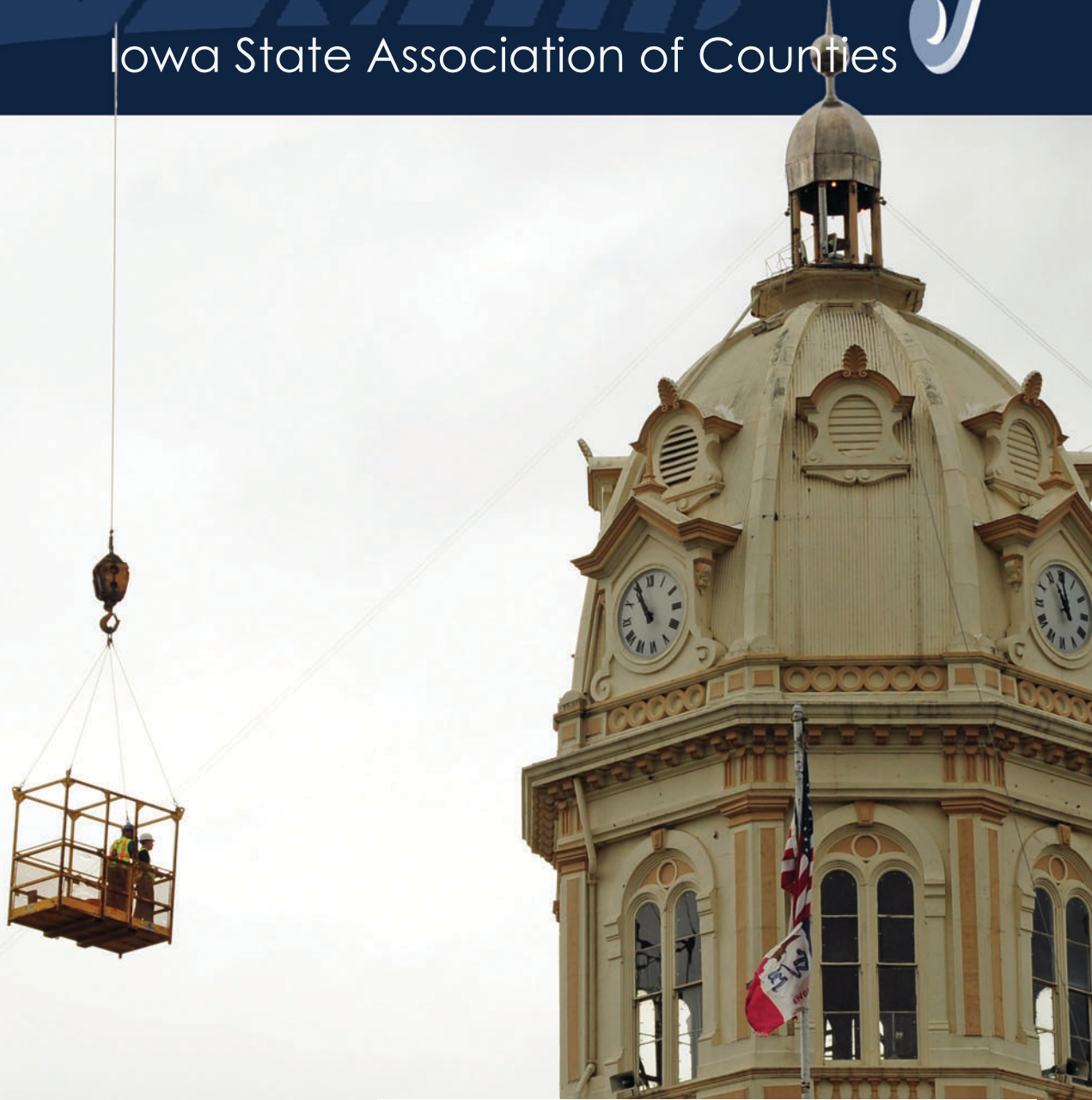
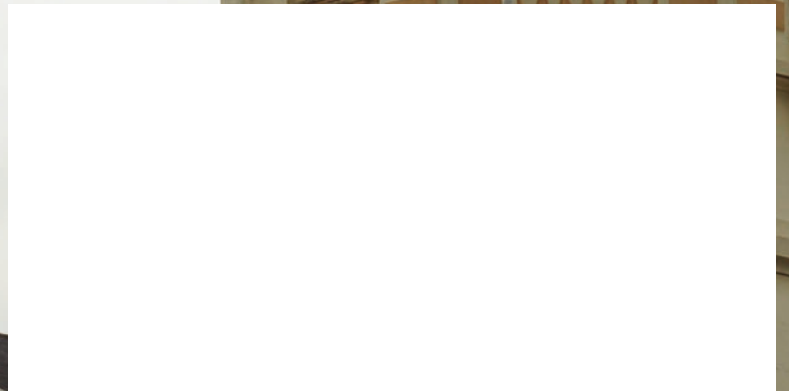


The Iowa County

Iowa State Association of Counties



November 2010
ISAC Scholarship Application





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ISAC's Mission:

To promote effective and responsible county government for the people of Iowa.

ISAC's Vision:

To be the principal, authoritative source of representation, information and services for and about county government in Iowa.

director's view

What if...?

Early Sunday morning September 26, I jumped in the car and headed to Milwaukee, Wisconsin for the Wisconsin Counties Association (WCA) 2010 Annual Conference. The sun hadn't risen over the rainclouds that seemed to have been stuck in Iowa for the previous week – but they were definitely moving eastward at a rapid clip. It wasn't long and I was enjoying a bright sunny day for the drive.

The purpose of my visit was to observe the operational aspects of the WCA Annual Conference. WCA Executive Director Mark O'Connell (my host and friend) graciously allowed me to participate in all WCA Board and conference activities. I want to relate to you some of my experiences in Wisconsin, but first let me thank Mark and his staff for being great hosts. You really do a great job! It is fun to observe a professional staff make things look easy to the members - planning and executing a successful conference is a very challenging task. I wish I had the space to individually thank all the staff who helped make my visit enjoyable – but my editor is a word miser so just let me say I thought you were all terrific.

The conference events were being held in both the Frontier Airlines Center and the Hilton Milwaukee City Center. I began the conference by attending the First General Assembly. WCA President and Calumet County Supervisor Alice Connors chaired the meeting. Milwaukee County is celebrating their 175th anniversary as a county. It just so happened that this was WCA's 75th Anniversary this year as well.

During the assembly, National Association of Counties (NACo) President and Tarrant County Texas Judge Glen Whitley reported on NACo activities but focused primarily on his "County Government Works" campaign. The campaign is designed to assist counties in informing the public of the important services they provide. President Whitley pointed out that too often counties go about doing their job quietly without recognizing how important it is for their citizens to understand how the services they provide make a real difference in their lives and communities. He challenged each member of the WCA assembly to identify five public service organizations in their community, contact them, and request the opportunity to make a presentation on county activities. ISAC is hoping to host President Whitley at the 2011 Spring School being held March 23-24 in Des Moines.

Next on the schedule was U.S. Senator Russ Feingold. Feingold is seeking reelection to a fourth term as the Democratic Senator from Wisconsin. Since the annual conference is held in September every year, WCA is able to attract several of the

By: Bill Peterson

ISAC Executive Director



candidates for statewide office. Senator Feingold's opponent was invited also, but did not attend.

The final presentation on Sunday afternoon was by Joel Sartore, a Contributing Photographer for *National Geographic* magazine. Mr. Sartore is a lifelong resident of our neighboring Nebraska and has written four books about his photography. His stories about the processes he uses to get the wildlife photos he is known for made the audience appreciate the fact that they only had to deal with disgruntled citizens.

The activities ended that afternoon with an hour and a half session called "Open Discussion: Ask the Attorney and WCA Staff." This lively interchange between members and association staff covered a wide range of topics. Members asked questions on Robert's Rules of Order, the Wisconsin State Health Plan, prevailing wage legislation, statewide interoperability funding, smart-growth planning and transportation funding. I was impressed with the ability of the WCA staff to respond to the many inquiries – and the member's willingness to stay until 5:30 pm on a Sunday evening.

Later Sunday evening I attended the WCA Board Dinner during which Alice Connors was recognized for her year as WCA president. This was an enjoyable time. I have had the opportunity to get to know many of the past WCA presidents over the years and enjoyed catching up with them. I had the pleasure of dining with NACo staff members Lisa Cole and Emily Landsman and WCA Marketing and Events Coordinator Cheryl Fleck (WCA's version of our Stacy Horner).

Following a Wisconsin County Mutual Insurance Corporation sponsored breakfast on Monday morning, county officials chose between six concurrent workshops. The topics were: energy independence; privatization of services; Asian carp; records retention; alternative fuels; and alternative approaches to county jails. I opted for the program on alternative approaches to county jails. This was a great presentation. Rock County Sheriff Robert Spoden and the team managing the county jail outlined how they have used different approaches to reduce their jail populations. The jail diversion programs have meant significant savings in the cost of operating their jail and helped them avoid having to build a costly new jail.

After the workshops, President Connors presided over the Second General Assembly. The session started with the presentation of a series of good government awards to WCA members. Following those presentations, Scott Walker, County

Executive for Milwaukee County and Republican Gubernatorial Candidate, addressed the assembly. He highlighted his accomplishments as county executive since taking office in 2002. Walker's Democratic gubernatorial opponent, Milwaukee City Mayor Tom Barrett, spoke next. Mayor Barrett is in his second term as mayor of Milwaukee, but has a long history of Wisconsin public service having served five terms in the U.S. House of Representatives and terms in both the Wisconsin House and Senate. J.B. Van Hollen, the current Wisconsin Attorney General, also addressed the assembly – his opponent was on the schedule for the Third General Assembly.

Not that I didn't find the political speeches interesting, but the final speaker of the Second General Assembly was by far the most captivating. This was none other than my host, WCA Executive Director Mark O'Connell. He aptly demonstrated why he is known by his colleagues for being innovative and a free-thinker. Using the Socratic Method (teaching by asking instead of telling) during his presentation titled "What if..." - he related a number of instances throughout history where theories and ideas proposed by visionary individuals often ran counter to conventional wisdom. And he pointed out that those often rejected concepts many times turned those conventional wisdoms upside down. What if those individuals had not dared to propose their sometimes seemingly preposterous ideas – where might we be now? I think O'Connell was suggesting to his members that in light of the difficult challenges they face as elected officials, they shouldn't be afraid to propose new ideas. The future of Wisconsin's counties might depend on it.

After the conclusion of the second assembly, I headed into the WCA Marketplace for a tour of their exhibit hall and lunch. There were around 109 exhibitors in the Marketplace. I spent some time reviewing the vendor list to see if there were a few I could entice to come to the ISAC Fall Conference in Coralville.

Monday afternoon I attended the WCA Annual Business Meeting. Unlike ISAC's business meetings which are conducted during our single general session, WCA conducts their business meeting separately from other conference activities. While I was attending the business meeting, which lasted about two and a half hours, two additional sets of concurrent workshops were held. Each county is allowed one voting delegate at the business meeting. It was during this meeting that annual dues were approved, the WCA legislative package was approved, reports to the member counties were made and the election of officers took place.

At the conclusion of the workshops and business meeting, county officials headed to the WCA Marketplace for an exhibitor reception. The reception was followed by the Annual Banquet and Installation of Officers. During the banquet two awards were presented to individuals who work both inside

and outside of county government, and WCA President Alice Connors passed the gavel to Fond du Lac County Executive Allen Buechel. Buechel will be the first elected county executive to serve as WCA president. After the banquet, it was on to the Green Bay Packer's party. The Packer's lost to the Chicago Bears so there were quite a few sad people around.

Tuesday morning I attended the Third General Assembly. Scott Hassett, Democratic Candidate for Attorney General, and Barbara Lawton, Lt. Governor of Wisconsin, both addressed the assembly. Richard Klemme, the Dean and Director of the University of Wisconsin Extension, related the importance of the relationship between county officials and the county extension offices. Christine Smith, a principal with Baker Tilly, LLP, presented a report to the members titled "A Roadmap for Government Transformation." The report had been commissioned by the Wisconsin Local Government Institute (LGI). The LGI is an organization funded and managed by the League of Wisconsin Municipalities, WCA, Wisconsin Towns Association, and the Wisconsin Alliance of Cities. The report makes some pretty interesting reading – you can find a link to the report on the ISAC website.

I missed the final set of concurrent workshops that rounded out the conference so that I could meet with Lisa Cole, Director of NACo Financial Services, Levi Lathen, Nationwide Retirement Solutions (NRS) State Director for Iowa, and Mike Studebaker, NRS Regional Vice President for the Midwest Region. Our discussion centered on how to more effectively market the NACo Deferred Compensation program in Iowa and how to help county employees prepare for retirement.

After a quick stop to pick up some "Fat Squirrels" for a fellow member of the ISAC staff, I climbed back in the car for the drive back to Des Moines. The seven hour drive back provided a great opportunity to reflect on all that I had observed at the WCA meeting, and to add to my long list of items to discuss with Stacy Horner and Rachel Bicego when I got back to the office. While I was glad to be heading home, I couldn't help but smile as I thought of the great time I had experienced. It wasn't just the professionalism of the WCA staff that I had experienced – which was great. Instead, it was that unique ability that seems to be at the heart of almost every county official I have had the pleasure to meet – whether in Wisconsin, Iowa or anyplace around the country where they gather. That ability is to make a person feel welcome and special – no matter how long they have known you. I was smiling at the comment that WCA Executive Director Mark O'Connell made at their annual banquet the night before when he informed his members, "I have the best job in the world because of you." I was smiling because I can remember making that same comment several times myself, but I did wonder *what if* my members weren't listening. Hopefully you are paying attention this time around - "I have the best job in the world because of you!"

2011 Legislative Session is Around the Corner

By the time you read this, the November 2 election will either be just around the corner or just completed. The picture of who is in control of the executive branch and the legislature will be determined and ISAC's work to educate new and returning legislators will begin again. In addition, the ISAC Board of Directors will have met and finalized, subject to the approval of the membership on November 17 at the General Session at the fall school, ISAC's legislative objectives, policy statements and top priorities for 2011. ISAC members in attendance at the General Session will have the opportunity to amend the ISAC platform as approved by the ISAC Board prior to final passage by the full membership.

The Legislative Policy Committee met on September 22 and recommended 28 legislative objectives to the ISAC Board of Directors. They also categorized those legislative proposals into general categories as follows:

Funding

- Overall Maintenance of Funding
- Mental Health Funding/Alignment
- Local Public Health Funding
- Funding of TIME-21
- E-Commerce Fee- \$3 to \$2

Government Efficiency

- Saturday Voting/Absentee Voting Deadline
- Posting Notices Alternatives
- Iowa Communications Network Access

Quality of Life

- Bottle Bill Expansion
- Food Establishment Licensing Fees
- Smokefree Air Act Casino Loophole
- Alternative Public Septic Systems – Local Control
- Mobile Home Parks – Supervisor Authority
- 50% Flood Damaged Structures
- Agricultural Exemption from Zoning, Building Codes
- Serving People in their Communities

Tax Reform

- Agricultural Building Value/Productivity Formula
- Buildings on Leased Lands
- Sales Tax Referendum – Supervisor Authority
- Guidelines for Classification of Agricultural Property
- Tax Increment Financing including Lost TIF

By: Linda Hinton

ISAC Government
Relations Manager



Customer Service

- Treasurers' Omnibus/Delinquent taxes
- Surviving Spouse Vehicle Registration Fee

Good Government

- Tax List Certification
- 85% Salary for Elections Deputies
- Interpretation of Next General Election for City Vacancies
- Shooting Range Clarification
- E911 Funding Authority

Now that the election is over, ISAC members should be contacting their legislators, new and old, to educate them on the issues of importance to county government. While the list of objectives reported above is not final until the membership votes, it does provide a framework for each and every one of you to begin discussions with your legislators on areas of possible legislation for 2011. The problem/solution statement for each of these objectives is available on the ISAC website, as are the policy statements and the ISAC Board's recommendations for top priorities. Legislative objectives are those items that ISAC will seek to initiate as legislation or as amendments to bills. Policy statements serve as guidance for ISAC staff in taking position on legislative proposals introduced by other groups. Top priorities are those proposals that receive special attention in ISAC publications and in interactions with state lawmakers.

Who needs to register as a lobbyist?

Every year the issue of whether county officials need to register as lobbyists with the General Assembly arises. Legislative branch lobbying refers to lobbying members of the Iowa House and Iowa Senate, as well as persons that work for the Legislature. Executive branch lobbying refers to lobbying the Governor, his staff, and members of executive branch agencies.

For most county officials, the answer to whether registration is required is "no." Iowa Code §68B.2(13)(b)(3) states that lobbyist registration requirements do not apply to any local elected official "while performing the duties and responsibilities of office." The harder question is whether affiliate legislative liaisons or other county officials who are actively involved in encouraging "the passage, defeat, approval, veto, or modification of legislation, a rule, or an executive order by the members of the general assembly, a state agency, or any statewide elected official" should register as a lobbyist with the General Assembly and the Executive Branch.

The gray area for affiliate liaisons and officers comes in §68B.2(13)(b)(7). This exempts members of associations who are not paid or who are not specifically “**designated representative(s) of an organization which has as one of its purposes the encouragement of the passage, defeat, approval, veto, or modification of legislation, a rule or an executive order before the general assembly, a state agency, or any statewide elected official.**” The question of fact if a complaint were lodged would be whether the affiliate had lobbying as one of its purposes.

ISAC has long recommended that the affiliate legislative liaisons, who are “designated representatives” of each affiliate, register as a lobbyist. All registrations, reports and filings will be filed electronically. Fortunately, registration and reporting have been streamlined. The following is a list of changes that have taken place this year.

- Lobbyists will no longer file monthly and quarterly reports. Lobbyists will be required to file an annual registration. Lobbyist annual registrations must be updated to reflect changes. (Changes include: the addition or deletion of a client, a client contact person change, an address change, an e-mail change, etc.) Lobbyists must register with each branch of government they will be lobbying.

- Lobbyists must submit the e-mail address of a contact person for each client. A client contact person must be a representative of the client who is someone other than the lobbyist. Exception: A lobbyist who is an executive or director of an association or a lobbyist who is directly employed by a client may be the contact person for the client.

- Lobbyists must continue to file declarations on bills.

Affiliate presidents who plan to be active in educating the legislature and the executive branch of issues of interest to the affiliate may want to consider registering as a lobbyist as well. As Ben Franklin said, “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.”



About the Cover

The cover picture and picture to the left were shared with me by Jessica Beebe, County Community Services and Madison County General Assistance. She was stunned by the enormous crane as she witnessed it dwarf the massive Madison County Courthouse on her way to work.

The photos were taken by enthusiastic amateur photographer Sharon Johnson, retired from Iowa State University Extension. These photos will be used as part of her “Project 365” that she is working on as a member of the Southwest Iowa Shutterbugs Camera Club. She is attempting to take one picture every day for a year.

2011 SAVE THE DATE!

**New County Officers
(NCO) School**
January 26-27
West Des Moines
Marriott

**County Day
at the Capitol**
March 3
Des Moines

**NACo Legislative
Conference**
March 5-9
Washington, D.C.

**ISAC Spring School
of Instruction**
March 23-24
Downtown Des
Moines Marriott

Tweeting in the Board Room

By: **Nate Bonnett**

ISAC Legal Counsel



A board member tweeting during board meetings became the subject of a recent skirmish in Cook County, Illinois and got me wondering how such action would be viewed from a legal and ethical standpoint in Iowa counties. I know some Iowa county officials are active on Twitter, but I don't know if anyone gives a live play-by-play of board happenings. If you do, perhaps this article will give you pause to consider the subjects of your tweets.

Last year, Cook County commissioner Deborah Sims filed a complaint against fellow commissioner Tony Peraica after he posted on Twitter during a meeting a call for Sims to be voted out of office for her position on a sales tax increase. Sims complained that Peraica's tweet amounted to electioneering on the board's publicly funded wireless internet connection. Peraica agreed, apologized for his inappropriate post, but has since continued general tweeting during board meetings.

This September, another commissioner proposed an ordinance amendment that would ban the use of "publicly accessible instant-messaging platforms" during board meetings and specifically targeted "social-networking websites or like platforms." The sponsor cited previous instances of "erroneous information" being broadcast to the public via Twitter and the desire to foster a more "cohesive" board, but, of course, partisan politics was also playing in the background. The measure was ultimately defeated by a committee of the board that was concerned about limiting the freedom of speech.

How would this situation be analyzed under Iowa law? Iowa Code §68A.505 prohibits the state and the governing body of a county, city, or other political subdivision from expending public money for a political purpose, including expressly advocating the passage or defeat of a ballot issue. The statute does not limit the freedom of speech of employees or officials of public bodies and does not prohibit expressing an opinion on a ballot issue through passage of a resolution or proclamation. This is good to know, but it doesn't fully answer the question.

The regulations implementing this law go further in explaining the application to using the county wireless network for tweeting in the board room. The phrase "expenditure of public moneys for political purposes" is to be broadly construed to include the use of public resources generally for a political purpose. IAC 351—5.1. The term "public resources" is defined as "moneys, time, property, facilities, equipment, and supplies of the [public entity]." IAC 351—5.3. The term

"political purpose" includes expressly advocating "the nomination, election, or defeat of a candidate or...the passage or defeat of a ballot issue." *Id.* Applying these definitions to a tweet calling for the public to vote out a fellow supervisor would result in a violation of the general prohibition of using public resources for a political purpose. IAC 351—5.4(1). The county wireless network would certainly be a public resource and the call to action is unquestionably advocating for defeat of a candidate. Furthermore, the rules provide a list of specific prohibitions to assist in clarifying the general prohibition on the use of public resources for a political purpose. One such action specifically prohibits using public resources to produce and distribute communications that expressly advocate for or against candidates or that expressly advocate for or against ballot issues. IAC 351—5.4(2)(d). I highly doubt Twitter was in mind when this rule was promulgated, but it applies to the situation nonetheless.

It all seems fairly straightforward until you try to apply some of the exceptions found in the rules. In some instances, technological advances have outpaced the regulations resulting in conceivable situations that, while technically legal, run afoul of the spirit of the law. For example, the public forum exception says that any public resource that is open to a member of the general public to use for other purposes may be used for political purposes. IAC 351—5.5(2). Applying the plain meaning to this rule, if the county offered free public Wi-Fi in the courthouse, a supervisor could legally use it to tweet to the public a request to vote out another elected official. If the Wi-Fi was not open to the public for use, the supervisor would be prohibited from making that communication.

Public officials also need to be cognizant of who owns the computer or cell phone being used to tweet. Clearly, a county-owned device would be off-limits for political purposes. But, presumably, a supervisor could pull out a private cell phone in a meeting that connects to the internet via a private data plan and tweet a request to vote out another official. This conduct may be protected by the part of the law that seeks to prevent infringement on freedom of speech. On the other hand, the definition of "public resources" also includes "time," which could mean that the time spent serving on a board in a public meeting cannot be used for a political purpose, so it wouldn't matter if the equipment used was private.

Continues on page 16.

Making the Most of your Fall School Experience

It's hard to believe that the 2010 ISAC Fall School of Instruction will be here this month! We are looking forward to seeing everyone November 17-19 at the Coralville Marriott Hotel and Conference Center. In preparation for the conference, I just wanted to remind everyone of some important conference details. Please don't hesitate to contact ISAC at 515.244.7181 or shorner@iowacounties.org if you have any questions in regards to the fall school. Lastly, don't forget to check out www.iowacounties.org/fallschool.htm before you leave for the conference to view the conference agenda, affiliate agendas and all conference information. Safe travels to Coralville!

Conference Registration

- Conference registration will be located in the exhibit hall at the Coralville Marriott Hotel and Conference Center. Registration will open at 9:00 am on Wednesday, November 17 and at 7:30 am on Thursday, November 18.
- Please make sure that you stop by registration as soon as you arrive to pickup your name badge and conference materials. Your name badge is REQUIRED for all conference events serving as your conference meal and admission ticket.

Conference Transportation/Parking

- Please take advantage of the complimentary shuttle service to/from the Coralville Marriott Hotel and Conference Center from all of ISAC's five overflow conference hotels. Please inquire at your hotel's front desk upon check-in for shuttle information.
- If you wish to drive and park, parking is available at the Coralville Marriott Hotel and Conference Center for a daily fee of \$8.00 overnight or \$0.75 per hour. Please have both cash and a credit card available for payment.
- The Coralville Marriott Hotel and Conference Center's north parking lot (ramp) will be open 24/7 throughout the entire conference. Their south parking lot will be open during the following hours. Please note that you will NOT be able to get your car in or out of the south parking lot outside of these designated hours.
 - o Wednesday, November 17: 6:00 am - 11:30 pm
 - o Thursday, November 18: 6:30 am - 11:30 pm
 - o Friday, November 19: 6:30 am - 1:00 pm

Conference Entertainment

- The ever popular dance floor will be alive once again at the fall school. The ISAC Dance is scheduled for Wednesday, November 17, from 8:30 pm - 11:00 pm. From big band to current hits to your requests, Ultimate Entertainment of Iowa City has an extensive music library playing favorites from all genres. Beverages and light snacks will be available during the dance.

By: *Stacy Horner*

ISAC Meeting/Event Administrator



- ISAC will be hosting a second social event on Thursday, November 18, from 8:30 pm - 11:00 pm. Come and watch Ultimate Entertainment of Iowa City put on the ultimate karaoke experience. Beverages and light snacks will be served.

Conference Attire

- Conference attire on Wednesday and Thursday is business; however, please feel free to dress casually on Friday.
- Please remember that meeting room temperatures do not feel the same for everyone. You may want to bring a sweater or jacket should the meeting room temperatures be too cool for you.

Conference Food/Beverage

- Your conference registration includes refreshments each morning, as well as a box lunch on Wednesday, November 17, featuring a turkey or roast beef sandwich, apple, chips, cookie and beverage, and an Italian lunch buffet on Thursday, November 18, featuring assorted breads/rolls, Caesar salad, assorted pizzas, cheese manicotti, iced tea/lemonade and cupcakes.
- An ice cream social will be held on Wednesday, November 17 from 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm.

Conference Networking

- Both lunches and all refreshments on Wednesday and Thursday will be served in the exhibit hall. It's the perfect opportunity to network with exhibitors and other affiliate members. Don't forget your business cards!
- Take notes and ask questions at the ISAC educational seminars available at the conference. It's also a great way to share information with other peers from your county and/or affiliate. (See listing of seminars on next page.)
- A great new addition to the conference agenda is the Exhibitor Learning Center, which will be located in the exhibit hall. Exhibitors will have 20 minutes for their presentation and will allow for a 10 minute Q&A session following the presentation. (See listing of presentations on next page.)
- Learn how to *Manage Stress Through Resiliency* during the ISAC Wellness Program Workshop presented by Employee and Family Resources in the Exhibit Hall from 7:30 am - 8:00 am on Thursday, November 18.
- Lastly, take advantage of the conference to meet new people and look for new ideas. Please take time to visit the exhibits and thank all of the sponsors and exhibitors for their participation in the fall school. We greatly appreciate everyone's support in making the conference a success!

Continues on next page.

Maintaining an Efficient Computer

One of the most common complaints amongst end users is that their computer is “slow.” However, we are usually our own worst enemy in creating a sluggish computer. Below are a few simple tips to keep in mind to help your computer run efficiently and smoothly.

1. Free up disk space: Microsoft Windows has a built in clean up tool entitled “Disk Cleanup.” It cleans up your hard drive by removing temporary file folders and emptying your recycle bin for you. To access this tool, simply click on the “Start” button, “All Programs,” “Accessories,” “System Tools” and “Disk Cleanup.” A popup window will appear that will enable you to select the files you wish to remove and will show how much disk space you will gain by removing them.

2. Disk Defragmenting: Another simple and easy tool Microsoft Windows has available to its end users is the Disk Defragmenter. Files when opened and closed over time become fragmented on your computer’s hard drive and cause your computer to run slower when bringing these fragmented pieces back together again. The disk defragmenter consolidates these fragmented pieces back into a single space on your hard drive. Remember to clean up your disk space before running this tool. To complete this process simply click on the “Start” button, “All Programs,” “Accessories,” “System Tools” and “Disk Defragmenter.” If you make it a habit to defrag your computer on a regular basis, you will find that the process takes much less time and will keep your computer running efficiently.

By: Tammy Norman
ISAC Office Manager



3. Spyware and Viruses: Spyware can not only make your computer run slower, it can gather personal and confidential information without your knowledge. Viruses can also simply slow down your computer or totally destroy your computer’s software and render your computer useless. There are several products that can protect your computer, including Norton AntiVirus 2011 w/ Antispyware for \$39.99 per year, McAfee Internet Security for \$54.99 per year, or Microsoft Security Essentials. The latter of those who have a Genuine Windows XP, Vista or Windows 7 operating system installed on your computer. To access this tool simply go to: http://www.microsoft.com/security_essentials/default.aspx.

By performing regular disk cleanups, disk defragmenting and installing an antivirus/spyware program on your computer, you will find that its performance will improve and your use of the computer will be less frustrating.

Website Note: If you have a question regarding new technology and would like it addressed in this column, please contact me at 515.244.7181 ext. 315 or tnorman@iowacounties.org.

Until next month, keep clicking!

meetings

ISAC Educational Seminars

- o **“The Good, The Bad and The Ugly: How to be Secure Online”**
presented by ICIT Affiliate
- o **“Managing Performance in Your Organization”**
presented by Jan Burch, SPHR, Jan Burch & Associates
- o **“Current Developments in HIPAA”**
presented by Steven Mitchell, US Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights
- o **“The National Debt: Making the Difficult Policy Choices to Improve America’s Long Term Fiscal Outlook”**
presented by Sara Imhof, Midwest Regional Director, Concord Coalition
- o **“Effective Meetings: Techniques, Tools and Strategies”**
presented by Gene Mohling, Regional Extension Education Director, Iowa State University Extension
- o **“National Health Care Reform: Employer’s Responsibility”**
presented by Cathy Cooks, Labor Liaison, Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield

Exhibitor Learning Center Presentations

- o **“Hot in Place Recycling”**
presented by Gallagher Asphalt Corporation
(Exhibit Booth #47)
- o **“New Communication with Your County Government”**
presented by Hyde Telecom Partners, Inc
(Exhibit Booth #32)
- o **“County Opportunities from Iowa’s Wind Farm”**
presented by Northland Securities, Inc
(Exhibit Booth #60)
- o **“Online Permit Management: Increasing Service and Efficiency”**
presented by The Schneider Corporation
(Exhibit Booth #52)

Criteria and Procedures for ISAC Scholarships

The Iowa State Association of Counties (ISAC) is a private, nonprofit corporation whose members are county officials and employees from the 99 counties in Iowa. ISAC has established the following criteria and procedures for granting scholarships:

1. Eligibility is limited to children of current county officials or employees. This does not include city employees, employees of county extension offices, or candidates who are themselves county employees. Children of county assessors are eligible to apply for this scholarship.
2. At least one (1) \$1,000 scholarship shall be awarded annually.
3. The candidates must be seniors in high school.
4. This is a one (1) year scholarship, and can be received only once by an individual.
5. The scholarship can be awarded to anyone who will be a full-time student of any college requiring at least a minimum of two (2) years for a degree.
6. The scholarship monies will be paid directly to the college; one-half upon acceptance, one-half upon completion of the first semester.
7. The candidates must provide personal reference statements from three (3) individuals other than family members, complete an application, and submit to an interview.
8. The criteria used in awarding the scholarship will be scholastic achievement, financial need, participation in extracurricular/community activities and overall character.
9. The selection committee shall award all scholarships and the decision of the selection committee shall be final.
10. The selection committee shall consist of seven (7) members, to be appointed by the ISAC President. The selection committee shall consist of one (1) representative from each ISAC district, plus one (1) member of the ISAC Board of Directors.
11. ISAC reserves the right to verify any information provided on any application.
12. Scholarships will be awarded at the ISAC Spring School in March.
13. Scholarship winners have two years to use their award. During the two years, they may apply to the scholarship committee for an extension of the time limit. The scholarship committee shall recommend to the ISAC Board of Directors whether to allow the extension of the time limit.
14. **Applications must be postmarked by December 17, 2010.**
15. **Applications should be mailed to:**
ISAC, 501 SW 7th St., Suite Q, Des Moines, IA 50309-4540



Scholarship Application

Name of Applicant _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

County _____ Home Phone _____

E-mail Address _____ Name of High School _____

Mother's Name _____ Father's Name _____

Which parent of yours is a county official or employee? _____

County Department _____ County Position _____

County Phone # _____

Proposed college _____

Have you taken the SAT/ACT _____ If so, your score _____

Total Class Size _____ Rank in Class _____ Grade Point _____ on a 4.0 scale

Financial Need: In the space provided, explain your financial need for this scholarship:

Essay: On another sheet of paper type an essay of no more than 250 words explaining your career plans and future goals. MAKE US SEE THE REAL YOU.

Extra Curricular Activities: In the space provided, please identify your most significant extra curricular activities, school activities, work experience, etc. that might be helpful to the committee in judging your application.

References: We need personal reference letters from three (3) individuals other than family members. (Such as teachers, employers, advisors)

Transcript: Please enclose a copy of your high school transcript with your application.

Technology Award: We are also offering the Iowa Counties Information Technology (ICIT) Award, which is a \$2,000 scholarship. This scholarship is available to an applicant who intends to pursue a two (2) or four (4) year degree in a technology related major and/or a degree that leverages/incorporates technology. If this applies to you, on another sheet of paper which you label "Technology Essay",

For you to be considered for a scholarship you must:

- 1. Return application filled out completely**
- 2. Enclose your typed essay**
- 3. Include three letters of personal reference**
- 4. Enclose your official high school transcript**

Return to: Iowa State Association of Counties, 501 SW 7th St., Suite Q, Des Moines, IA 50309-4540.
Applications must be postmarked by December 17, 2010.

I hereby certify that this application contains no misrepresentation or falsifications and that the information given by me is true and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature of Applicant: _____

Self-Determination and Goal Setting

By: Cindy Chappelle

ISAC Case Management Specialist



Goals, what are they? We talk about them, write them, achieve them and sometimes fail them. One definition I found was, “the result or achievement toward which effort is directed.” Also, (I like this one), “dream with a deadline.” I took that definition from BusinessDictionary.com, and it went on to say that a goal is “an observable and measurable end result having one or more objectives to be achieved within a more or less fixed timeframe.” In comparison, a ‘purpose’ is “an intention (internal motivational state) or mission.” The question, “Has the goal been achieved?” can always be answered with either a Yes or No.

Does this sound familiar? I’m sure it does. The bigger question is how to motivate and/or teach people to achieve goals. We all have something we want to achieve and getting there is often hard work. We have to make changes in our behavior and daily routines which can be very difficult. Self-determination can be very important in our success or failure. What is self-determination? “Self-determination is the determination of one’s own fate based upon a freely determined set of criteria.” It means a person should be given the opportunity to succeed or fail in pursuit of their own happiness.

When assisting a person with a disability to learn self-determination and to achieve goals you should provide that person with information presented in a manner they can understand in order to make an informed decision.

Self-determination describes a role a person takes in determining his/her own pathways. For most people, this skill comes from life experiences. People with the limited ability to make correlations between two occurrences, people with mental retardation or certain other disabilities may need to be actively taught self-determination.

When possible, learning self-determination should begin as early as elementary school which means children should be allowed (taught if necessary) to make their own choice of clothing to wear, choose their own lunch items, or choose which DVD they will watch. At first they can be given guidance but allowed to make their own decisions. An example would be in choosing a DVD to watch. If part way through the DVD it was discovered that a bad movie was chosen they should not be allowed to change DVD’s at that time, teaching them that there are consequences to their own decisions. This allows the child to begin to develop an understanding of the power and rewards of choice-making.

Or consider the young adult or an older adult where this may be a new concept. Adults need more responsibilities and decision-making opportunities. The adult needs to know, not only that they can make their own decisions, but that they have a right to make their own decisions. The adult should have an active role in planning their own daily schedule, rules and consequences.

When an individual accepts responsibility for their daily choices they can begin to understand that they can have control over their chosen goals.

In an article titled “The Relationship Between Self-Determination and Quality of Life for Adults with Mental Retardation” Michael Wehmeyer and Michelle Schwartz (The Arc National Headquarters) write “There is growing mindfulness in the fields of disability services, rehabilitation, education and psychology of the need to promote self-determination for individuals with mental retardation and developmental disabilities, based at least partially on the importance of this outcome for people to experience an enhanced quality of life. In the present study data were collected on the quality of life and self-determination of 50 individuals with mental retardation, and data were analyzed, using discriminate function analysis and correlational analyses, to determine the contribution of self-determination to quality of life and examine the relationship between these constructs. People who reported a higher quality of life were also identified as more self-determined. The results support the continued effort to promote self-determination for people with mental retardation and developmental disabilities.”

There is a lot of information online about the importance of self-determination and achieving goals in regard to persons with disabilities. Much of it talks about how the teachings should begin in elementary school; however, when information is discussed in regard to adults with disabilities and quality of life, the discussions are focused on the importance of adults being able to participate and make decisions about the direction of their lives and activities. They feel more respected and are viewed with more respect.

When working with individuals to develop goals, take a look at their “self-determination” mindset. Do they have specific goals for their life? Are they able to display confidence in their decisions? Are they willing to accept the consequences of their decisions? Teaching and assisting a person to develop self-determination may be a step towards achieving their desired goals.

miscellaneous

ILPHA Mentor Pilot Program

By: L. Graham Dameron, MPH

ICPHA Executive Director

Unlike many other health-related professions, public health has not historically employed structured mentoring programs in leadership development. However, the Public Health Workforce Development Committee (PHWDC) of the Iowa Counties Public Health Association (ICPHA) recognized a critical need by new local public health (LPH) administrators in Iowa for just that – ongoing support and assistance from seasoned administrators in the state.

To fulfill this need, the PHWDC, in collaboration with the University of Iowa College of Public Health, Upper Midwest Public Health Training Center, decided to create a pilot mentoring program. The Iowa LPH Administrator Mentor Pilot Program was designed to have a mentor (seasoned local public health administrator) assist a mentee (newer local public health administrator) in expanding his or her knowledge, skills and abilities with respect to leadership, management and general public health practice. Preliminary discussions began in late 2008 and by April 2009 the PHWDC identified and outlined the program goal, objectives and supportive activities.

ICPHA, with support from Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) regional community health consultants, marketed the pilot program to administrators of local public health agencies across the state. Five new local public health administrators expressed interest and four seasoned administrators offered to participate as mentors. By early December 2009, mentors and mentees were matched, with one mentor taking two mentees.

While ICPHA provided some guidance, each team approached their participation in this pilot differently. Initial evaluation survey results showed that teams communicated via phone and e-mail with frequency ranging from weekly to monthly; however, many of the teams did not have a set meeting schedule. Discussion topics included fiscal management; Board of Health requirements and organization; personnel issues; Community Health Needs Assessment and Health Improvement Plan; interpreting grant language; and day-to-day programming.

Overall, the pilot proved to be a success, with positive experiences reported by both mentors and mentees. Several teams indicated that their relationship will continue after the program ends. ICPHA is distributing information about the Iowa LPH Administrator Mentor program to its members, ICPHA and ISAC. Program information is also being shared with IDPH to use as a resource for new public health administrators. Finally, ICPHA plans to identify and possibly seek funding to help implement and sustain the program in the future.

For further information please contact:

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legal briefs

Continued from page 8.

The final exception I'll mention protects the right to use Twitter in the board room over the county-owned network as long as the communication does not expressly advocate for or against a candidate or ballot issue. IAC 351—5.5(5). If you want to broadcast the mundane details of Supervisor Doe's latest good news on local food programs, by all means, tweet away,

because there is no political purpose there. It can also be a good way to keep the public informed. Just be careful what you post. And, since the Iowa Ethics and Campaign Disclosure Board can be followed on Twitter, it's probably only a matter of time before they work to close some of the loopholes in the law caused by technological advancements.

Slips and Falls, a Year-Round Challenge

Provided by: Iowa Municipalities Workers' Compensation Association (IMWCA)

Slips and falls are one of the most common causes of workplace injury, as well as one of the most costly. Despite this fact, slip and fall prevention receives very limited attention by most entities, and most prevention efforts are focused on reducing slips and falls in icy conditions during the winter. While wintertime falls are an important issue, a review of the timing and causes of slips and falls shows this to be a year-round hazard.

The financial impact of a slip and fall accident can range from minor inconvenience to massive liability, depending on the circumstances. The National Floor Safety Institute estimates that the average cost of a slip and fall workers compensation claim is \$4,000, and the average liability award for injury to a customer or other third party runs from \$60,000 to \$100,000 per claim. Employers also suffer a loss of productivity when employees are injured and off the clock. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, injuries resulting from floors, walkways and ground surfaces were responsible for 18% of all days away from work.

One important factor in preventing slips and falls is to understand the different causes and contributing factors. Although precautions like removal of snow and ice, selection of proper footwear, maintaining good housekeeping and proper lighting of walkways are important, they aren't the most important preventative measure.

A closer examination of claims involving slips and falls reveals that the employee's attention and focus on getting from point A to point B is a primary cause. A lack of awareness of the walking conditions takes away the individual's ability to compensate for any hazardous conditions. For example, parking lots are a common site of slips and falls for a number of reasons. Uneven walking surfaces and the accumulation of snow, ice or sand are commonly blamed for slipping or tripping. Fortunately, these issues can generally be resolved with improved maintenance. However, people are usually very focused on looking for their car versus watching where they step. They may be in a hurry to get to their car because of weather conditions or to avoid being late for an appointment. Carrying too much in one's arms can restrict the employee's ability to see where they are walking and may also contribute to a fall. However, when employees improve their focus on where they are walking and how they are walking, it reduces the chances of a slip or trip despite the condition of the walking surface. The same focus on walking also applies to stairways and office or shop floors.

To help prevent slips and falls, remind yourself and your co-workers to be aware of and focus on their travel path. To improve awareness and response here are a few tips:

1. Maintain all floors and walkways in a clear, clean and consistent condition.
2. Keep your eyes on the travel path.
3. Don't rush. Take your time when walking or climbing stairs to ensure you have good footing and to adjust to any hazards.
4. Carry materials in shoulder bags or on carts to keep hands free and your field of vision open.
5. Don't take shortcuts through untraveled or unmaintained areas.

Slips and falls also occur frequently when getting in and out of vehicles and equipment. Slippery steps, uneven ground and awkward positions are contributing factors in these injuries, and shortcuts like jumping out of a vehicle or equipment are also factors. The use of three points of contact is the best protection. Ensuring either two hands and one foot or two feet and one hand are in contact with the steps and handles at all times is a tried and true method of mounting or dismounting vehicles and equipment. This procedure slows down the process and allows the operator to establish a firm contact with the ground or steps. Four simple tips for getting on or off equipment or vehicles include:

- Only mount or dismount when the equipment or vehicle is stationary.
- Always mount or dismount while facing the vehicle or the equipment.
- Make sure that the points of contact you use are clear of debris, mud, grease, etc.
- Only use points of contact that are intended for use to mount or dismount (in other words, hubs and such should not be used).

Following these simple rules will substantially reduce the chance of injury when getting on or off, or in or out of vehicles and equipment.

As winter and its busy season approach, be sure to remind employees of these safety steps. After all, nothing is more important than getting everyone home safely.

NACo Deferred Compensation Program

Why workers say they don't participate in their employer's supplemental retirement plan

According to researchers at Dartmouth College, there are three basic barriers to long-term saving, especially participating in employer-sponsored retirement programs, such as a deferred compensation plan.¹

1. I don't know where or how to start saving.
2. I don't make enough to save.
3. I'd rather buy that (fill in the blank) today.

Employers and plan providers may be uniquely qualified to help workers overcome all three.

1. Not knowing where to start

Researchers found that employees can be overwhelmed by "the process." From daunting paperwork that comes with enrollment to the sheer quantity of questions on each form, workers often find they cannot decide and never enroll in the plan.

County employers have two main opportunities to help employees start saving. The first is when new hires are welcomed aboard. By providing them easy-to-understand information about the benefits of their deferred compensation plan, as well as streamlined forms, when they receive other benefits information, employers can show how committed they are to helping employees achieve lifelong financial security.

That commitment may be reinforced by asking new hires to join the plan before they receive their first paycheck.

The second opportunity is during benefits enrollment periods and related employee events. Again, by highlighting plan participation as employees are considering other benefits, employers give them the chance to include long-term needs in their decision-making process.

2. Believing they do not have enough income

Most public sector deferred compensation plans make entry easy by allowing low minimum contributions. However, employees may not realize that.

They may also need help understanding how, especially early on, just a few dollars a week invested through deferred compensation can grow to a tidy sum at the end of a 30-year career. And if the employee is disciplined enough to increase contributions every time they get a raise the potential for growth is even greater.

Just as many counties are juggling fiscal restraints, tight budgets mean individual employees need to make trade-offs. By helping employees understand the advantages of deferred compensation, they may be more willing to brown-bag it or bring in a thermos of home-brewed coffee (or make other trade-offs) so they can budget contributions to their deferred comp account. County leaders can encourage this preferred behavior by modeling it themselves.

3. Not having enough self-control

According to the Dartmouth researchers, the evidence shows that employees are less likely to delay participation if they are given a plan – rather than left to their own devices. Employer programs that make enrollment and contribution increases automatic can help employees overcome their own inertia.

But the Dartmouth research suggests even plan sponsors who are not ready to adopt "automatic features" can help employees find their way to a potentially more financially secure retirement – by mapping the path for them. Have materials prepared with "default decisions" already filled in. The fewer the choices they need to make, the more likely they are to enroll and participate.

What County Employers Can Do

For decades, the National Association of Counties (NACo) has provided a wealth of resources that member counties can use to encourage workers to save for retirement. NACo members can access many of these resources online through the NACo website, www.naco.org. These tools can help counties encourage employees to overcome the three barriers to saving identified by the Dartmouth researchers.

And, of course, there's the NACo Deferred Compensation Program, developed and provided by Nationwide Retirement Solutions and the NACo. For more than 30 years, the NACo Deferred Compensation Program has offered county employers a way to address their employees' need for additional income in retirement through quality education, online resources and personal service.

For additional information about the NACo Deferred Compensation Program or help putting the educational resources to work in your county, please contact Lisa Cole, lcole@naco.org or 202.942.4270, or contact Louie Watson, WatsonL2@Nationwide.com or 614.854.8895.

¹ "How to Foster Saving and Participation to Pensions: A New Approach," Annamaria Lusardi, Defined Contributions Insights Magazine, July/August 2007.

Author: Bob Beasley, CRC, CIC
Communications Consultant, Nationwide Retirement Solutions
(614) 854-3278, beasler@nationwide.com

Unemployment Benefit Extensions

The Unemployment Insurance (UI) Program instituted under the Social Security Act of 1935 is generally considered to be the first line of defense in stabilizing the economy. The intent is to provide partial wage replacement to workers who become unemployed through no fault of their own. In normal times, states pay a maximum of 26 weeks of benefits (Massachusetts and Washington can pay 30 weeks under certain conditions).

Extended Benefits (EB) - The Recovery Act of 2009

In 1970, a federal law mandated that states provide for extended benefits (EB) for up to 13 or 20 weeks when unemployment in a particular state reaches certain levels. The funding for EB is normally shared by the federal government and the states – the federal government finances 50% and states fund the other 50%. Because of the “Great Recession,” provisions in the Recovery Act and subsequent reauthorizations basically set aside the 50-50 sharing of EB costs and currently allow for 100% federal funding of state EB. Note that this does not apply to government entities or Indian tribes due to a long-standing federal law which prohibits the federal government from picking up the costs for these employers.

Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC)

During a handful of national recessions since the 1970’s, federally-funded programs of additional benefits were adopted to supplement regular UI benefits and state EB because of high, sustained unemployment percentages. Due to the “Great Recession,” the most recent program – Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC) – has been in effect since July 2008 and is not set to expire until November 30, 2010. Currently, four tiers of EUC exist, with up to 53 weeks of additional benefits potentially available. States administer the EUC program on behalf of the federal government. EUC is 100% federally funded.

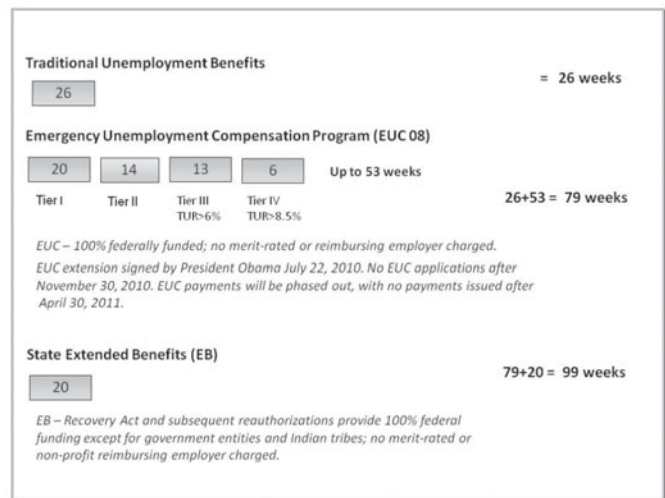
Program	Available Weeks	Trigger	Funding
Regular UI	26	Unemployed through no fault of claimant	Employers
EUC Tier I	Up to 20 weeks	All states	100% federally paid
EUC Tier II	Up to 14 weeks	All states	100% federally paid
EUC Tier III	Up to 13 weeks	States with TUR [*] > 6% or IUR [*] > 4%	100% federally paid
EUC Tier IV	Up to 6 weeks	States with TUR > 8.5% or IUR > 6%	100% federally paid
State EB	Up to 20 weeks	Unique IUR and TUR triggers in each state’s laws	100% federally paid

^{*}TUR – Total Unemployment Rate
^{*}IUR - Insured Unemployment Rate

Persons must exhaust their regular UI benefits before the state determines EUC eligibility. If an individual exhausts regular benefits and EUC, and if the particular state’s unemployment rate has “triggered on” EB, then extended benefits may be paid. Between the three programs, a maximum of 99 weeks of benefits is potentially available.

Funding and Triggers of Unemployment Benefit Programs Chart 1 Below

Weekly Benefits Review of Unemployment Compensation



Controlling Unemployment Duration

Most unemployment benefits charged to most employers arise from claims filed due to lack of work caused by position elimination, non-misconduct performance issues and other types of staff reduction or “right-sizing.” Indefinite or permanent lack of work can result in some of the longest benefit durations when compared to claims resulting from other separation types.

In lack of work cases, employers can develop “reemployment strategies” to help these transitioning employees find work much faster than they can on their own, reducing their overall draw of unemployment benefits and lowering the charges to the employer’s account. Such a strategy can represent substantial benefits for both the employer and the employees that find themselves displaced from work.

TALX can assist by providing effective and affordable Reemployment Services that supplement your Unemployment Cost Management program. Ask your CRM for more information.

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ISAC's 2010 Golf Fundraiser was teed up for a hole-in-one.

Thank you for a hot event!



All photos taken by CRMS at ISAC's 2010 Golf Fundraiser will be available at ISAC's Fall School.
Stop by to pick up your complimentary copy!

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2010/2011 calendar

November 2010

- 4 CCMS Advanced Case Management (Hilton Garden Inn, Urbandale)
- 5 Fall School Registration Closes (4:30 pm)
- 17-19 ISAC Fall School of Instruction (Coralville Marriott Hotel and Conference Center)
- 30 NACo Legislative Conference Registration Opens

December 2010

- 3 District 5 Meeting (The Hotel Ottumwa, Ottumwa)
- 7-9 ICEA Statewide Annual Conference (Scheman Center, Ames)
- 9 ISAC Board of Directors Meeting (ISAC Office, Des Moines)

January 2011

- 10 CCMS Training Committing Meeting (ISAC Office, Des Moines)
- 11 CCMS Administrators Meeting (Hilton Garden Inn, Urbandale)
- 26-27 ISAC New County Officers School (West Des Moines Marriott)

February 2011

- 10 Supervisors Statewide Meeting (Hilton Garden Inn, Urbandale)
- 16-17 CCMS Fundamentals Training (Courtyard by Marriott, Ankeny)

March 2011

- 3 County Day at the Capitol (Des Moines)
- 5-9 NACo Legislative Conference (Washington D.C.)
- 23-24 ISAC Spring School of Instruction (Marriott and Renaissance Savery, Des Moines)

April 2011

- 12 CCMS Administrators Meeting (Stoney Creek Inn, Johnston)

Please visit ISAC's online calendar of events at www.iowacounties.org and click on 'Upcoming Events.' A listing of all the meetings scheduled thus far in 2010 and 2011, agendas and meeting notices can be found on ISAC's website. A majority of ISAC's meetings offer online registration. If you have any questions about the meetings listed above or would like to add an affiliate meeting to the ISAC Calendar, please contact Stacy Horner at 515.244.7181 or shorner@iowacounties.org.

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