

THE AIWP CURRENT

≡ A NEWSLETTER OF THE ASSOCIATION OF IOWA WORKFORCE PARTNERS ≡

January 2021

Virtual Professional Development

1st Quarter Professional Development



January Webinar: Serving Individuals with Disabilities

The AIWP January Professional Development Webinar was presented by Bob Hendrickson from Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS). This was a stand out webinar, with many great resources, which you can find below! If you missed the January Professional Development Webinar, you can view the recording [here](#).

Assistive Technology Resources:
[Job Accommodation Network](#)
[Telecommunication Access Iowa](#)



March Webinar: Veteran Employment

We will be taking a break from our monthly webinars in February, but we will return March 17th for a conversation with Jathan Chicoine from Home Base Iowa about Veteran Employment!

Don't miss out on this great opportunity! Register today!

Date: Wednesday, March 17th
Time: 12:00PM - 1:00PM CST
Cost: FREE!

Register for the March 2021 Webinar here!

Employer Innovation Fund and Child Care Challenge Fund

Two new grant funding opportunities from Future Ready Iowa were announced by Governor Reynolds on January 13th, 2021.

Both grants, with a combined \$1.2 million in funds, aim to strengthen Iowa's COVID-19 economy. The Employer Innovation Fund encourages workforce participants to seek post-secondary education opportunities to equip them with the skills needed for Iowa's most in demand jobs. This fund also incentivizes employers to support their employees through professional development and further education.

The Child Care Challenge Fund aims to eliminate another major obstacle to employment for many Iowans- access to child care. This fund allows grant seekers to build a new child care facility or retrofit an existing structure.

Click [here](#) to read more about the new funds and their application requirements.



AIWP 2021 Legislative Priorities

The 2021 legislative session began on Monday, January 11th. The AIWP team has created a list of 4 legislative priorities for this session:

1. Streamline the talent pipeline to high-demand careers by supporting Sector Partnership initiatives, trainings, and resources. Empower Sector Partnerships to be a voice on industry concerns in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and natural disasters.
2. Address external barriers to service for rural communities, including, but not limited to:
 - Investing in and providing state matches to broadband grant programs aimed at extending high-speed internet services to unserved and underserved areas.
 - Investing in transportation and infrastructure, including rural road maintenance and repair as well as reliable, accessible, and robust public transportation options.
 - Expand eligibility and funding for the Family Self-Sufficiency Grant Program under FIP to support individuals paying for vehicle repairs and maintenance, allowing them to access services in rural areas.
3. Continue investment in, and coordinate state and federal funding for computer literacy and basic computer skill building services provided under WIOA. As services were required to transition to virtual in response to COVID-19, individuals with limited computer literacy and skills found themselves at a disadvantage.
4. Expand the state's capacity to serve youth by investing in local youth Work Based Learning programs.

Since Monday, Governor Reynolds has touched on many of these topics, noting that they are important pieces to stimulating growth in Iowa's economy, and specifically mentioned rural access to broadband.

[View and Download the AIWP 2021 Legislative Priorities Here!](#)

Resources Worthy of Your Attention

Employment Watch: Women Account for 100% of Job Losses in December

In 2019, women outnumbered men in the workforce. Now, women account for 55% of job losses since February 2020. Closing out the year, women accounted for 100% of the net job loss in December.

There are many factors contributing to this shocking statistic- the hospitality industry was hit particularly hard because of COVID-19 and this workforce sector trends towards women's labor. Beyond that, many women left the workforce in 2020 due to lack of child care and the higher demands women face in caregiving.

Other notable statistics from December's job losses include 40% of unemployed women being without work for 6 months or longer, and Black and Latina women almost doubling the rate of unemployment of both White men and women.

[Read More Here](#)

News from the Field

Iowa Must Address Looming Workforce Shortfalls

In a guest opinion to the Sioux City Journal, Steve Warnstadt, a former Iowa State Senator and current Government Affairs Coordinator for Western Iowa Tech Community College, addresses many barriers consistently experienced by workforce development professionals.

Noting the coming mass retirement of 16% of the workforce in the coming 15 years, Warnstadt notes that Iowa must do more to train, prepare and bolster our workforce. Warnstadt states that access to broadband, workforce training programs and post-secondary education, health care and child care are all issues that must be addressed by the state legislature in order to save Iowa's manufacturing jobs.

You can read more about this issue [here](#).

WIOA Success Stories: Impacting Iowan's Everyday Lives



Seizing Opportunity: Nichole McRoberts

Nichole is a single mom and was working for an inventory company. Her schedule was never consistent and her job required travel, which was hard to manage with a child at home. She was interested in exploring another type of job.

A staff member mentioned that North Iowa Area Community College, IowaWorks and Iowa Mold & Tooling were partnering to offer a Women in Welding course. Adult Basic Education at NIACC, through Integrated Education and Training, provided contextualized math while the women were also learning to weld, in a short term training program. Nichole successfully completed the class and was offered a position at Iowa Mold & Tooling.

Nichole told KIMT, the local television station that “The opportunity sounded so good, she couldn’t pass it up.” She said she never thought she would be in welding, but its right up her alley.

She obtained a 1st shift welding position at the end of the class and has been employed there for 5 months. The WIOA Title 1 Adult Program provided her a welding helmet for her new career. She recently made the move to a 2nd shift welding position.

This story was submitted by Patti Hanson, Dean of Continuing Education at North Iowa Area Community College

Do you want to feature a success story of your own in The AIWP Current?

Submit Your Success Story Here!

Seeking Success in the New Year

For many, a new year symbolizes resolutions of things you'd like to work on and accomplish by December 31st. If you're looking to have a more successful year, try some of these tips:

- 1) Do something you love every day
- 2) Give yourself credit when you deserve it
- 3) Make new professional contacts and network
- 4) Listen more than you talk
- 5) Take up a new hobby
- 6) Stick to goals, keep a resolution
- 7) Do something just for you
- 8) Try to learn one new thing a day
- 9) Track your to-do list
- 10) Take yourself a little less seriously



Read more about these success resolutions [here](#).

Join the Association of Workforce Partners!

Join AIWP Now!

The Association of Iowa Workforce Partners (AIWP) is an **advocacy organization** that works on behalf of workforce development professionals in the state of Iowa. AIWP ensures workforce service providers can focus on

providing high-quality results to their customers by offering **legislative relations, communications, and professional development services to members and staff.**

Members have access to all of the services of AIWP, including:

- AIWP annual professional development conference,
- Legislative Days at the capitol,
- Advocacy event planning and coordination,
- Professional development opportunities,
- and more!

If you're interested in joining AIWP, please contact Bri Steirer at (515) 237-0338 or bsteirer@sppg.com.



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