

Legislative Skilled Worker Shortage Study Committee

Outline of Comments:

- A. Thank you and introductions
- B. The fundamental issues:
 - 1. Shortage of workers
 - 2. Shortage of skilled workers
- C. Each year the Community Colleges report their prior annual numbers to the Iowa Department of Education. Here is the unaudited filing for the annual period ending June 30, 2007

Unduplicated Credit Students	125,959
Unduplicated Non-Credit Students	287,538

- D. There is uniform agreement that there is a looming workforce and skills shortage internationally, already exhibiting itself in Iowa in a number of areas including information services, manufacturing, etc. The job surplus/lack of skilled worker issue is a major challenge threatening Iowa's ability to keep good paying jobs in our state

"Simply put: Iowa doesn't have enough people to fill all the jobs our businesses want to create in the decades ahead."
David Yepsen, Feb. 5, 2006

- E. Even if the numbers are too high, even a flat workforce would hurt Iowa as companies try to grow or new companies try to locate here.
- F. Every community college is fully engaged with their business community regarding workforce and economic development issues.
- G. This issue also creates an opportunity, especially for working families struggling in a low wage hourly job—community college training programs provide renewed hope and opportunity—often in the form of a skilled trade providing a chance to now make \$40,000-\$50,000 a year.
- H. Iowa's community colleges are proud of the role policymakers have given us to train the next generation of skilled workers, especially in Iowa's targeted industries
- I. DMACC is working with Central Iowa agencies and the Greater Des Moines Partnership to develop a Central Iowa Comprehensive Workforce System. [See handout]
- J. Every Community College is responding to the needs of its region as best fits its region in ways similar to DMACC, even if the structure is different. We are all

addressing all populations, including disabled, ex-offenders, those with low skills, etc, trying to help all persons get into the workforce and move their families to financial sustainability.

- K. All of us are working with the public schools in some way or another to help with career exploration and planning for high school students and offering college classes that help prepare these students for the workforce or advanced education.
- L. Community Colleges, because of their mission and connectivity, have proven to anticipate and act on initiatives that start regionally and have become state-wide targeted cluster groups in scope:
 - 1. Wind energy at Iowa Lakes CC
 - 2. Bio-fuels at Indian Hills and Iowa Central CC
 - 3. Career Link for advance manufacturing at Eastern Iowa CC
- M. The Iowa Legislature has given the Community Colleges of Iowa great tools to respond to the needs of business and industry. Steve Ovel and Al Clauson will talk more about the great things that have and can be achieved through the “Workforce Training And Economic Development Fund”, Power Fund, RIIF, ACE, 260F, 260E, Career Academies, non-credit programs, etc. The future of all of these efforts can be grown and coordinated through the legislatively-created structure of the Workforce Training and Economic Development Fund programming and targeting goals.
- N. Regional Market needs--Community Colleges are more organized and operate with a state-wide vision better than they have in their 41 year history. They can serve Iowa best if funded and allowed to respond to their regional economic development and workforce needs.
- O. We have a great relationship with IWD, IDED and the DE and welcome the accountability that they help achieve as we file regular reports on past and future initiatives.
- P. **CAPACITY** -- DMACC, like all community colleges, needs increased capacity to respond to the shortage of workers trained with skills to earn a good wage; and to develop skilled workers to meet the needs of growing businesses in Iowa. All community colleges need the capacity to do more, with most current programs at or near capacity or with multi-year waiting lists. As just one example, we are partnering more and more with groups like ABI and TAI to try to stimulate even more enrollment in programs that are near full.

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