 will graduate and join a network of over 1,200 alumni.

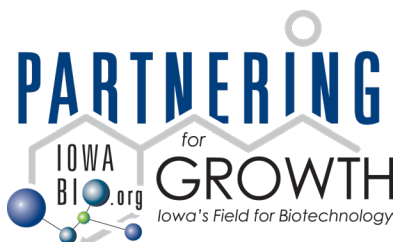
Leadership Iowa is currently accepting nominations for next year's participants and host communities. Would you or someone you know benefit from this unique experience? Do you know of an Iowa community that should host a Leadership Iowa session? To learn more and nominate yourself or others, as well as a host community for the 2020-21 program, visit [www.LeadershipIowa.com](http://www.LeadershipIowa.com). ■





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CULTIVATING IOWA'S TALENT CONTINUUM

# Application Now Open for the ABI Foundation's Student Programs,

Business Horizons (high school) and Leadership Iowa University (college)

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Valuable to business and industry, relevant to community retention and workforce development efforts, and impactful to participants: the ABI Foundation cultivates Iowa's talent continuum with engaging experiential programs, Business Horizons (high school) and Leadership Iowa University (college).

**BUSINESS HORIZONS**  
**JULY 19-23, 2020 | CENTRAL COLLEGE IN PELLA**

Innovation simulation for high school students (grades 9-12) to team up and compete as a start-up from inception to investor pitch, using their strengths and skills to strategize and visualize future plans in Iowa.

One-third of Iowa high school graduates do not pursue further education. After five days of team-based, hands-on career exploration, here's the breakdown of what our diverse 76 participants envision their next steps to be:



Additionally, 66% of our high school student participants in 2019 were already in the workforce, with the majority holding jobs both during the school year and summer months.

Transforming interests into pathways, they are approaching commencement more knowledgeable, confident and enthusiastic.

Help a high school student discover their next step at [www.BusinessHorizonsIowa.com](http://www.BusinessHorizonsIowa.com).

Sources: AEA PREP, Iowa Area Education Agencies, Iowa Department of Education, 2019. Post-program survey, Business Horizons, 2019.

**LEADERSHIP IOWA UNIVERSITY**  
**AUGUST 9-13, 2020 | DES MOINES AREA**

College internship capstone connecting our state's next decision makers with tools for professional and personal success.

Less than half of all college students in Iowa say they are likely to stay in the state.

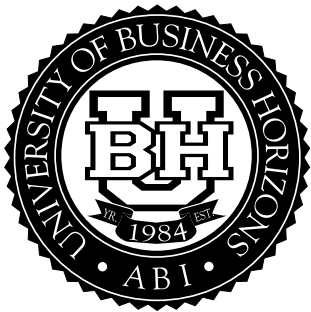
'Personal interest' and 'feels it's meant to be' are among top motivators alongside earnings potential, location and aptitude for/ability to perform job. Here's what our 2019 Leadership Iowa University students said would make the difference in their future workplace:

"Culture that embraces creativity and challenges." "Company that has an impact on the community." "Diversity, especially in the leadership team." "Assists with personal development." "Team atmosphere."

After one week of touring Iowa businesses and networking with Iowa professionals, nearly all participants, including those undecided on plans after graduation previous to the program, shared they now plan to continue to call our state home.

Connect a college student to experience why Iowa is the best place for them to work and live at [www.LeadershipIowaUniversity.com](http://www.LeadershipIowaUniversity.com).

Sources: Post-graduation Location & Employment Plans, Iowa Workforce Development, 2017. Post-program survey, Leadership Iowa University, 2019.



**LEADERSHIP IOWA**  
**UNIVERSITY**

## Get involved:

- **NOMINATE.** The quick and easy "Nominate" forms found on each program's website allow you to provide student contact information so staff members can follow-up with program details. Participants often thank their connector for many years to come. Nominations are not required to apply for the ABI Foundation's student programs.
- **VOLUNTEER.** Meet our participants and see the impact first-hand by joining the 100+ volunteers it takes to make these programs a success.
- **SUPPORT.** Build your legacy by sponsoring success for Iowans. Show your company's support across the state through a tax-deductible contribution to the ABI Foundation and/or its programs.



GET TO KNOW

# Meet Our Newest Members

Visit our newest members' websites, and see what they're up to:

Barilla | [www.barilla.com/en-us](http://www.barilla.com/en-us)

Business & Financial Strategies | [www.bf-strategies.com](http://www.bf-strategies.com)

FIN Strategies | [www.fin-strategies.com](http://www.fin-strategies.com)

LDJ Manufacturing | [www.ldj-products.com](http://www.ldj-products.com)

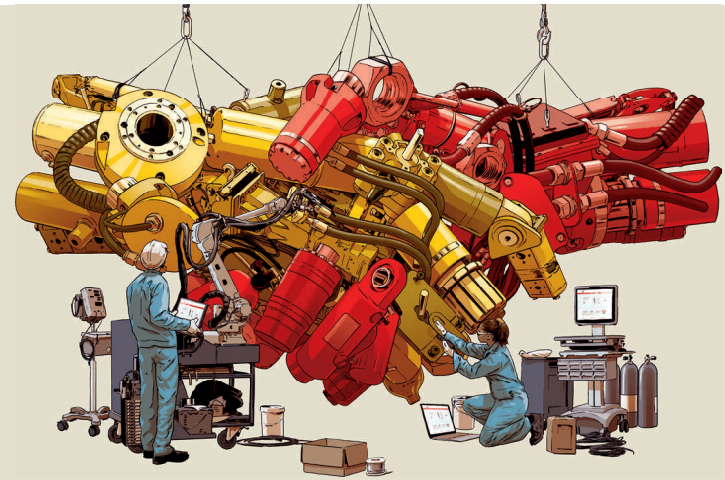
P&G Oral Care | [www.us.pg.com](http://www.us.pg.com)

Riessen Performance Group | [www.kathleenriessen.com](http://www.kathleenriessen.com)

Tri-City Electric Co. | [www.tricityelectric.com](http://www.tricityelectric.com)

Women Lead Change | [www.wlcglobal.org](http://www.wlcglobal.org)

**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).**



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Iowa's 2020 legislative session, which begins Jan. 13, will bring a mix of new and old. Republicans control the Iowa Senate, House of Representatives and governorship for the fourth straight year and plan to build on what they've accomplished in the past few sessions.

Front and center on both parties' minds? Continuing to build up workforce, which is ABI's No. 1 priority for 2020. ABI is encouraging the Legislature to propel Future Ready Iowa forward along with work-based learning opportunities, apprenticeship programs and other initiatives. This includes overcoming barriers to employment, such as child care and workforce housing.

Republicans and Democrats agree workforce is a key issue, but there are also a number of other items on the 2020 agenda.

### WORKFORCE IS BIPARTISAN ISSUE

At an early December event in his home district of Black Hawk County, Republican Rep. Pat Grassley, grandson of U.S. Sen. Chuck Grassley and incoming speaker of the House, was slated to speak after a Democratic senator. Both touched on several similar issues, the biggest being workforce.

Grassley took that to mean workforce isn't a partisan issue — it matters to both sides of the aisle.

"I think that shows that this is not a Republican or Democrat issue," Grassley said. "How we arrived there may be a little different, but this is a step in the right direction that we've both identified this as an issue."

Unemployment in Iowa has hovered around 2.5% the past few years — sometimes as low as 2% in rural areas — and businesses around the state are feeling the squeeze. The problem is exacerbated in rural counties, where population numbers are dwindling in favor of metropolitan areas.

Democratic Rep. Todd Prichard, the House minority leader, represents New Hampton and Charles City in north Iowa. Manufacturing has a heavy presence in New Hampton, representing about 1,800 jobs in a city of about 3,500 people, he said. Prichard believes funding programs that encourage job training in advanced manufacturing is essential.

"As manufacturing becomes more and more technology-based, we have to have training that meets that change," he said. "I would hope that's something that both sides agree on: job training."

Future Ready Iowa, an initiative launched in 2018 by Gov. Kim Reynolds, has helped provide a road map for better job training. The goal of the plan is for 70% of Iowa workers to have education or training beyond high school by 2025.

ABI considers Future Ready Iowa critical to the state's workforce efforts. Legislative leaders agree job training, which is offered through this program, is essential.

"It's an important part of our workforce agenda," said Republican Charles Schneider, Senate president. "We've worked closely with the governor, and we want to be very supportive of her efforts to move that forward."

Democrat Janet Petersen, the Senate minority leader, said Future Ready Iowa is a bipartisan initiative.

"We believe we should be putting more resources toward job and apprenticeship programs to make sure that Iowans who want to elevate their ability to make a decent living have access to that through Future Ready Iowa," she said.

Workforce is sure to come up during the 2020 session as an issue both sides want to tackle, but there are some disagreements. Republican Jack Whitver, the Senate majority leader, said it's critical to get able-bodied workers off the sidelines. He believes moving people off of the state's welfare system and into the workforce is an important next step.

"If you are able-bodied, and you are on welfare programs, you don't have kids at home, there's no reason you shouldn't be working," Whitver said. "There's real dignity to work, and we want to try and find ways to encourage or incentivize people to get out of the welfare programs, and get them into the workforce. Our businesses need them, our economy needs them, and fellow taxpayers need them."

"The reality is over the last century, we've been at the same population level, and so I'm not going to sit around and hope that hundreds of thousands of people move to Iowa. We need to find ways to be aggressive about it."

On the Democratic side, the workforce agenda focuses on helping Iowa workers receive more benefits, like paid time off, maternal accommodations, and child care accessibility and affordability. Increasing wages is also a priority. Peterson, who plans to address all these issues in the 2020 sessions, hopes improvements in these areas will help boost workforce numbers.

### CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE GAINS TRACTION

Child care was brought up as one of the chief concerns by legislative leaders, and it goes hand in hand with workforce. Some individuals choose not to enter the workforce because child care costs are too high. Iowa's government-run program pays for at least part of a child care bill, but to qualify, a family must make less than 145% of the federal poverty line. In 2019, that limit was \$37,300 for a family of four.

Lawmakers refer to this limit as a fiscal "cliff effect," and it can make it hard for parents to enter or stay in the workforce.



As manufacturing becomes more and more technology-based, we have to have training that meets that change."

— House Minority Leader Todd Prichard





“When you rise in the workforce and you lose that assistance, then it can become unaffordable,” said Republican Rep. Matt Windschitl, House majority leader. “We want to look at trying to see what we can do at a state level. Some of that is federal as well, but we want to try and address that so we have that workforce and opportunities are there for Iowans.”

There are a few ideas on how to fix the so-called cliff. At the moment, if a family makes more than the threshold, they lose all assistance. Schneider wants to implement a sliding-scale system that would see benefits reduce as income goes up. That way families can gradually adjust as they improve their earning power — “there’s not that sudden cutoff at a certain level that disincentivizes people from wanting to take a promotion,” Schneider said.

For Democrats, Prichard said he’d like to take a multipronged approach to child care. In addition to pushing the fiscal cliff further out, he suggested funding existing child care centers so they can make capital improvements, like renovations or expansions. The goal would be to improve quality of care and capacity.

Petersen wants to push the fiscal cliff out while adding funds into the child care system. She added that Iowa needs to ensure its providers are safe. A 2019 Des Moines Register investigation found at least eight children have died in Iowa child care settings since 2018. At least half of those deaths involved providers warned by the state for taking care of too many children.

“It is shameful how many children have died in child care settings,” Petersen said. “The Legislature should look at ways that we can ensure kids are safe when parents are at work.”

#### TAX REFORM HIGH ON REPUBLICAN AGENDA

In 2018, the Republican-majority Legislature passed a major tax reform bill aiming to improve Iowa’s business climate. The bill laid out a five-year plan to gradually lower a variety of tax rates, including income and corporate taxes.

For 2020, more plans to address the tax climate are in the cards. Whitver said Iowa businesses are dealing with an antiquated tax code, and what he calls one of the worst tax environments in the country.

“As long as I’m leader in the Senate, we’re going to push tax reforms,” Whitver said. “We passed a significant tax reform bill in 2018, and we need to find ways to continue to build upon that as we go forward. We have a very messy tax code because for 20-plus years [the Legislature] didn’t have the political courage or will to implement good tax policy. So now we’re cleaning that up.”

Iowa ranks No. 42 in the country on the Tax Foundation’s 2020 State Business Tax Climate Index, which measures how well states structure their tax systems. Iowa also ranks No. 42 in individual income tax.

“If we want to be competitive long term, we need to continue to work on that,” Whitver said. “That’s one thing that our caucus has always done is we’ve tried to look long term, look past the next election and look toward the next 10 to 15 years. And fixing our tax code is a top priority.”

Petersen, Whitver’s Democratic counterpart in the Senate, said Democrats hadn’t been invited into any discussions on tax reform as of early December.

In the House, Windschitl wants to carefully evaluate potential tax reform to ensure the budget doesn’t flip into a deficit. Iowa finished the 2019 fiscal year with a \$289 million surplus, but because the farm economy could continue to take hits in 2020, Windschitl is cautiously approaching tax cuts.

“I’m not opposed to looking at all the options out there, but it comes down to sound budgeting practices,” he said. “If you start decreasing revenue, is that going to affect us with the farm economy? Twelve months from now, we don’t know how these trade deals and tariff wars are going to affect us. We need to make sure we have a buffer there, so that we don’t end up in the hole when we come into the session in 2021.”

Grassley hopes in his first year as speaker of the House, his party can pass something that enacts meaningful change in Iowa’s tax climate.

“I want to make sure that we don’t pass something just so we have something to run on,” Grassley said. “I want to pass something that actually makes a difference, something we can fully implement, and something that doesn’t devastate our state’s budget. I think we’ve done that in a very responsible way.

“When I think of what we displayed as a caucus was our ability to manage the budget in a responsible manner and pass responsible tax reform at the same time. That’s something we should be proud of.” ■

## Other issues on lawmakers’ 2020 agendas:

**JACK WHITVER (R-Ankeny), Senate majority leader:** “A lot of the problems that businesses have are created by over regulation. We are always trying to find a good balance between a safe workplace and one that’s just overburdened by the tax or regulatory environment.”

**JANET PETERSEN (D-Des Moines), Senate minority leader:** “Mental health will be an issue that I think will have good bipartisan support. ... We want to make sure that we have sustainable, adequate funding to help regions truly get children’s mental health care underway.”

**CHARLES SCHNEIDER (R-West Des Moines), Senate president:** “We need to do what we can to make Iowa a more attractive place so people want to come here. We need to do what we can to make sure that we’re getting people into the workforce who are currently sitting on the sidelines.”

**MATT WINDSCHITL (R-Missouri Valley), House majority leader:** “We’ve always done this, and we will continue to do it. We’re always looking for the opportunity to return the taxpayers’ dollars to them.”

**TODD PRICHARD (D-Charles City), House minority leader:** “We want to make sure that Iowa is a good place to live and work and raise a family. The things at the top of our list are health care and education. We’re seeing a lack of services for people outside of urban areas, particularly in rural areas.”

**PAT GRASSLEY (R-New Hartford), speaker of the House:** “Broad-band internet is another issue. Our caucus has been in conversations about how we could have a system in this state where you would have an employee being able to work from home.”



## CAPITOL BUSINESS



# What to Expect from ABI During the 2020 Legislative Session

The legislative session will begin on Jan. 13. As always, ABI serves as the Iowa business community's eyes and ears at the Capitol. The upcoming legislative session will be no different. Here is what you can expect from ABI during the session and how you can make a difference in the policymaking process.

## THREE THINGS TO EXPECT FROM ABI:

1. Round the clock coverage at the Capitol – The ABI public policy team provides a gavel-to-gavel presence during the legislative session. If the Legislature is in session, you can count on ABI to provide timely information about deliberations at the Capitol. We will work to educate lawmakers and representatives of the executive branch about the impact various proposals will have on employees and employers statewide. ABI will be there for Iowa employers—day and night.

2. Weekly updates – ABI members will receive the Voice of Iowa Business newsletter every Thursday afternoon. The newsletter will track the legislative development of key issues ABI is engaged in on behalf of members during that week. The newsletter will be timely and in your email inbox before the end of the week.

3. Monthly conference calls – ABI members also get up-to-date information during monthly conference calls, which are made possible by member company support. During these calls, we share the status of bills, answer your questions and provide an insiders' look into the legislative process.

## THREE WAYS YOU CAN GET ENGAGED:

1. Meet your local elected officials – Iowa legislators are extremely accessible.

In addition to weekend forums, legislators are willing to come to businesses and meet with employees and other businesses from their districts. The best way to educate legislators is to help them understand what you do and why your business is important to the Iowa economy. Invite them to your office, plant or construction site. Get to know them. If you need help with this, ABI staff is here to assist.

2. Attend Iowa Business Day on the Hill – In addition to the ABI Legislative Briefing and Reception that kicks off the legislative session, ABI also partners with business organizations for Iowa Business Day on the Hill. This year, the event will be held on March 11 at the ABI office. Check out [www.iowaabi.org](http://www.iowaabi.org) for more details.

3. Make sure you receive ABI emails – I know you receive a lot of emails from organizations you're a part of. However, if you want to stay up-to-date on the legislative happenings at ABI, make sure you read the Voice of Iowa Business newsletter on Thursdays. Also, when you see an email from Mike Ralston, Brad Hartkopf or myself, most likely it's related to a pending public policy issue, it's time sensitive and we need your support. Please help us and reach out to your legislators when the requests come from ABI.

It is an honor to represent you and the hundreds of thousands of employees you employ throughout the state each and every day. We will work hard every day for you and for a better climate to be an Iowa employer. If you have a question about public policy, please email or call us. Our job is to represent you and be responsive to your questions and concerns. Thank you for your commitment to ABI and Iowa's business community. ■



**JD Davis**  
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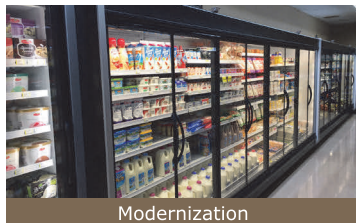
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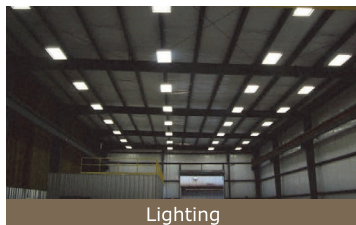
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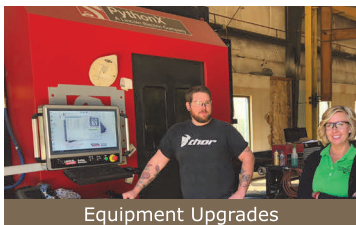
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### More Details:

For program overview, related requirements, and ensure availability of funds, contact Bruce Nuzum or visit:

**[IADG.com/EnergyBank](http://IADG.com/EnergyBank)**

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS



### FEBRUARY 13

#### Building Business Value

Agri-Industrial Plastics Company | Fairfield

### MARCH 5

#### Connecting Statewide Leaders

Muscatine | 10:30 a.m.

### MARCH 5

#### Building Business Value

Muscatine | 1 p.m.

### MARCH 5-6

#### Leadership Iowa

Muscatine

### MARCH 11

#### Iowa Business Day on the Hill

ABI Office | Des Moines

### APRIL 2-3

#### Leadership Iowa

Glenwood/Council Bluffs

### MAY 7-8

#### Leadership Iowa

Waverly

### JUNE 9-11

#### Taking Care of Business Conference

Cedar Rapids Convention Complex | Cedar Rapids

### JUNE 11

#### Leadership Iowa Graduation

Cedar Rapids

### AUGUST 31

#### Executive Open

Des Moines Golf and Country Club | West Des Moines

Visit [www.iowaabi.org](http://www.iowaabi.org) and click the "Events" tab for details on upcoming events.



EVENT REWIND



# Connecting Statewide Leaders

December 5 | Fort Dodge

On Thursday, Dec. 5, the Leadership Iowa Class of 2019-20 joined ABI members and Fort Dodge community and industry leaders for a Connecting Statewide Leaders event. Attendees heard from Iowa Department of Education Director Dr. Ryan Wise. Dr. Wise provided an in-depth look at Iowa's educational landscape.



# Leadership Iowa

December 5-6 | Fort Dodge

On Dec. 5-6, the Leadership Iowa Class of 2019-20 examined the topic of education in Fort Dodge. The group visited Fort Dodge Community Middle School with Superintendent Dr. Jesse Ulrich, where they spoke to students about their careers and heard from the high school robotics teams. They also toured Trinity Regional Medical Center's simulation lab and saw the most up-to-date technology in training future medical care providers. Other highlights included learning about the variety of business-education initiatives taking place across the state and gaining insight into today's issues in K-12 and higher education.



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