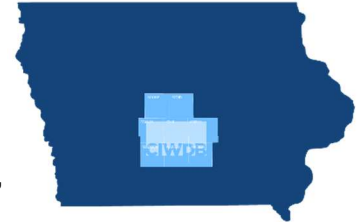




Expanding Workforce Solutions Through Adult Education

The primary role of the Local Workforce Development Board is to serve as a strategic convener, fostering collaboration between the eight Chief Elected Officials, the Development Board and key economic, education, and workforce partners in the Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA). The Central Iowa Workforce Development Board (CIWDB) leads efforts to improve and strengthen the workforce by developing strategies that promote innovation, alignment, and improvement of employment, training, and education programs to drive economic growth. To ensure long-term workforce resilience and economic stability, CIWDB and the Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) advocate for continued expansion of adult education partnerships.

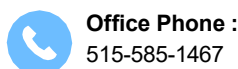


Iowa experienced an 83% increase in the number of foreign-born individuals living in Iowa between 2000 and 2019 (Iowa Dept. of Human Rights, 2023). There has been a 53.7% increase in the number of English learners in K-12 between the 2010 and 2023 school year, with 185 world languages spoken. These highlight the growing need for workforce strategies that support English Language Learners (ELL) and newcomers to Iowa. As Iowa's workforce evolves, it's critical for workforce partners and employers to leverage adult education for workforce development. Employers and workforce partners can collaborate with Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) programs to upskill their workforce.

Partnering for Workforce Success

The CIWDB composition requires partnership with post-secondary education, as well as adult education. A strong presence from DMACC is essential to building a skilled workforce that drives economic growth and stability. As the WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) provider under IowaWORKS in Central Iowa, DMACC plays a critical role in workforce development, providing individuals with foundational skills in reading, writing, math, and English language proficiency to support employment and economic self-sufficiency. AEL empowers individuals with the skills and education needed to succeed in today's job market, ensuring that businesses have access to a well-trained workforce.

Each year, the AEL program serves approximately 2,000 English Language Learners and 1,200 students seeking their High School Equivalency. These programs provide individuals with essential basic academic skills and workforce preparation skills, helping students overcome barriers to employment and career advancement. DMACC AEL recently introduced Integrated Education and Training (IET), a program that combines adult education and literacy activities with workforce training and soft skill development, helping adult learners acquire the competencies required for success in high-demand industries.



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In response to a recent mass layoff impacting 1,300 workers in Central Iowa, the CIWDB, IowaWORKS and DMACC implemented strategic workforce solutions to expedite reemployment and skill development. Many displaced workers faced barriers such as limited English proficiency, lack of credentials, and industry-specific skill gaps. To address these challenges, DMACC assisted in IowaWORKS Rapid Response efforts – serving as a Resource Center for dislocated workers, helping at Career Fairs, and participating in PerryNEXT, a coalition addressing immediate needs of dislocated workers along with long-term recovery and revitalization efforts. Adult Education and Literacy was a key component in providing this response as they provided additional English Language Learner (ELL) classes to help workers build critical language skills for re-employment, as well as implementing CDL Jumpstart to help English Language Learners enter the trucking industry. Additionally, the English for Employment workshop at the Des Moines IowaWORKS office was implemented to assist unemployed individuals in developing workplace communication skills essential for job readiness.

Program Success and Impact

One example of a successful initiative implemented in response to the mass layoff is the CDL Jumpstart Program. Through co-enrollment under IowaWORKS and WIOA Title I and II, CDL Jumpstart provided English Language Learners with the necessary training and support to obtain a Commercial Driver's License (CDL). The program offered a comprehensive workforce training approach, starting with a bridge class to help students build industry-specific vocabulary and job readiness skills. Students then moved into CDL training, receiving financial and supportive services from Title I, such as funding for tuition, transportation assistance, and career readiness services, removing barriers that often hinder participation.

- **Eight individuals** enrolled in CDL Jumpstart in Perry, including seven dislocated workers.
- **Six participants** successfully earned their CDL, equipping them with employment skills.
- **One participant shared:** *"JumpStart allowed me to improve my English and to have a lot of knowledge about the CDL. Title I helped me a lot by ensuring my entire CDL school fees were paid and gas costs for classes helped a lot, developing a resume and above all the advice which was an undeniable asset to me. This experience will help me integrate better here and be very useful to society in the USA. Thank you and God bless the United States of America."*

Workforce Development in Action:

To discuss collaboration or learn more, visit www.ciwdb.org or connect with:

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