



2026

Economic Development Update

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BCS.UNI.EDU



12 programs

- Entrepreneurship / Small Business
- Community and Economic Development
- Metal Casting / Foundry 4.0
- Market Research
- Environmental Assistance / Sustainability



Each year, BCS assists clients in all 99 Iowa counties — for 26 years straight.

Impacting every county

4,662

clients served

ACROSS ALL 99 IOWA
COUNTIES AND BEYOND



3,077

students engaged

VIA COURSES, RESEARCH
PROJECTS, VOLUNTEER
WORK AND STUDENT
EMPLOYMENT

152

faculty and staff

INVOLVED IN DELIVERY OF
PROGRAMMING AND
SERVICES



Every \$1

PROVIDED BY THE STATE IS
LEVERAGED WITH \$5 IN
PRIVATE GRANTS, FEES OR
FEDERAL FUNDING



UNI Economic Development Funding

Iowa Skilled Worker and Job Creation Fund

Economic Development Appropriation

- Institute for Decision Making
- Metal Casting Center/Foundry 4.0 Center
- Advance Iowa/Iowa Center for Employee Ownership
- Family Business Center
- IASourceLink – UNI John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center

Regents Innovation Fund

- Rural and Regional Development
- Industry 4.0 and Foundry Innovation
- Market Research
- Business Development & Succession
- Technology Transfer
- Leverage for other funding sources

General Fund

- John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center
- Foundry 4.0 Center

Every \$1 provided by the State is leveraged with \$5 in private grants, contracts, fees for service or federal funding.

Local & Regional Development

Over 860 communities and organizations served

Organizational and community planning

Rural development

- Majority of clients are rural communities / economic development officers
- Governor's Empower Rural Iowa
- Iowa Rural Development Council
- Iowa Rural Vitality Coalition



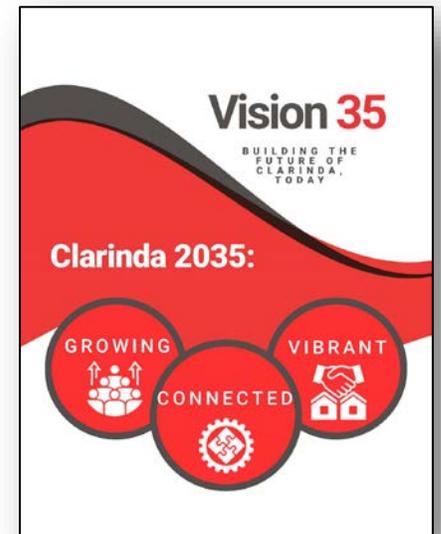
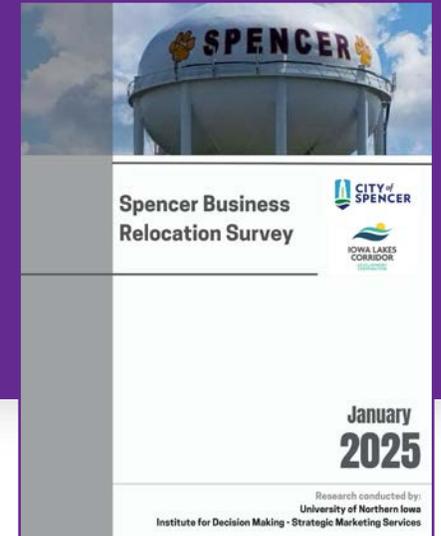
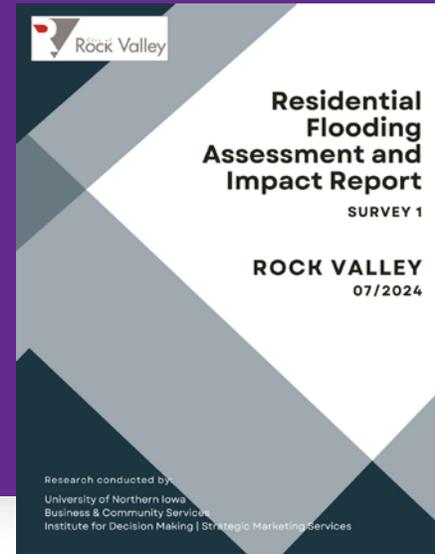
IDM provides customized and direct support to EDOs and businesses

Local & Regional Development

Talent and workforce development

Community natural disaster response and recovery

- Research and information
- Training and technical assistance





Employee Ownership

- Assisting business owners considering employee ownership
- Rural ESOPs — Ford Foundation
- COOPS
- Other approaches to employee ownership
- Annual Iowa Employee Ownership Conference
- Broad statewide support and network

*TOP: Jerry Ripperger of Principal Financial chats at the 2025 IA-CEO Conference
BOTTOM: Students from Iowa colleges pose at the conference with Dean Wilson*





FAMILY
BUSINESS CENTER

Family businesses are the lifeblood of Iowa's economy

Family businesses face challenges like

- Transitioning leadership to the next generation
- Family governance
- Lacking communication about succession

Family businesses generate more than 64% of U.S. GDP and 78% of all new private-sector jobs.

Trusted by Iowa Families in all regions and industries.



Companies represented were members of the UNI Family Business Center in FY25



FAMILY
BUSINESS CENTER

Family business support provided

/ FY25

- **530 family businesses** assisted to date
- **Fifth-annual Iowa Family Business Conference** featured Austad's Golf in Des Moines
- **26 generational peer group** meetings hosted
- **66 Iowa counties** impacted through service



For our most recent board opening, we used the UNI Family Business Center to help us with this important position. They helped us determine the skills and qualifications needed and posted the position. I was highly impressed with the quality of the candidates. There was no way we could have achieved this on our own. They even helped us with an onboarding checklist so that our new board member felt welcomed and oriented to our family of companies. We will definitely utilize UNI for future board openings.

—Brendan Comito, Capital City Fruit

Foundry 4.0

Full transition to 4.0 technologies

- Automation
- Sensors / Internet of Things
- Digital Twin
- Investment Casting



*Industry representatives
learning about new
technologies.*

High school students learning about investment casting.



Metal Casting

Defense Logistics Agency Project

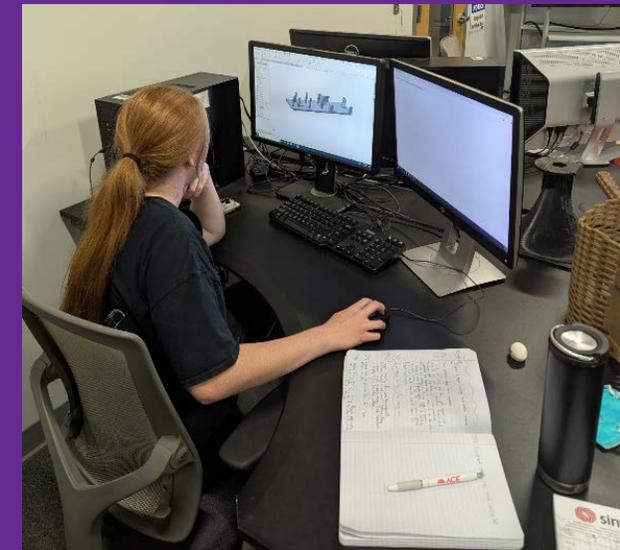
Foundry of the Future — AE Building

- Most modern foundry on a university campus

Preparing the Foundry Industries Future Workforce

Partnering with Industry

- Steel Founders Society of America
- American Foundry Society



Supporting Entrepreneurs

- IASourceLink / Iowa Business License Information Center
- Regional Navigators
- Student Business Incubation
- Regional Entrepreneurship & Small Business Support

IASOURCELINK

Home How Do I Licensing FREE Resources Webinars Blog

Start a Business in 10 Steps

Download our free step-by-step guide to get your Iowa business started and making money in no time!

Download

Since 2012, IASourceLink has assisted

+20,000 Entrepreneurs	99 Iowa Counties	43 U.S. States
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TOP: IASourceLink offers on-demand resources for business owners.

BOTTOM: Curt Strouth, Iowa Lakes Corridor Development Corporation receiving the IASourceLink Resource Partner of the Year from IEDA Director Debi Durham.

Supporting Student Entrepreneurs

- B-Engraved, a custom laser-engraving business
- Bronk & Co, a drone business
- The Steel Sorceress, handmade jewelry and sculpture business
- JPEC Connect, a cohort that brings entrepreneurial-minded students together at UNI





A smart investment for Iowa

Building a Better Iowa

- Statewide coverage
- Small and medium businesses
- Leverage public investment
- Partnerships
- Innovations
- Linking with local and regional development

