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BRUCE TAMISIEA, CEO & Founder, Tecton Industries

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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



David Zrostlik

ABI Chair

Stellar Industries, Garner

ABI Works All Year Long for You

ABI's annual manufacturing awards dinner and conference were terrific. Now in its third year, the annual Iowa Legends in Manufacturing Dinner, sponsored by ABI and ABI's Elevate Advanced Manufacturing initiative, has already become one of our state's top events for manufacturers.

Each year, Iowa manufacturing is celebrated and honored. This year's dinner was a terrific event. If you missed it, you missed one of the most fun events of the year. Don't miss it again; make your plans now to join us next fall.

The annual advanced manufacturing conference, held the day following the Legends dinner, was another great event. Terrific speakers and terrific networking marked the day.

Then, last month, the ABI Foundation held the first in a yearlong series of sessions with the 36th class of Leadership Iowa. LI is the nation's oldest statewide leadership development program, and well over a thousand alumni are now working to make their companies — and their communities — a better place.

On top of all this activity, last month also saw the latest edition of the ABI Biennial DC Fly-In. Several ABI leaders flew to Washington, where we held great meetings with each member of Iowa's congressional delegation. We also held a series of briefings at the White House, the National Association of Manufacturers and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. Each event was informative, and the entire trip was a great success.

My purpose in noting these events and activities is not to focus on the past. As you know, ABI is always about the future. The point is ABI works all year long to advance an agenda that provides value to your business. Growing your business and growing Iowa communities is what ABI is all about. You can see that, thanks to your support and with the leadership of the ABI Board of Directors, that agenda is well in hand.

Finally, after a series of meetings in Greater Iowa City, another thing I can share is that the 2018 Taking Care of Business Conference will be spectacular. Mark your calendars now for June 5-7. You'll be glad you did!

EXPERT ADVICE

Gains in Productivity

Millennials expect different things from the workplace than the generations that preceded them. They are largely unimpressed with the corner office or the usual trappings that communicate status and rank. They prefer an open work environment that fosters collaboration and provides access to decision-makers. Other appealing features of the workspace include common areas where they can enjoy informal conversations and meetings with co-workers. They also expect up-to-date technology.

In 1924, researchers in the Western Electric Hawthorne plant near Chicago were attempting to determine the effect that lighting and working conditions had on productivity. The researchers adjusted the lighting in a variety of ways and measured the impact on output. Each time the lighting was adjusted, productivity increased. The employees' working conditions were also changed (e.g., hours, breaks), and productivity improved with each change. Interestingly, by the time the working conditions and lighting were returned to their original levels, absenteeism had plummeted and productivity was at its highest level.

When the researchers couldn't determine a pattern to the lighting or working conditions, they began to look elsewhere and realized that the productivity increase could be attributed to the attention the researchers were paying to the workers and not to the environmental effect at all. This discovery would greatly influence the social sciences in the decades that followed. The result is called the Hawthorne Effect or the Observer Effect. Individuals positively modify their behavior in response to being observed.

There are many things leaders can do to create an environment that allows people to work at their inventive and productive best. Perhaps the most important thing is also one of the simplest. Paying attention to someone doesn't require a financial investment. It's an energetic investment.

When you pay attention to people, they respond.

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.



Rowena Crosbie

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◀ EVENT REWIND

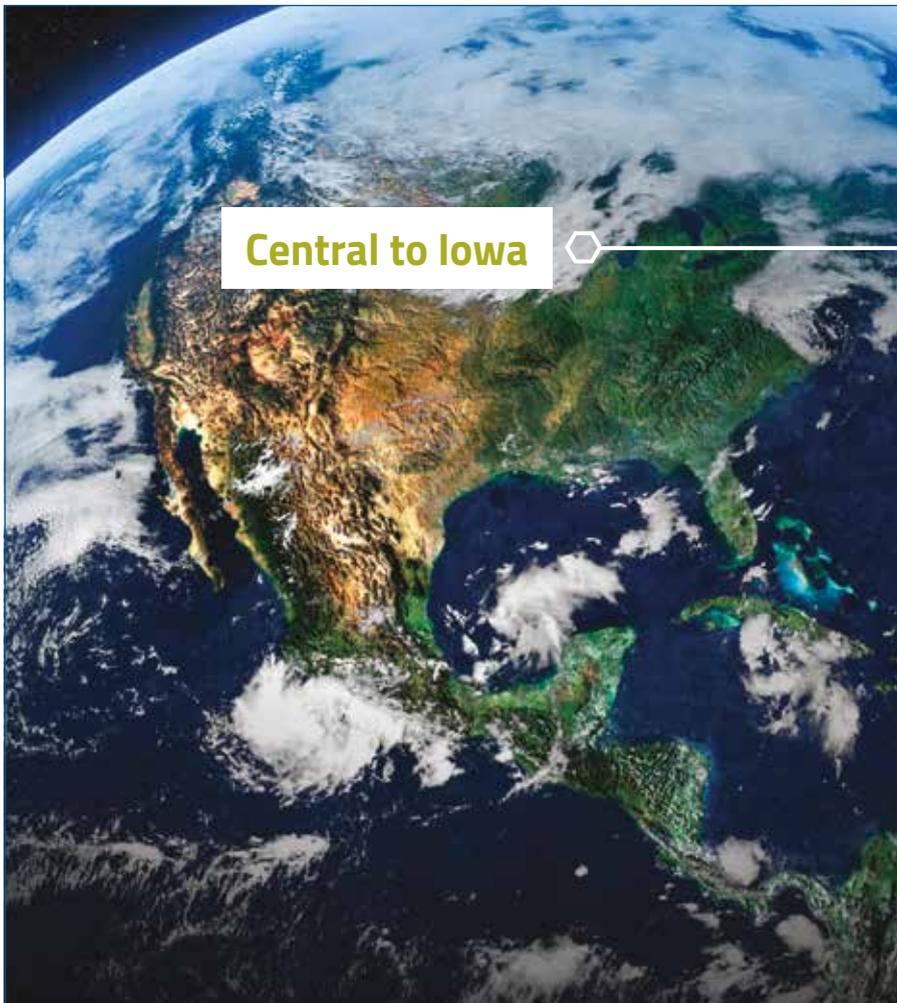
Biennial ABI D.C. Fly-in

OCTOBER 2-4 | WASHINGTON, D.C.



ABI members and public policy team flew to the nation's capital for meetings with every single member of the Iowa Congressional delegation, along with briefings at the White House and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Four key issues were the focus of discussions with members of Iowa's Congressional delegation: 1) Tax reform, 2) Workforce challenges, 3) Controlling health care costs, and 4) Regulatory challenges.



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CAPITOL BUSINESS



ABI GOES TO WASHINGTON, D.C.



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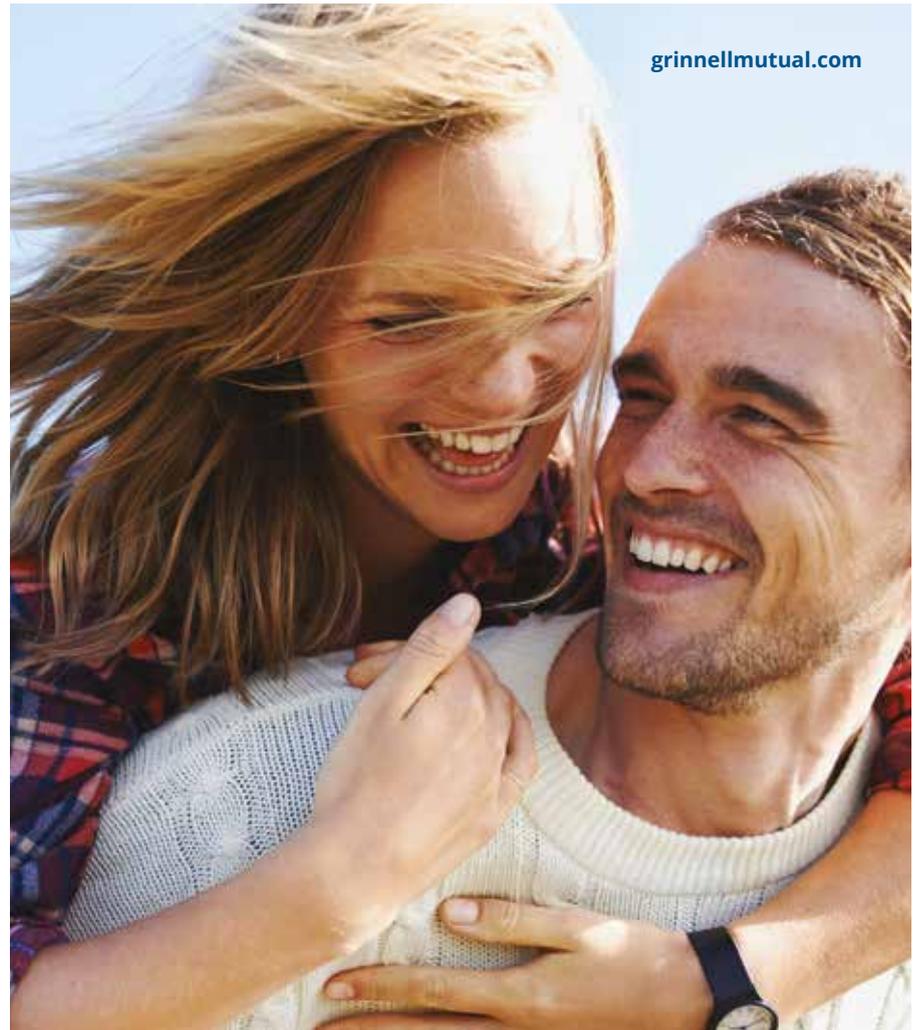
The Iowa Association of Business and Industry is known for its strong advocacy and public policy work on state-level issues that affect Iowa employers. You may not know, however, that ABI plans a biannual trip to Washington, D.C. This trip allows ABI members to engage with ABI partners and have high-value conversations with Iowa's federal delegation to discuss ABI member concerns and issues that are vital to their businesses. Several ABI leaders recently returned from a successful fly-in to the nation's capital, which took place on Oct. 2-4, and this article provides an overview of our D.C. visit.

On Monday we arrived in Washington and traveled downtown to meet with Jim Gerlach, president and CEO of BIPAC. BIPAC is an organization that provides voter education and outreach information to companies and associations throughout the country. Jim gave an update on the state of federal affairs including an analysis of where congressional and Senate races stand across the country right now going into the midterm elections. Stephanie Groen, Gov. Kim Reynolds' state-federal relations director, updated members on issues closer to home including Iowa's individual health insurance marketplace, workforce efforts such as STEM and apprenticeships, water quality, the Renewable Fuel Standard and the Water of the United States rule (WOTUS).

On Tuesday ABI members had coffee and doughnuts with Congressmen David Young and Dave Loebsack before traveling to the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM). Top policy experts in tax, trade and infrastructure provided an in-depth, thorough analysis of where Congress stands concerning those incredibly important topics. Following NAM, ABI members headed to the Eisenhower Executive Office Building for a briefing with the White House Office of Political Affairs. We listened to the deputy assistant secretary for tax and budget in the Department of Treasury discuss tax reform at a very detailed level. Our first meeting of the afternoon was with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, where members heard from leading experts in the fields of education, workforce, health care and trade.

The second day concluded with conversations with Sens. Chuck Grassley and Joni Ernst. Both senators indicated their support for comprehensive tax reform, which will help allow Iowa businesses to be globally competitive. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce also presented Sen. Ernst with a "Spirit of Enterprise" award during our visit to recognize her strong support of pro-business legislation.

The last day of ABI's fly-in included visits with the entire congressional delegation. Members engaged in dialogue with the delegation about issues including tax reform, trade, workforce, health care and infrastructure. As a member of the ABI public policy team who had the opportunity to visit Washington representing members, I'm grateful to the members who took time out of their busy schedules to join the trip and advocate on behalf of all Iowa job creators for policies that will keep Iowa competitive. It's clear that Iowa's congressional delegation listens to ABI members. If you are interested in learning more about ABI's position on federal issues or specific policies we talked about while in Washington, or are interested in joining the next Washington, D.C. fly-in, please contact me at 515-235-0576.



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**COMPANIES PUT
EMPLOYEES FIRST,
*ENHANCE WORK LIFE***

PHOTO BY DUANE TINKEY

Tecton Industries in Spencer has always put its employees first ever since the company was founded 36 years ago.

The company doesn't have traditional time clocks, seniority, fixed-pay scales or scheduled breaks and lunch hours. Instead, employees are asked to follow three principles: maturity, courtesy and honesty.

"If we give and receive those three things, there has been nothing in this world we cannot beat. Period," said Chief Executive Officer and founder Bruce Tamisiea.

Workplace culture has been a focal point of Principal Financial Group in Des Moines for years. The company has always been progressive, but executives wanted to ensure the company stayed ahead of its competition and brought more attention back to employees and the company culture, said Kathleen Souhrada, an assistant vice president who oversees workplace culture. That's why collaboration has become a focus on the workplace's culture in addition to flexibility and employee empowerment.

Part of this required reconfiguring workspaces so employees could physically collaborate on projects in different types of workspaces. Employees also are given the flexibility and empowerment they need to complete their job and to choose the type of workspace – whether it's a booth in the cafeteria or a cubicle – that best fits their ability to perform their job. Employees also have been given the digital tools they need to collaborate with their counterparts across the world.

"Going forward, it won't matter that I'm in Des Moines and another person is in Chile," Souhrada said. "We can come together and work toward how we can better serve customers."

The flexibility component of workplace culture also has been a big part in helping employees balance their home and work lives. That's why the company changed its vacation and time off policies to "FTO" or flexible time off.

"They are one whole person, and they have responsibilities in their personal and work lives, and those don't all fit neatly into work hours," Souhrada said.

The work-life balance concept is not a new one, but it was something Principal employees would comment on in their company's annual employee survey.

"We're trying to empower our employees to figure out both physically and from an hours perspective how they can bring their personal and work lives together, so they can do their best work for our customers," Souhrada said.

The creative nature of the workforce at Trilix marketing in Des Moines means there's more emphasis on company culture and ensuring employees have the tools to do their jobs, Ron Maahs, the company's chief executive officer, said.

"It's my job to make sure everyone can do their job," he said. "That might mean they need a better chair or computer or work flow or environment. We try to give people, within reason, things to do their jobs and to make it comfortable for people to work together as much as possible."

From 2004 to today, the company has grown from fewer than 10 employees to 52, many of whom are in their 20s and 30s. This group has devised its own take on committees and created a "mmittee" for many of the things they want to do at work with both work and play. This includes beer tastings, fitness and fun. They'll soon develop one for philanthropic acts.

These "mmittees" are responsible for healthy snacks and food in the breakroom/kitchen, holiday parties, Friday afternoon beer tastings, step competitions and more. All of these things were driven by employees and a desire to find ways to balance fun with work, Maahs said.

"It comes from the type of folks who are here," he said. "It's a creative group. There's a lot of energy. There's not a lot of 'I just want to sit at my desk and sneak in and out each day.'"

"We're trying to empower our employees to figure out both physically and from an hours perspective how they can bring their personal and work lives together, so they can do their best work for our customers."

Bruce Tamisiea,
chief executive officer & founder,
Tecton Industries



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A CUSTOM PUBLICATION FOR ABI

Part of the culture at Trilix is a collaborative environment where employees can easily work together on projects. There are also areas to respect other groups of employees who don't want to work in a collaborative space, Maahs said.

CIPCO realizes culture is important to company's future

About five years ago, executives at Central Iowa Power Cooperative (CIPCO) in Creston decided a change was needed to increase and improve its workplace culture.

Each of the company's facilities received updates, with the offices in Des Moines and Cedar Rapids receiving large renovations. More effort was made to encourage collaboration among employees with updated office space that is open and contemporary. Individual workspaces have been updated with the employee in mind: Desks can be raised and lowered; each employee has a laptop and moveable monitor; there are break rooms with couches and other collaborative spaces; and offices have glass doors and windows for an open, welcoming feel.

"It's really designed to be a space that works best for you as an individual but also encourages that group collaboration," said Kerry Koonce, CIPCO's manager of communications and public affairs.



CIPCO executives also wanted to know why employees worked at the company and how to better engage them. Focus groups helped create an employee values proposition. Annual employee engagement surveys monitor how employees are doing at each of CIPCO's locations, and managers make changes as needed.

"We knew we were going to have a lot of people retiring, and we wanted to make this an attractive place to work," said Janel Cerwick, the company's vice president for human capital.

CIPCO also provides wellness initiatives for employees and hosts lunch-and-learns that are video conferences for all employees to view.

A lot of effort also has been put into employee interaction and communication, Cerwick said. Employees create profiles through an assessment tool called DiSC that is used to improve communication, so employees can adapt their behaviors with others to work together and provide feedback.

CIPCO also has created a culture of personal responsibility and empowerment. Employees are encouraged to seek out the resources they need. There's no chain of command requirement for them to request information.

Companies see increase in job retention

The employees-first culture at Tecton has helped the company retain its workers with little turnover. Until this year, Tecton has never advertised for employment. All employees come from referrals. Prospective employees interview supervisors and other employees after talking with Tamisiea to determine if the company is right for them.

Employees receive the help they need when they need it even with personal problems or to adjust their schedules to accommodate their desires to be at home with children or attend their activities, Tamisiea says.

The company was founded with these principles because they are morals that are all important to Tamisiea, as well as two parts from the first line of his life plan.

"We want to have fun and be happy," he continues. "I don't think a work environment has to be unfun or unhappy because we spend the majority of our time there. We understood early on that it was going to take a tremendous amount of time to build a company from scratch. That's why we did as much as we could to include family in activities."

This includes a dining area where employees, especially those who work the night shift, can dine with their family members.

"We encourage them to invite their families to have dinner with them," Tamisiea says.

Tyler Tamisiea, the company's sales and marketing manager, says culture doesn't happen overnight. It's something that has to be ingrained into the company at all levels, so everyone is working toward the same goal.

"This is something that we've been working on through the decades," Tyler Tamisiea says. "Those beliefs haven't changed. We haven't been willing to compromise even though things might have gotten difficult. This is embedded into our workforce."

Principal managers spend a significant amount of time focusing on employee experience – everything from workspace configurations to flexibility to benefits, Souhrada said.

"We work hard to create an employee experience that is desirable," she said.

This is measured through the annual employee survey and the company's high employee retention rate. The company also receives a large number of applications and external recognitions as a best place to work, Souhrada said.

Culture becomes a common interview question

Prospective employees take a tour through Trilix to see firsthand what the company culture is all about, Maahs said. He's also upfront about what the company stands for and what is expected of employees.

"That gives them a vibe, and then we talk about some of the things with do with the 'mmittees' and the events," he said.

Questions about the workplace environment are becoming more and more common, Souhrada, with Principal, said.



“I don’t think a work environment has to be unfun or unhappy because we spend the majority of our time there. We understood early on that it was going to take a tremendous amount of time to build a company from scratch. That’s why we did as much as we could to include family in activities.”

Bruce Tamisiea,
chief executive officer & founder,
Tecton Industries

“People want more than just a 9 to 5 job,” she said. “They know that working is an integral part of their life and want to make sure the employer they’re going to has the same values they have. ... They want to know that the employer’s values around work-life balance or around flexibility will work with what they want from their life.”

To some degree this is a cultural shift, Souhrada said. Workplace culture was a common question among the company’s 225 interns last year.

“Culture is evolving, and what we expect in our work life is changing,” she said. “Now, it doesn’t have to be an either-or. I don’t have to have either a great home life or a great work life. Now I can have both.”

About 40 percent of CIPCO’s 100-employee workforce will be eligible for retirement in the next decade. Employees with more than 30 years of experience have already begun to retire.

“People tend to stay for their careers,” said Memorea Schrader, the company’s human resources generalist and recruiter. “These long tenures are pretty common throughout the organization.”

Part of this is because of the company’s strong benefits package that includes vision and dental insurance. Managers also want to ensure the company stays attractive to new workers, which is why they created a video message about working at CIPCO that’s shown to prospective employees. One of the hiring factors is whether the individual fits the company and department’s culture, Schrader said.

“It is a very common question for interviewees to ask what the culture is like or why whoever is in the interview works for CIPCO or continues to work for CIPCO,” she said.

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EMBARRASSED EXECUTIVE



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The president's recent executive order:
Is my company's health insurance plan affected?

Q: How will President Trump's recent executive order changing parts of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) affect my company's employee health insurance plan?

A: Other than creating confusion in the health insurance market, the president's executive order doesn't propose any immediate changes for employer-sponsored health insurance plans. The executive order does direct federal agencies to consider a number of changes, with a targeted objective of reducing the cost of health insurance by providing more choice and competition. Changes to association health plan regulations, expansion of health reimbursement arrangements and extending the time period individuals can be covered by short-term, limited-duration insurance (STLDI) policies are a few key opportunities.

Again, the executive order doesn't define any actual changes to the Affordable Care Act. It does, however, begin the process for allowing changes to the ACA that support competition in the health insurance market. It should be noted any proposed changes would first be subject to federal comment periods. Given where the calendar stands today and the need for public comment, it's fairly certain that the open enrollment season for 2018 will not be affected.

As the calendar advances in 2018, employers should be prepared for an onslaught of new health insurance opportunities proposing to reduce the cost of health insurance. Be skeptical. Do your due diligence by knowing what these new policies cover and what they don't.

It looks to me that the Wild West of health insurance is set to begin all over again, which isn't necessarily a bad outcome. It should be noted that nothing in this executive order addresses the root causes of why health care has become unaffordable for so many.



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TOP TIPS



Iacovos Zachariades

President and CEO,
Global Reach

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Cultivating a Highly Trained Workforce: How Small Businesses Can Do Their Part

In the world of web design, development and online marketing, technologies and practices change rapidly, requiring that we constantly evaluate new needs, expand our skill sets and add qualified expertise to our staff. There must be adequate training opportunities available and a strong interest present among potential applicants to achieve that.

As a company that's been in business for over 20 years, we've identified a few ways to ensure job seekers in our community are provided the opportunity and incentive to begin a career in the web industry. Here are some tried and true tips:

Keep Tabs on Internal Needs

Stay in the know about changes taking place in your industry, as well open positions needing to be filled. Are there gaps in expertise within your staff? Communicate these needs to nearby high schools and community colleges. Keeping them updated on the required training programs or certifications gives them the opportunity to prepare and implement programs that will enable applicants to excel in your field.

Get Involved in Curriculum Development

Reach out and partner with high schools or community colleges and offer your firsthand expertise on the skills that will ad-

equately prepare students for a role in your company. By helping shape the curriculum, students are more likely to get the proper training and education, cultivating qualified applicants for your specific job openings.

Generate Interest and Provide Mentoring and/or Internship Opportunities

Business leaders can make themselves available to provide mentoring opportunities to students in relevant majors. Generate interest by volunteering to visit and speak to classrooms, making students aware of the demand for careers that exist in your field. Offer internships to give students hands-on experience, while also getting an idea of their capabilities.

Drive Incentive via Tuition Assistance or other Continuing Ed Benefits

Offering employees flextime for training or initiating onsite education opportunities can help attract job prospects and further educate current employees with goals to advance. Consider enacting a tuition reimbursement program to motivate current employees and make sure your staff is aware of the potential salary increases awarded to those attaining higher education or additional certifications.

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AHEAD OF THE CURVE

BEFORE THE BALL DROPS...



Amanda Nuzum
Development Director,
ABI Foundation
anuzum@iowaabi.org

As the business world changes, and as our workforce needs continue to grow, the ABI Foundation is committed to staying at the cutting edge of leadership programming — for you, for future participants and for every community across Iowa. Your contributions have allowed the ABI Foundation to provide valuable opportunities and programming for more than 30 years. We are grateful for the ongoing support from all of our statewide partners as we continue on our mission to make Iowa the strongest it can be by empowering the current and future leaders of our state.

With the end of another year quickly approaching, you may be starting to think about how you can close out your year of charitable giving with end-of-year donations to help support the work of your favorite organizations. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, the ABI Foundation continues to make an impact on students and adults across the state with the help of generous supporters. There is still time for YOU to help drive our mission forward with a tax-deductible gift to the ABI Foundation.

There are a number of ways you can support the ABI Foundation programs (Leadership Iowa, Leadership Iowa University and Business Horizons), including:

- **Program Sponsorship:** Program sponsors at any level play a vital role in the success of the ABI Foundation. There are multiple options for individuals and businesses when it comes to providing a tax-deductible program sponsorship, as well as a variety of benefits including widespread brand recognition.
- **Program Scholarships:** Individuals and businesses can directly impact the lives of our program participants by providing a program scholarship for an individual who may not otherwise have the means to attend — truly giving the gift of an invaluable opportunity.
- **Matching Gifts:** Does your company have a matching gift program? If so, be sure to

take advantage of this to get the most out of your giving. Matching gift programs are an easy way to not only receive tax benefits, but also ensure that your dollars will go further in meeting the immediate needs of the organization.

- **Planned Giving:** Planned giving is a creative way to commit support to a nonprofit organization with no immediate out-of-pocket cost. For example, October was Estate Planning Awareness Month. Together with the Mid-Iowa Planned Giving Council, Gov. Kim Reynolds encouraged Iowans to consider estate gifts that will enable the nonprofit sector to continue to serve and sustain the quality of life that makes our state and its communities such great places to live, work and raise families.
- **#GivingTuesday:** The ABI Foundation, alongside many other nonprofit organizations, is participating in #GivingTuesday on Nov. 28. This event is a global day of giving fueled by the power of social media and collaboration. Last year, over 700,000 people collectively gave more than \$116 million in more than 70 countries.

Lastly, for graduates of our Leadership Iowa and Leadership Iowa University programs, you have a unique opportunity to directly support and sustain these programs by joining the Alumni Society through your annual tax-deductible membership dues.

Wherever your heart leads you, please consider a year-end gift to a charitable organization. There are so many ways to make a difference, and that is exactly what your gift will do — make a tremendous difference to the organization and to the people who are impacted by its mission.

Before the ball drops, make a real difference. Right here. Right now.

For questions regarding donations to the ABI Foundation, contact Amanda Nuzum, development director, at anuzum@iowaabi.org.

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ARE YOU AN ABI MEMBER? CHANCES ARE THE ANSWER IS YES.

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.





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