



**IOWA
ASSOCIATION
OF BUSINESS
AND INDUSTRY
FOUNDATION**

2025 ANNUAL REPORT





Dick Davidson, Current Chair



Lori Schaefer Weaton, Past Chair



A Message From Our Chairs

Dedicated to developing Iowa's workforce and leaders through statewide educational programs, the Iowa Association of Business and Industry Foundation has been serving professionals for more than four decades.

The ABI Foundation has three core programs that help develop Iowa's workforce and leaders at every stage: **Business Horizons, Leadership Iowa**

University and Leadership Iowa. From high school students to professionals, the ABI Foundation offers unique learning experiences for students and professionals to enhance Iowa's future.

We are grateful for the many volunteers and partner organizations that make this work possible. We invite you to learn more, ensure your community is represented in our programs, volunteer and consider a sponsorship role that helps keep these programs available at low cost.

LEADERSHIP IOWA UNIVERSITY

Leadership Iowa University brought together 20 college students and interns from 10 regional colleges and universities for a five-day in-person experience exploring leadership and career opportunities across the state.

Throughout the week, participants:

- Toured local businesses and organizations to gain a behind-the-scenes look at Iowa's communities and industries
- Met with over 100 professionals and industry leaders
- Honed their personal and professional brand through interactive workshops

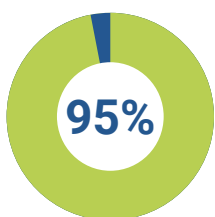
- Engaged in candid conversations with local leaders — asking questions that don't always get answered in a classroom

Students left the program with stronger leadership and communication skills, expanded professional networks, and a deeper appreciation for the opportunities in Iowa.

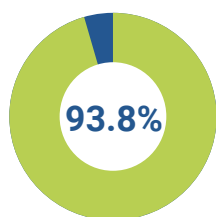
LEADERSHIP★IOWA
UNIVERSITY

"LIU has opened my eyes to the opportunities in Iowa and connected me to the caring people supporting them."
— Will Chase, University of Iowa

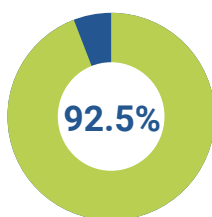
Key Outcomes



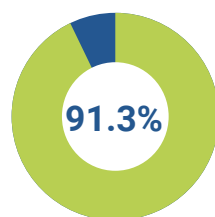
95% gained a better understanding of their personal strengths and expanded their professional network.



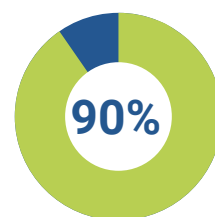
93.8% became more confident networking and engaging with professionals.



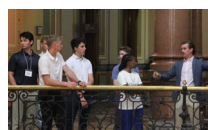
92.5% developed a stronger sense of the impact they can make as leaders.



91.3% increased their awareness of Iowa's business diversity, climate and innovation.



90% grew their understanding of issues affecting Iowa communities.



BUSINESS HORIZONS

Business Horizons brought together high school students from 33 schools across Iowa for a five-day hands-on experience in business, innovation and leadership.

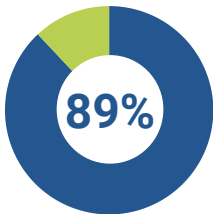
Throughout the week, students:

- Worked in teams to create and launch their own business
- Competed in challenges that tested creativity and collaboration
- Engaged with dozens of Iowa professionals and local companies to learn from industry experts
- Discovered their strengths and explored career opportunities in Iowa

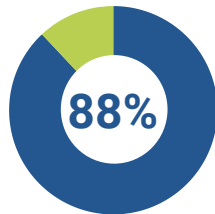
The program provided over 50 hours of immersive learning, helping students build next-generation skills in leadership, problem-solving and communication — while inspiring them to see the opportunities available in Iowa's future workforce.



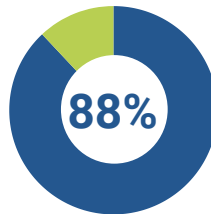
Key Outcomes



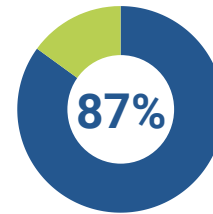
89% strengthened problem-solving skills through creativity and innovation.



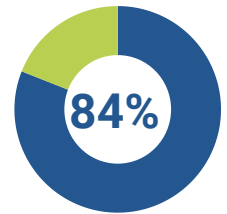
88% gained a deeper appreciation for teamwork and individual contributions.



88% improved their understanding of business operations.



87% enhanced their ability to apply knowledge of Iowa businesses to future careers.



84% increased confidence in taking on leadership roles.



"Business Horizons not only taught me about the basics of building a business, but a lot about myself. It showed me my potential to be a creative, confident and collaborative leader." — Siddhi Bharadwaj, Pleasant Valley High School

LEADERSHIP IOWA

Leadership Iowa brought together 40 selected participants from across the state for eight monthly sessions exploring leadership, civic engagement and key issues impacting Iowa.

Throughout the program, participants:

- Explored topics such as agriculture, education, health care, government, economic development and workforce issues
- Engaged in interactive experiences, site visits and expert-led discussions to see Iowa's industries and communities up close
- Participated in collaborative activities and workshops to develop practical leadership skills
- Connected with community and industry leaders, asking questions that reveal the challenges and opportunities shaping Iowa

Participants completed the program with broader perspectives on Iowa's opportunities and challenges, stronger leadership and communication skills, and an expanded network of personal and professional connections.



THE COURSE FOR OUR STATE



"You are who you associate with, and I was proud to have associated with so many wonderful people from this program. It's enriched my life with a broader outlook on my community and those that make good things possible, and I'm extremely grateful for the opportunity to have taken this journey." – Patrick Jones

Get Involved!

Help shape Iowa's next generation of leaders! Sponsor a program, provide a scholarship, serve as a mentor or speaker, or encourage students to apply. Your support connects participants with hands-on experiences, expert insights and statewide networks — building a stronger workforce and thriving communities.

Scan the QR code to learn more and get involved:



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