



2025 ANNUAL REPORT

MISSION

Build a quality workforce for today and tomorrow.

VISION

All Central Iowans are engaged and thriving in our workforce.

PREPARED BY: **CENTRAL IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

PUBLISHED **FEBRUARY 24, 2026**

IowaWORKS
A proud partner of the AmericanJobCenter network



www.ciwdb.org



linkedin.com/company/central-iowa-workforce-development-board

Letter from the Executive Team

To Our Central Iowa Workforce Development Stakeholders,

2025 was a transformative year for the Central Iowa Workforce Development Area. Together with our stakeholders, we responded to meet the evolving needs of job seekers and labor demand, working to build a more efficient and effective talent pipeline.

We welcomed new leadership with the appointment of Story County Supervisor Lisa Heddens as Chief Lead Elected Official. Her peer supervisors entrusted her to guide the redesign of our local workforce area structure. Stacy Sime continued her role as Chair of the Central Iowa Workforce Development Board (CIWDB), leading a committed team of 19 board members representing our eight-county service area. Additionally, the Mid-Iowa Planning Alliance for Community Development was designated as the new WIOA grant recipient, enhancing administrative compliance and oversight of grant activities. These changes have created a strong foundation for sustained success. Our partnerships with community organizations and elected officials grew stronger. In September, we hosted our first WIOA Advocacy Day to elevate the visibility of IowaWORKS and align workforce efforts with local and regional economic development strategies. Additionally, local, state, and federal elected officials gained deeper insight into the structure and impact of federal WIOA investments and the public workforce system.

IowaWORKS expanded outreach through initiatives like the Mobile Workforce Unit tour of our rural counties outside of Polk. WIOA programs collaborated with refugee resettlement agencies and nonprofits to pilot innovative work experience programs, as they navigated through federal funding delays. Increased effort was placed on spotlighting in-demand occupations through CDL information sessions and IT career panels. Our first industry sector collaborative in “transportation and warehousing” launched this year, marking a strategic shift to ensure business feedback is at the center of our workforce strategy.

Looking ahead to 2026, we are sharpening our focus on Dislocated Worker initiatives and Rapid Response strategies in the event of job loss or reductions in Central Iowa. We remain steadfast in our commitment to ensure individuals who lose their jobs due to no fault of their own find meaningful employment that meets current labor market demands.

Thank you for your continued trust and support. We look forward to sustaining this momentum together in 2026.

Sincerely,



Lisa Heddens

2025 Chief Lead Executive Official, CIWDA



Stacy Sime

2025 Board Chair, CIWDB



Eric Kress

Executive Director, CIWDB

WHO WE ARE

The Central Iowa Workforce Development Board's purpose is to serve as a strategic leader and convener of local workforce development system stakeholders, as defined by the Federal WIOA Act.

- **Boone County** - *Erich Kretzinger*
- **Dallas County** - *Julia Helm*
- **Jasper County** - *Doug Cupples*
- **Madison County** - *Heather Stancil*
- **Marion County** - *Jim Mueller*
- **Polk County** - *Jill Altringer*
- **Story County** - *Lisa Heddens*
- **Warren County** - *Travis DeWitt*



COUNTIES WE SERVE

Boone, Dallas, Jasper, Madison, Marion, Polk, Story and Warren.

CENTRAL IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

BOARD COMPOSITION



10 +

BUSINESS MEMBERS



4 +

WORKFORCE



3 +

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING



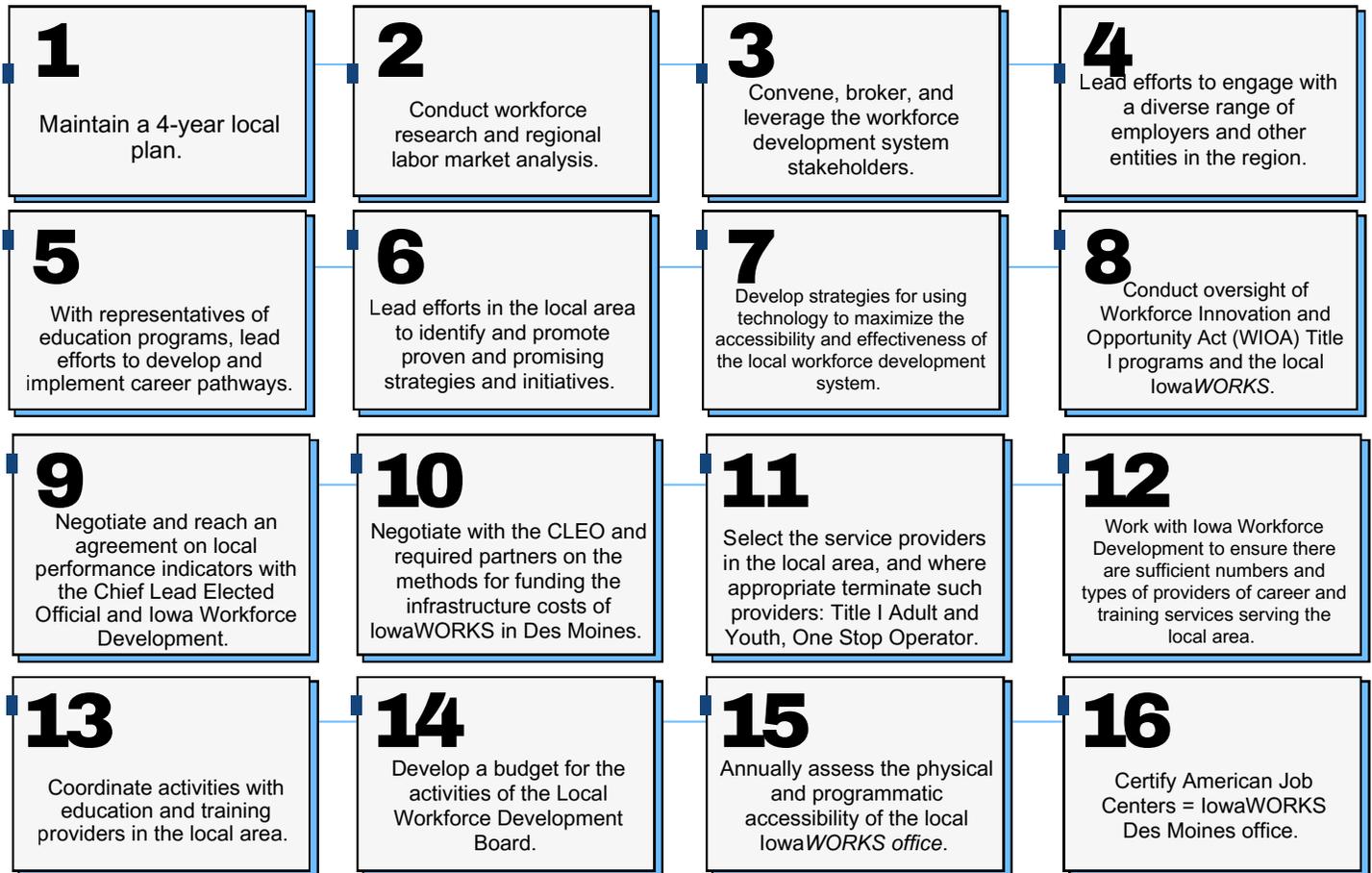
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GOVERNMENT

19 LOCAL MEMBERS

Natalie Baysinger - Tri-City Electric
William Berning - Iowa Workforce Development
Megan Crawford - Kreg Tool
Kathleen Davis - Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services
Erica Spiller - DMACC
Brenda Clouse - Dallas County Hospital
Tom Hayes - South Central Iowa Federation of Labor
Stacy Kilstofte - American Packaging
Amy Landas - Vision Bank (*Secretary*)
Jeremy Lindquist - Local Union 33
Marcanne Lynch - Mainstream Living
Paula Martinez - AFSCME Local 3013
Abigail Miller - AgCertain
Lauren Robins - Agriland FS
Lana Pol - Geetings, Inc. (*Vice-Chair*)
Stacy Sime - LifeServe Blood Center (*Chair*)
Jenae Sikkink - Greater Des Moines Partnership
Michelle Schott - DMACC
Teri Vos - WorkSMART Connector

Responsibilities of the CIWDB



FULFILLING OUR RESPONSIBILITY

- Board members and staff continued to serve on community coalitions; including but not limited to, the Greater Des Moines Partnership Workforce Collaborative, Grand View's Jacobsen Institute, the Refugee Alliance of Central Iowa's Economic Mobility Workgroup, and Boone Workforce partners.
- Aligned WIOA partners with Lutheran Services of Iowa, Oakridge Neighborhood, and Easter Seals Iowa, for an innovated summer work experience in the childcare and direct care professional occupations, simultaneously with English language advancement for refugees.
- Continues to build relationships with key Economic Development and chamber partners, including but not limited to regional entities the Ames Alliance, and Greater Des Moines Partnership.
- Supported partnership with WIOA Title I and FreeWorld to support second chance job seekers in obtaining their CDL and securing good jobs in the transportation industry.
- Educated local and state elected officials on the impact of WIOA federal investments during a September Workforce Development month advocacy event.
- Assisted Dallas County Economic Development and Perry City officials in educating future business on labor availability and workforce development resources supporting investment in Central Iowa.

CIWD BOARD MEMBER TESTIMONIALS



“Serving on the Board is a way I can help my community and use my 50 years of small business experience and advocacy to support development and economic planning.”

LANA POL
Owner, Geetings Inc.
202 CIWDB VICE-CHAIR



“Serving on the CIWDB Disability Access Committee has shown me that when organizations engage with public resources, they can drive innovation, reach new audiences, and set a standard for meaningful inclusion. Accessibility can be a growth strategy, strengthening both businesses and communities..”

MEGAN CRAWFORD
Kreg Tool
2025 CIWDB MEMBER

CIWDB STAFF

With 20 years of experience, Eric Kress has served the CIWDB since 2022. In this critical role, he is responsible for translating the board’s vision and decisions into actionable strategies, partnerships, and programs. Eric’s leadership is vital to the success of the local board, as he ensures the board’s goals are effectively implemented through day-to-day operations. Eric’s manages key relationships, coordinates initiatives, and ensures goals are met through day-to-day operations.



Eric Kress
Mid-Iowa Planning Alliance
CIWDB Director

WIOA CORE PARTNER PROGRAMS

- YSS (Title I Youth Services)
- National Able Network (Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker Services)
- Iowa Workforce Development (Title III Wagner Peyser Employment Services)
- DMACC (Title II Adult Education and Literacy)
- Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services and Iowa Department for the Blind (Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation)

WIOA REQUIRED WIOA PARTNER PROGRAMS

- IWD Jobs for Veterans, Reentry Employment, State Unemployment Compensation)
- Promise Jobs (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families)
- DMACC (Perkins Career and Technical Education)
- Proteus (National Farmworker Jobs Program)
- AARP Foundation and National ABLE Network (Senior Community Service Employment Program)
- American Indian Council (Native American Program)
- Ottumwa Job Corps (Job Corps)
- Oakmont School (Youth Build)



2025 HIGHLIGHTS FROM IOWAWORKS DES MOINES OFFICE

- Hosted employer panels for customers in the occupations of CDL and CNA
- Trained center staff in the latest industry trends through an IT employer panel at our October In-Service
- Formed and provided ongoing facilitation of a Disability Employment Networking Group to support networking and coordination amongst vital community partners who specialize in services for individuals with disabilities
- Served 58,940 customers through a variety of career and training services.
- Provided 45 hours of professional development training at no cost to all IowaWORKS partner staff.
- Strategically managed and coordination 932 customer referrals between co-located partner staff.
- Trained staff on Integrated Resource Team (IRT) and Co-Enrollment techniques and procedures
- Provided 5 free webinars featuring disability related information and best practices during National Disability Employer Awareness Month
- Conducted 45 "Grab a Job" hiring events at the office in partnership with 102 local businesses.
- Hosted 14 off-site Career Fairs in the area involving over 150 employers.
- Mobile Workforce Unit was out in our community 40 times serving job seekers and employers
- Hosted a September Workforce Development Month Business Engagement forum at IowaWORKS, which provided information on services, as well as facilitated small-group conversations to gather business input on the latest trends, challenges, and opportunities.

Adult and Dislocated Worker Services

The WIOA Adult program Adult Program aims to assist adults in obtaining employment and enhancing their skills through various services. It prioritizes individuals who are low-income, recipients of public assistance, veterans, and those who are basic skills deficient. The program is designed to improve workforce quality, reduce welfare dependency, and increase economic self-sufficiency



The WIOA Dislocated Worker program is designed to help workers get back to work as quickly as possible and overcome such difficult barriers to employment as: difficulty transferring specialized skills to other occupations or industries; or a decline in the market demand for certain skills. It also helps separating service members to enter or reenter the civilian labor force.

WIOA TITLE I AT-A-GLANCE

- ✔ Support our most underrepresented and in need job seekers, including recipients of public assistance
- ✔ Provides 1 on 1 individualized career services through assessment and individual service plans
- ✔ Ensures necessary skill development, supportive services, training, and job placement for customers
- ✔ Measures employment retention and earnings for 12 months post exit for all customers enrolled

Youth and Young Adult Services



The WIOA youth employment program serves eligible youth, ages 14-24, who face barriers to education, training, and employment. The WIOA Youth Program focuses primarily on out-of-school youth, requiring local areas to expend a minimum of 75% of WIOA youth funds on them. The program includes 14 program elements that are required to be made available to youth participants. WIOA prioritizes work experience through a 20% minimum expenditure rate for the work experience program element.

Administrative Foundation

The Mid-Iowa Planning alliance for Community Development provides support and technical assistance to cities and counties throughout the mid-Iowa region. MIPA is established as a nonprofit organization and functions as the de facto Council of Governments for the region. MIPA manages and administers various regional organizations and initiatives, helping to coordinate planning efforts and foster regional collaboration.



Beginning in July 2025, MIPA has become the WIOA Local Grant Recipient on behalf of the Central Iowa Workforce Development Area. As part of that status, the support the CIWDB with contracting, accounting, auditing and other administrative functions.

WIOA-Aligned Workforce Success Story

Paid Worker Experience and Integrated Education and Training

Background & Challenge

In January 2025, Lutheran Services of Iowa (LSI) experienced an unexpected funding freeze that paused its resettlement program—still needing to place more than 100 job seekers with self-sufficient employment. Through collaborative conversations among the LSI team, CIWDB staff, and IowaWORKS partners, an innovative solution was developed to address employment barriers faced by participants with limited work history, limited English proficiency, and insufficient foundational workplace skills.

Program Design & WIOA Services Leveraged

Easter Seals of Iowa stepped forward as a business partner to create access to work experience opportunities in the Child Care and Direct Support Professional occupation for seven job seekers. Over the course of the summer, the participants completed a total of 450 hours of paid, hands-on work experience, shadowing Easter Seals professional staff while caring for children and adults with disabilities. Complementing the work experience, participants engaged in eight hours per week of contextualized English language instruction delivered by DMACC. The instruction focused on practical vocational language and foundational job skills, reinforcing learning directly connected to their day-to-day work experiences.

PROGRAM RESULTS

All seven participants are now prepared for employment. Three secured full-time employment at the conclusion with Easter Seals Iowa and three with other employers in similar occupations.

System Impact

This initiative demonstrates best practices in:

- Cross-partner collaboration
- Rapid response to funding disruptions
- Flexible service delivery
- Employer-led workforce solutions
- Work-based learning as a bridge to unsubsidized employment



By leveraging WIOA-funded services, integrating education and training, and engaging a committed employer partner, the workforce system successfully removed barriers, improved employment outcomes, and supported both job seekers and regional employers.

Outreach Success

IowaWORKS Mobile Workforce Center Tours Central Iowa



The IowaWORKS Mobile Workforce Center completed a successful 2025 tour across seven Central Iowa counties—Warren, Dallas, Madison, Marion, Jasper, Story, and Boone. The initiative aimed to connect job seekers, employers, and community partners through accessible workforce services and employment opportunities to areas outside Polk County, where the IowaWORKS American Job Center is located. The tour demonstrated the power of collaboration in expanding workforce access to rural communities through innovative outreach and technology.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Counties Visited: 7
 - Warren, Dallas, Madison, Marion, Jasper, Story, Boone
- Job Seekers Engaged: 104
- Participating Businesses: 22
- Partnering Chambers/Economic Development Entities: 8

Partner Organizations

- Boone Chamber of Commerce
- Adel Chamber of Commerce
- City of Adel
- Greater Dallas County Development Alliance
- Newton Economic Development
- Jasper Economic Development (JEDCO)
- Norwalk Chamber of Commerce
- Marion County Public Health
- Madison County Chamber of Commerce

Partner Businesses

- Boone Wal-Mart
- Bomgaars
- Besser
- Landus Ag
- Aerotek
- Dallas County Hospital
- Liberty Ready Mix
- Nucor
- Chevron Renewable Energy Group
- Graphic Packaging
- Adapt Health
- New Century FS—Key Cooperative
- Optima LifeServices
- Mary Greeley Medical Center
- Ames Community School District
- Michael Foods
- Norwalk Schools
- Hy-Vee (Lomar)
- First Choice Services
- Marion County
- Wesley Life
- Marion County Public Health
- Agriland FS

Business Partner Testimonial

“We were able to interview several potential leads for our both our temporary as well as permanent needs. Open interviews are often a challenge getting applicants to return home to fill out their online application. Having the mobile unit on site solved this for us. It was great having the technology and staffing to help applicants complete their applications the same day was a huge success for us.” - Angel, Store Manager, Boone, IA

Request an appearance at

<https://workforce.iowa.gov/jobs/mobile-center>



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TITLE I WIOA LOCALLY NEGOTIATED PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES

Program Year 24 - Central Iowa area Title I exceeded 12 out of 15 goals across three programs.

ADULT	GOAL	ACHIEVED
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after Exit	80%	80.6%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after Exit	\$7,000	\$7,341
Employment Rate 4th Quarter after Exit	71%	78.2%
Credential Attainment within 4 Quarters after Exit	71%	82.4%
Measurable Skill Gains	63%	90.9%

DISLOCATED WORKER	GOAL	ACHIEVED
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after Exit	83.0%	87.8%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after Exit	\$10,500	\$9,221
Employment Rate 4th Quarter after Exit	85%	87.7%
Credential Attainment within 4 Quarters after Exit	72%	81.5%
Measurable Skill Gains	63%	97.1%

YOUTH	GOAL	ACHIEVED
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after Exit	73%	73.6%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after Exit	\$4,100	\$3,921
Employment Rate 4th Quarter after Exit	73%	82.0%
Credential Attainment within 4 Quarters after Exit	43%	57.1%
Measurable Skill Gains	50%	39.7%

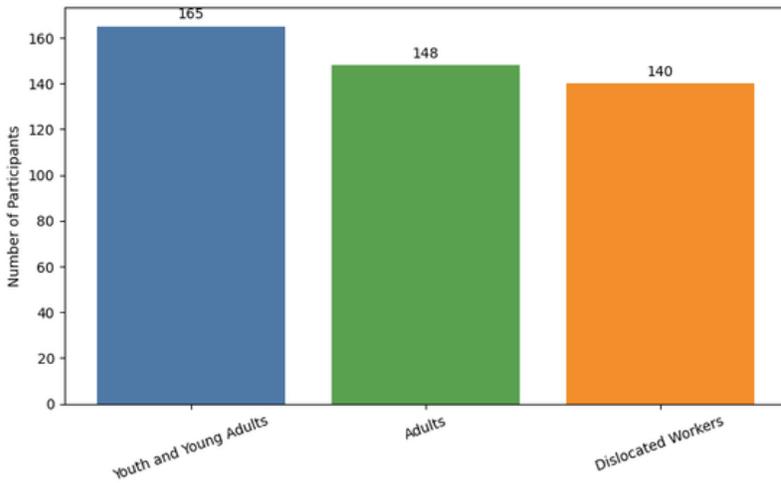
SOURCE

<https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/iowalmil/viz/WIOAPerformanceOutcomes/WIOAPerformanceOutcomes>

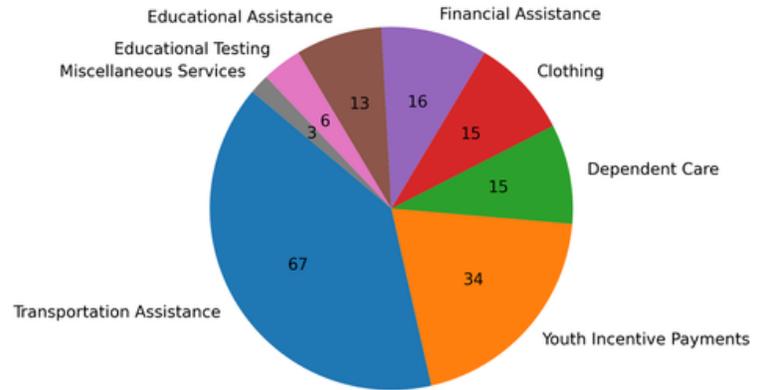
AT A GLANCE IN CENTRAL IOWA

Title I Statistics

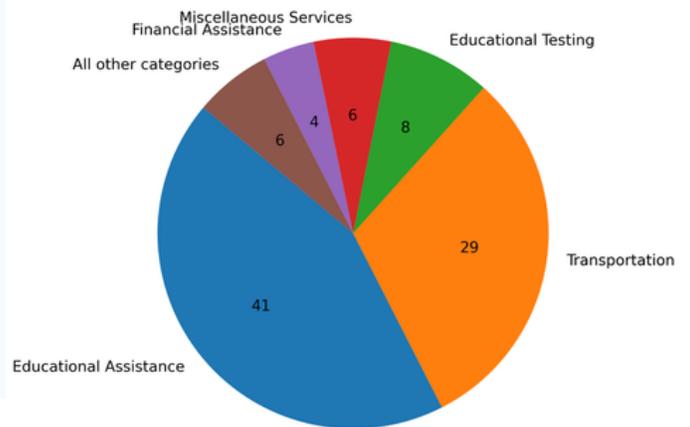
473 Title I Participants in 2025



Title I WIOA funded Supportive Services in 2025 - Youth Program



Title I WIOA funded Supportive Services in 2025 - Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs

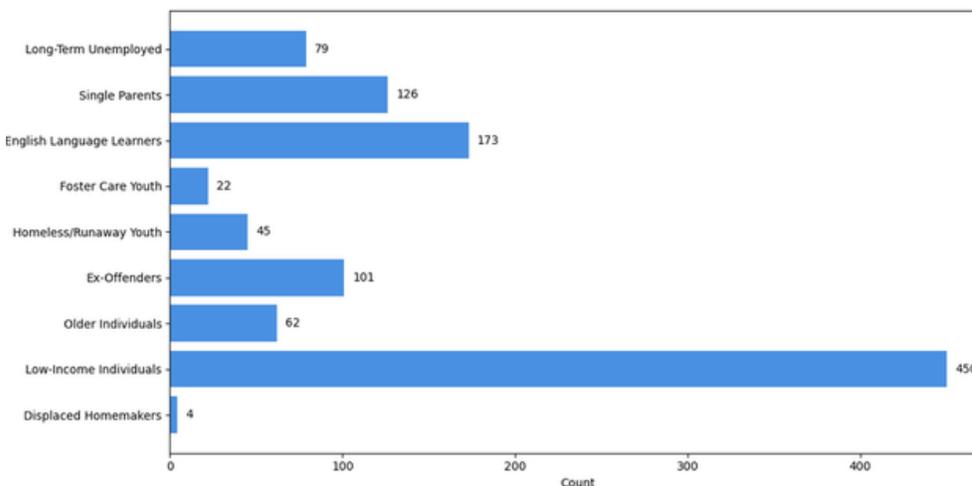


4,652 Services Provided

Top Title I Career Services offered in 2025

- Career Planning (Adults and DW) 1,905
- Labor Market Information (Youth) 1,068
- Objective Assessment 286
- Individual Service Strategies Developed 266

WIOA Title I Participant Characteristics



Top Title I Funded Training Programs

1. CDL
2. Health Care and Social Assistance
3. Business
4. Cosmetology
5. Computer Information Systems
6. Construction

AT A GLANCE IN CENTRAL IOWA

Central Iowa Unemployment Rates

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2025</u>	<u>Change</u>
Boone	2.5	2.7	+.2
Dallas	2.9	2.8	+1
Jasper	3.0	3.4	+4
Madison	2.6	3.1	+5
Marion	2.3	2.5	+2
Polk	3.1	3.5	+4
Story	2.1	2.4	+3
Warren	2.5	3.0	+5
Iowa	3.3	3.5	+2



IWD Labor Market Information - December 2025

Health Care Workers In-Demand

14,442

Jobs Statewide on IowaWORKS Job Board

Job Postings requiring Post-Secondary Education - Statewide

Registered Nurses, Nurses Assistants, Nurse Practitioners, Critical Care Nurses, Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses, Physical Therapists, Radiology Technologists and Technicians, Physical, Occupational, Respiratory, Therapists, Family Medicine and General Physicians, Surgeons, Pharmacists, Medical Assistants.....

As posted on IowaWORKS November 3, 2025



Other Top In-Demand Occupations

Requiring Post-Secondary Education

*General and Operations Managers
 Project Management Specialists
 Computer Systems Engineers/Architects
 Teaching Assistants/Special Education
 Teachers and Instructors - All other
 Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers
 Auditors and Accountants*