

# The Iowa County



November 2012  
2013 Scholarship Application  
Legislative Focus for 2013



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# The Iowa County

November 2012 \* Volume 41, Number 11

The Iowa County: The official magazine of the Iowa State Association of Counties  
5500 Westown Parkway, Suite 190  
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## Features:

**2013 ISAC Scholarship Application** 12-14

## Capitol Comments

Linda Hinton 4

## Legal Briefs

Kristi Harshbarger 5

## CCMS

Cindy Chappelle 9

## ISAC Meetings

Stacy Horner 8-9

## Technology Center

Sam Watson and Tammy Norman 10-11

## NACo News

15-16

## Miscellaneous

17

## Affiliate Highlights

18

## Preferred Vendor Highlights

19

## About the Cover

20

## Calendar of Events

22



ISAC members are elected and appointed county officials from all 99 counties. *The Iowa County* (ISSN 0892-3795, USPS 0002-150) is published monthly by the Iowa State Association of Counties, 5500 Westown Parkway, Suite 190, West Des Moines, IA 50266. Periodicals postage paid at Des Moines, IA 50318. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to [rbicego@iowacounties.org](mailto:rbicego@iowacounties.org). Subscriptions: \$25 per year.

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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.

## 2013 Legislative Focus

The leaves are falling, furnaces have been turned on and the quadrennial election on November 6 is right around the corner. By the time you read this you may well know whether there will be big changes in Washington, D.C., at the Iowa Capitol, and at the local courthouse, or if most incumbents are returning and the current majorities have been maintained. ISAC will begin working to educate new legislators on the issues that counties face, while redoubling our efforts to reach out to returning lawmakers.

In preparation for the coming session, ISAC's Legislative Policy Committee (LPC) met on September 27 to finalize their proposed policy statements, legislative objectives and top priorities. As of this writing, the ISAC Board of Directors has not had the chance to review and revise the proposals at their October 25 and 26 meeting. The final product will go before the entire membership on November 28, at the General Session at fall school. At that time ISAC members will have the opportunity to amend the ISAC platform as approved by the ISAC Board prior to final passage by the full membership.

The LPC's recommended platform includes 20 legislative objectives, although half of the objectives are in multi-part objectives, to the ISAC Board of Directors. Items were combined into one objective when they covered the same subject or fit together thematically. Following are the three top priorities recommended by the Legislative Policy committee:

**Property Tax Reform** - This priority continues as a major issue for ISAC in light of the property tax proposals that have been introduced over the past two sessions. Several objectives from prior years are included in this overall statement. These include capturing the value of agricultural buildings, developing standard guidelines for the classification of agricultural property, uncoupling agricultural and residential properties, and TIF reform. In addition, the LPC added a defensive statement regarding the exemption of the supplemental levy from any limitation that might be proposed.

**Mental Health Funding** - Last year's priority regarding redesign has been deleted since the regional concept is being implemented, but the underlying need for adequate funding for the regions remains. The LPC amended this objective to emphasize the need for the legislature to act early in the session to appropriate funding for FY 2014, since county budgets will be well under way in January. A proposal to align the hiring and payment of the judicial mental health advocate with either the state or the regions is included in this objective as well.

By: **Linda Hinton**

ISAC Government Relations  
Manager



**Road Funding** - ISAC will continue to work with a coalition to secure additional funding for Iowa's roads. We will continue to advocate for an increase in the motor fuel tax as well as other options to increase funding to the TIME-21 fund up to the \$225 million cap with excess revenues distributed through the Road Use Tax Fund.

Other objectives proposed by the LPC include the following:  
**Agricultural Exemption from Zoning, Building Codes** - The agricultural exemption from zoning and building codes currently includes farm houses. The objective seeks to eliminate that exemption so that the public health and safety codes would apply to all homes whether in town or on a farm.

**Annexation and De-annexation** - This objective combines two proposals; one to have a county say when cities are annexing property, and one for the county to have a say when a city is proposing a severance.

**Bottle Bill Expansion** - Iowa's bottle bill was passed in 1979 and ISAC has proposed expansion many times. Many beverage containers, most notably water bottles, are not covered by the law. The costs for litter removal to counties and other road jurisdictions are considerable and the bottle bill has proven to be a deterrent to littering.

**Elections** - There are three election objectives, two of which relate to absentee voting. The first proposal is to eliminate the post mark requirement on absentee ballots and change the standard for a timely ballot to all ballots received before the polls close on Election Day. This would eliminate a problem with unreadable or nonexistent post marks. Second is a proposal to end absentee voting at the auditor's office at 12:00 pm noon on the Monday before Election Day. Third is to make the registration deadline for all elections 11 days prior to the election. This makes things consistent but also helps curtail the costs of being open one Saturday.

**Posting Notices** - ISAC has been advocating for options to publishing in the newspaper for several years. This objective incorporates a proposal from the treasurers affiliate to allow a reference to where the parcel descriptions for the annual tax sale can be found in order to cut publishing costs.

Continues on page 6.

## Open Records and Personnel Records: The Sequel

By: **Kristi Harshbarger**

ISAC Legal Counsel



For those of you who have been following along, in the March 2012 “Legal Briefs” I summarized an opinion from the Iowa Court of Appeals regarding open records and personnel records – *American Civil Liberties Union Foundation of Iowa, Inc. v. Records Custodian, Atlantic Community School District*. The case was related to a request the school received for records regarding employee disciplinary actions of teachers involved in an alleged strip search of students. The school released the names of the employees that were disciplined in connection with the incident, but claimed that the details of the discipline were confidential records as “[p]ersonal information in confidential personnel records” under Iowa Code §22.7(11) and thus exempt from release under the Open Records Law.

The American Civil Liberties Union Foundation of Iowa (ACLU) filed suit and the district court determined that “the disciplinary records requested by the ACLU were ‘essentially in house, job performance documents exempt from disclosure.’” The ACLU appealed the decision and the appellate court agreed that the disciplinary records were clearly confidential under Iowa law, and as opposed to something “in between,” and that only “in between” cases should a balancing test be applied.

The ACLU again appealed the case, and the Iowa Supreme Court (the “Court”) agreed to hear it. On July 27, 2012, the Court affirmed the Iowa Court of Appeals opinion and found that the disciplinary details were confidential records that were exempt from disclosure under Iowa Code §22.7(11). Not only did the Court find that the records were confidential, but they also affirmed the appellate decision that applying a balancing test in this case was not necessary.

The Court, in an opinion written by Justice Wiggins, held the proper framework for analyzing this situation was to “first examine the specific statutory provision involved to see if the statute delineates exactly what types of records or other information are considered private and thus subject to the public disclosure exemption.” The opinion held this determination of whether a record fits into a category of statutorily-listed confidential records is done by “looking at the language of the statute, our prior caselaw, and caselaw from other states.”

Only if the “statutory exemption does not articulate precisely what records or information the legislature considers private” should a balancing test be applied, with the interests to be balanced “the public’s ‘right to know’” with “the government entity’s interest in privacy.” The opinion explained that the balancing test should only be used in limited circumstances because it is not the court’s “responsibility to balance competing policy interests. This balancing is a legislative function and our role is simply to determine the legislature’s intent about those policy issues.”

Applying this framework to the disciplinary records, the Court looked at its decision in *Des Moines Independent Community School District v. Des Moines Register & Tribune Co.* in 1992 where it held that performance evaluations were “in-house, job performance documents exempt from disclosure” to conclude that the information in this case “regarding discipline are nothing more than in-house job performance records or information” and should thus similarly be confidential. The Court also looked at case law from other states – including a 2000 case from Massachusetts that concluded “[i]t would distort the plain statutory language to conclude that disciplinary reports are anything but ‘personnel [file] or information.’” Finally the Court concluded that a ruling finding anything other than a categorical exemption for the discipline records would create a “logical problem.” The Court explained if a balancing test were used:

Can it be that discipline in employee A’s personnel file may be treated differently than the exact same discipline in employee B’s file, based on the degree of public interest? Can it be that identical discipline for the son or daughter of a public official, which might create something of media frenzy if released, is entitled to less protection under the statute than a child with a less public family background?

Continues on page 6.

# legal briefs

Continued from page 5.

It is worth noting that this was not a unanimous decision, and Chief Justice Cady drafted a dissenting opinion, which was signed on to by Justices Waterman and Mansfield. The dissenting opinion distinguished the disciplinary records in this case from the evaluation records at issue in the *Des Moines Independent Community School District* case, by stating:

a vast difference exists between past job performance evaluations and the publicly announced job discipline in this case. Job performance evaluations normally address very personal and intimate information relating to an array of strengths and weaknesses found at the core of a person's character and personality. Discipline imposed by a supervisor, on the other hand, reflects a judgment by the supervisor about an incident of wrongdoing by the person. While both types of information have some privacy interests, performance evaluations of government employees are much more personal, while discipline of government employees implicates a more public interest.

The dissenting opinion thus thought a five factor balancing test should be used in this case, which considers: 1) the public purpose of the party requesting the information; 2) whether the public purpose can be accomplished without disclosure of the information; 3) the scope of the request; 4) whether alternative sources for obtaining the information exist; and 5) the gravity of the invasion of personal privacy. The dissenting opinion concluded that applying this five-factor balancing test to the facts of this case should result in the records on the employees' discipline being released.

# capitol comments

Continued from page 4.

**REAP Funding** - The Resource Enhancement and Protection Program (REAP) invests in Iowa's natural and cultural resources and is authorized to receive \$20 million per year, but the legislature has been appropriating significantly less. This proposal asks for full funding.

**User Fees** - This objective combines three proposals for increased fees. The treasurers affiliate proposed an increase in the drivers' license fees to assist in funding the counties' drivers' license ser-

vices. The recorders affiliate proposed an increase in the filing fee from \$1 to \$2 to cover redacting and other costs for electronic recording of documents. The environmental health affiliate proposed an increase in the license fees for food establishments to help defray the costs of inspection.

## Time Management

**By: Cindy Chappelle**

ISAC Case Management  
Specialist



As the season changes to fall many are getting ready to settle in to new routines. Children have headed back to school, days have become shorter, and the weather is cooler. These changes tend to bring about natural changes in our routines. Managing our time tends to be one thing we think about doing, but never actually find the time to explore options or give the time to do anything about it.

I know most people have their own “way” of doing things and some of the ideas I will note here will be familiar, but maybe by being reminded of some strategies you may want to try something new that just may help with managing your time either at work or at home. I thought I would start by mentioning some mistakes that are made that can get in the way of effective time management: failing to keep a to-do list, not setting personal goals, not prioritizing, failing to manage distractions, procrastination, taking on too much, thriving on “busy” and/or multitasking, not taking breaks, and ineffectively scheduling tasks. Any of these sound familiar?

Now that we know what can get in the way of good time management, let’s explore some strategies that may help.

- **Set clear goals.** Make a list.
- **Practice assertive communication.** Give yourself permission to say “no” when needed.
- **Utilize practical prioritizing.** What has to be done first?
- **Accept personal responsibility.** Be accountable.
- **Implement effective organizational skills.** Remove the “clutter.”

Sounds easy enough, right? I’m sure most of you already use these strategies. However, several things tend to get in the way throughout a typical day. Unexpected emergencies are one. Allowing others to interrupt is another, and one of my personal struggles is, allowing me to interrupt myself (Answering email/phone calls, talking to co-workers, starting another project before I finish the one I started, etc.).

Before you begin to start a new habit to improve your time management skills learn to break away from “bad habits.” Think about accepting and forgiving your own mistakes or shortcomings. Accept the way you are – not how you think you “should be.” Eliminate unrealistic expectations. Be flexible when set-

ting goals, and get back on the wagon quickly after falling off. Develop a support system, and accept that the “ideal” is only a guideline or goal to work toward.

Once you can acknowledge and accept what “bad habit” you need to adjust or just get rid of, then you will be ready to accept a new strategy to move toward a more effective way to manage your time.

Once you are ready, focus on the task, not the distractions. Identify the objective and what the next steps will be. Have the flexibility to revise/change your plan if needed. Clump similar tasks together. (Don’t take 10 trips to mail letters or to the copy machine if one could work.) Keep good records and cut the clutter. Identify tangible and reachable goals. Screen your calls. Block out time on your calendar for “priorities” or actually schedule quiet time to get a task completed. Use a timer. Now for the hard one – discourage professional interrupters or learn to be direct with those “interrupters” who don’t get the hint. To discourage “interrupters,” try continuing on with the task at hand, identify an escape route method, change the position of your furniture to discourage “sitters,” use a sign on your door or desk, and, practice what is preached - avoid interrupting others.

Now that you are looking at your organization and daily routines try taking a look at how your time management skills or techniques are either helping or hurting you. Maybe one or more of the noted skills will help you to re-assess what you are doing. Remember...think ahead and take preventive action.

Wikipedia defines time management as the act or process of planning and exercising conscious control over the amount of time spent on specific activities, especially to increase effectiveness, efficiency or productivity.

“In truth, people can generally make time for what they choose to do; it is not really the time but the will that is lacking.”  
Sir John Lubbock

# meetings

## 2013 New County Officers School

ISAC will host its New County Officers (NCO) School on Wednesday, January 23-Thursday, January 24, 2013 at The Meadows Events and Conference Center (1 Prairie Meadows Drive, Altoona). All newly-elected county officials are encouraged to attend this two-day training and get a jump start on learning about county government. While the NCO School is designed for new county officials, it is also an excellent opportunity for incumbent county officials to brush up on many important subjects.

The first day of training will consist of general issues that apply to all county officials, such as Open Meetings Law, ethics and budgeting. The second day of the training will be specific to each of the three offices that are up for election this year – auditors, sheriffs, and supervisors.

Registration opens at 8:30 am on Tuesday, December 4, 2012 and closes at 4:30 pm on Monday, January 14, 2013.

### Registration Fees:

- Two-Day School: \$130 in Advance
- Two-Day School: \$150 at the Door
- One-Day School: \$70 in Advance
- One-Day School: \$90 at the Door

Registration includes refreshment breaks, meals, and a CD of the 2013 NCO School Manual, which contains in-depth information about each of the subjects presented throughout the

**By: Stacy Horner**

ISAC Meeting/Event  
Administrator



training. Please pre-register for this conference. This greatly helps ISAC staff to plan accordingly for conference meals and materials. This keeps registration fees low, which saves your county money!

**Hotel Accommodations:** A sleeping room block is available at the Prairie Meadows Hotel for the evenings of Tuesday, January 22, 2013 and Wednesday, January 23, 2013. The group room rate is listed under the Iowa State Association of Counties (ISAC) and is \$95/night plus applicable taxes. Please call the hotel's reservation line (515.957.3000 or 800.325.9015) to make your room reservation. All reservations must be made no later than 5:00 pm on Thursday, January 3, 2013. After this deadline, any rooms left will be released for general sale and the ISAC group rate will not be available.

Prairie Meadows Hotel amenities include: indoor swimming pool, restaurant and lounge, fitness and business centers, wireless high-speed Internet, interactive in-room service system.

Hotel room amenities include: hypo-allergenic Omaha Bedding mattresses, flat-panel televisions with HD satellite programming, refrigerator, iHome alarm clock, iron and ironing board, hair dryer, and Wolfgang Puck coffee with Keurig K-cup Brewers.

## 2013 NACo Legislative Conference Registration

Mark your calendars now to attend NACo's 2013 Legislative Conference, March 2-6 at the Washington Hilton in Washington, D.C. Registration will open November 27. The NACo Legislative Conference is held on an annual basis in Washington, DC. This meeting brings over 2,000 elected and appointed county officials from across the country to focus on legislative issues facing county government. Attendees hear from key Administration officials and members of Congress and are offered a myriad of additional educational opportunities addressing current and hot topic issues. A day of lobbying on Capitol Hill the last day rounds out an information packed conference that is NOT to be missed. Please visit [www.naco.org](http://www.naco.org) for more information and to register.





## Tentative Agenda:

### Wednesday, January 23, 2013

8:30 am - 9:15 am Registration and Morning Refreshments  
9:15 am - 9:30 am Welcome - Bill Peterson, ISAC Executive Director, and Darin Raymond, Plymouth County Attorney and ISAC President

9:30 am - 11:00 am General Session: Open Meetings/Public Records - Angela McBride, Assistant Ombudsman for Public Records and Privacy, Kathleen Richardson, Executive Secretary of Iowa Freedom of Information Council, member of Iowa Public Information Board, and Drake University School of Journalism and Mass Communication Director and Associate Professor  
11:00 am - 11:15 am Break

11:15 am - 12:15 pm General Session: Ethics - Megan Tooker, Iowa Ethics and Campaign Disclosure Board Executive Director/Legal Counsel

12:15 pm - 1:00 pm Lunch

1:00 pm - 2:00 pm Breakout Sessions

- Personnel Law - Michael Galloway, Ahlers & Cooney, P.C.
- County Home Rule - Michael Bennett, Assistant Iowa Attorney General PATC
- County Budgeting Panel Presentation - Deb Anderson, Polk County Board of Supervisors Budget Manager, James Bronner, Blackhawk County Finance Director, and Dave Farmer, Scott County Budget Manager

2:00 pm - 2:15 pm Break

2:15 pm - 3:15 pm Breakout Sessions

- HR Panel Presentation - Lora Shramek, Johnson County Human Resources, Lisa Powell, Linn County Human Resources, and Mary Davis, Pottawattamie County Human Resources
- Working with your Legal Team - Kristi Harshbarger, ISA Legal Counsel
- County Budgeting Panel Presentation - Deb Anderson, Polk County Board of Supervisors Budget Manager, James Bronner, Blackhawk County Finance Director, and Dave Farmer, Scott County Budget Manager

3:15 pm - 3:30 pm Afternoon Refreshment Break

3:30 pm - 4:30 pm Breakout Sessions

- Contract Negotiation/28E Agreements - Darin Raymond, Plymouth County Attorney
- Lobbying Etiquette/Working and Interacting with Legislators - Linda Hinton, ISAC Government Relations Manager
- Effective Meetings/Parliamentary Procedures - Cindy Kendal ISU Extension Office of State and Local Government Program

4:30 pm - 5:30 pm General Session: The Property Tax System - Jay Syverson, Nyemaster Goode Attorney

5:30 pm - 6:00 pm Break

6:00 pm - 8:00 pm Dinner and Keynote Speaker - "Remarkable Leadership that Inspires" - Rob Bell

### Thursday, January 24, 2013

7:30 am - 8:00 am Registration and Morning Refreshments

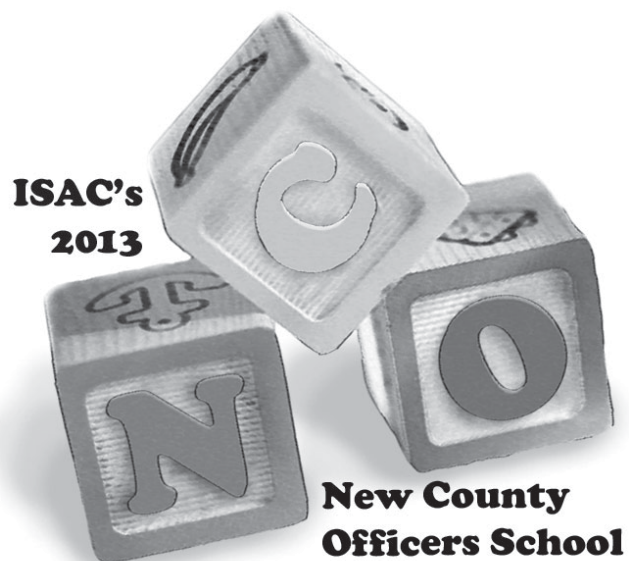
8:00 am - 4:00 pm Affiliate Time

- Auditors
- Sheriffs
- Supervisors

12:00 pm - 1:00 pm Lunch

We are excited to announce that Rob Bell will serve as the keynote following dinner on Wednesday evening, January 23. He will present "Remarkable Leadership that Inspires." Rob Bell began teaching his customer service and communication techniques early in his tenure as Personnel Development/Education and Training Director for Dick's Supermarkets, Incorporated. Drawing on 25 years of experience in leadership roles, customer service, and training, Rob makes it simple, clear and FUN to improve customer service and gain leadership skills. Before becoming Dick's Supermarkets' go-to-guy for training and remarkable customer service, as a former CPA, Rob worked as the Accounting Manager for a large trucking company, an auditor, and an adjunct instructor at the University of Wisconsin - Platteville. Rob now tours the country teaching the principles that have helped hundreds of companies and organizations improve their communication and service strategies.

Please contact Stacy Horner for any questions ([shorner@iowacounties.org](mailto:shorner@iowacounties.org)) or visit [www.iowacounties.org](http://www.iowacounties.org) for more information. We look forward to your attendance and participation at the 2013 NCO School!



## CSN: The Process of Change

By: **Sam Watson**

ISAC Information Technology  
Specialist



At ISAC we maintain and support a variety of applications. This includes both web and client based applications. Which application type is the best to use for a given situation depends on the application user's needs and resources. To determine which is the most appropriate requires an understanding of the differences between web-based and client-based applications.

Client-based applications are applications in which the majority of the application resides on the user's computer. Typically, this means installing an application via an installation package. There are numerous client-based applications that are used internally by the ISAC staff, with a major supplier of these applications being the Microsoft Corporation. We use Microsoft Office, CRM, Dynamics GP, and BizTalk to name a few, and they all have to be supported by ISAC IT personnel. We install, patch, and troubleshoot problems with these applications on an as-needed basis. Unfortunately, the performance of a client-based application is largely dependent on the computer on which it is installed. Older computers generally have less memory and slower processors, hard drives, and graphics processors. So, before a client-application is purchased it needs to be known the suitability (performance-wise) of the computers on which it will be installed. Plus, because the application needs to be installed on the computer of every user, there is a need for a local IT resource or expensive third party IT support. In ISAC's case, we have an IT team suitable for this support.

Web-based applications, on the other hand, rely only on a web browser to be installed on any computer. If you have a Windows-based computer, you have Internet Explorer as a choice, or if you have a Mac, you have Safari as a choice. You can also install several other popular web browsers such as Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox. Since the application is web-based, it can be accessed anywhere the Internet can be accessed. One of the major applications of this type that ISAC supports is called the Community Services Network (CSN). In the basest sense, CSN is just a collection of webpages displaying data dynamically, with the data itself stored in a database. The webpages are stored on an ISAC application server, and the data is stored in database tables stored on a database server.

When a user requests a given webpage from the ISAC server, the page is merged with pertinent data on the server, and the combined page is sent to the user's web browser. That is the beauty of dynamic web content vs. static. Dynamic content can change depending on something a user selects on a page or even a change within the page or data itself, while static content remains the same.

While client-based applications can be written in a multitude of programming languages (and may require specialized skillsets), there are fewer possibilities for dynamic web-based applications. At ISAC, we again use a product from Microsoft. The product is called ASP.NET, and its support is included with Windows-based servers, of which ISAC has several. Other examples of dynamic web-based application languages are PHP and ColdFusion. The "ASP" part of ASP.NET stands for Active Server Pages, and represents the dynamic concept with the idea being "pages on the server which are active (i.e. changing)." With the use of these languages, possibilities are nearly endless because the web developer is free to have the page do any type of checking, validating, or data manipulation on the server-side before combining the results into a page that is then sent on to the user's browser.

The future has, of course, arrived. Web pages in a browser can now refresh only the parts and specific data that is needed, thereby saving time and network bandwidth by not having to request the full page again from the server. ASP.NET itself is based on an earlier, "limited" version called just "ASP" which was released in 1998. ASP.NET has also gone through many versions, starting from 1.0 in 2002 to version 4.5 released this past August. Newer versions mean newer functionality, better performance, and a more pleasant user experience. And that has been one of the main goals of web-based applications: to make it like a client-based application without its inherent limitations. Progress toward that goal occurs with every released version. Stay tuned for the next version.

## LinkedIn

**By: Tammy Norman**

ISAC Office Manager



**Q:** I have heard about a professional networking site called LinkedIn. Can you please explain what it is?

**A:** LinkedIn is a professional networking site that was launched in May of 2003. It currently has over 175 million members and is growing. LinkedIn was designed to allow members to share expert ideas and knowledge with others in the field of proficiency. Keep in mind, this website is not a social website like Facebook. LinkedIn is designed to share work and employment related issues. Membership to this site is free.

To join LinkedIn, go to <http://www.linkedin.com/>, complete the registration form, and create a profile. LinkedIn allows its members to share information and ideas with similar professionals. Make sure your profile represents your education, past job experience, and current job duties. Once your profile is set up, make “connections” with others in your immediate circle of skill sets and job similarities.

Connections enable you to share advice and experiences with others in similar job positions. It is also wise to “connect”

with professionals that offer services that you may need in your job or will benefit the company or county that you work for. These connections can assist you with projects for which you need to seek advice. Information sharing is an excellent benefit that LinkedIn offers.

You can use LinkedIn to market events or services. LinkedIn can provide a presence for your county or county office. You can feature blogs, tutorials and groups. LinkedIn is also a great resource to post job openings and find new employees. Ultimately, LinkedIn is a great (free) online tool which allows you to connect with other professionals.

**Website Note:** Remember you still have time to sign up for fall school. Please register online before the deadline of Tuesday, November 13. If you have a question regarding new technology and would like it addressed in this column, please contact me at 515.244.7181 or [tnorman@iowacounties.org](mailto:tnorman@iowacounties.org). Until next month, keep clicking!

## SAVE THE DATE!

January 23-24, 2013

The Meadows Events and Conference Center



All county officials are invited to join us for the ISAC New County Officers (NCO) School. This is an educational conference that can help you sharpen up on important county related topics. The first day of training will consist of general issues: open meetings law, ethics and budgeting. The second day will be specific to each office.

Register beginning Wednesday, December 4, 2012!

**More information at [www.iowacounties.org](http://www.iowacounties.org).**

# 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 to apply 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 scholarship committee shall award all scholarships and the decision of the selection committee shall be final.
10. The scholarship 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 14, 2012.**
15. **Applications should be mailed to:  
ISAC, 5500 Westown Parkway, Suite 190, West Des Moines, IA 50266-8202**



# Scholarship Application

Name of Applicant \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home County \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_ Name of High School \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Father's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Which parent is a county official or employee? \_\_\_\_\_

County and 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:

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**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.

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**References:** We need personal reference letters from three (3) individuals other than family members (Teachers, employers, advisors, etc.).

**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 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 should be label "Technology Essay," tell us about your plans in this area.

**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, 5500 Westown Parkway, Suite 190, West Des Moines, IA 50266-8202. **Applications must be postmarked by December 14, 2012.**

**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:** \_\_\_\_\_

## NACo Partners with Vilsack on Regional Drought

With more than two-thirds of the nation's counties declared official drought disaster areas, NACo partnered to host a regional drought meeting in Omaha/Douglas County, Nebraska on October 9. NACo President Chris Rodgers, commissioner, Douglas County, Nebraska, served as a co-host of the event and moderator for the opening plenary where he stressed the need for a comprehensive drought response and a multi-year Farm Bill.

Counties are working to bolster agriculture's resiliency to drought by investing in county extension agents, Ag technical training, roads, enhanced water systems and other infrastructure critical to agriculture.

"It is critical to address the immediate needs of our nation's producers, but we also must look at the mid-range and long-term drought issues facing our state, region and nation and begin to plan for them," said Rodgers. "A critical first step in this response must be the passage of a multi-year Farm Bill when Congress returns after the elections, so that producers, businesses and local governments can plan for rural development efforts tailored to meet upcoming challenges such as the possibility of a continued drought."

Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack and federal officials from a half dozen other agencies participated in the forum and discussed immediate tools available to producers and businesses and listened to suggestions regarding larger community wide needs.



*NACo President Chris Rodgers and Secretary Tom Vilsack*

**By: Erik Johnston**

NACo Associate Legislative Director



"From the early days of this disaster, USDA has taken action to help," Vilsack said. "We've streamlined our disaster designation process, provided easier access to farm credit, opened more conservation lands for emergency haying and grazing, and much more. Meanwhile, we continue to convene regular meetings of White House Rural Council to coordinate the federal response and identify every effort we can take to provide additional help and assistance."

"In order to do the most good," Vilsack continued, "we must ensure a strong partnership between local communities, states, tribes, and the federal government."

The meeting included two breakout session tracks, one focused on meeting the needs of farmers and ranchers and one focused on businesses and communities. Producers expressed worries over the lack of resiliency in rural water systems, the need for interconnected water systems with multiple sources and the need to help livestock producers, new producers dealing with drought for the first time and those producers without crop insurance. Another consensus issue was the need to bolster research on drought resistant crops.

The resources available to help producers are catalogued at [www.usda.gov/drought](http://www.usda.gov/drought).

Several of NACo's rural leaders served as panel participants in the community leader breakout sessions. Commissioner Don Larson from Brookings County, South Dakota, Supervisor, Chair Melvyn Houser from Pottawattamie County, Iowa, and Supervisor, Chair Doris Karloff from Saunders County, Nebraska described the issues facing rural counties.

The top concern expressed by many community leaders was meeting the immediate needs of producers and the many businesses in their communities that do not have a safety net. Wildfires have ravaged many counties and overburdened the volunteer first responders of rural counties. Another major issue facing most communities is balancing the need for irrigation during times of drought with diminishing municipal water supplies. Variable speed water pumps for wells and interconnected public water systems are solutions that rural water profession-

Continues on next page.

## NACo Healthy Counties Resource Center

NACo's recently launched Healthy Counties Resource Center provides ideas and information about policies and initiatives that counties can implement to promote community health. The resource center is intended to help counties develop local efforts that aim to reduce the incidence of chronic diseases and ultimately lessen the cost burden on county health care services.

NACo's Healthy Counties Resource Center contains links to federal health information, toolkits and publications from leading health promotion organizations, as well as examples of county initiatives to promote prevention and wellness. Many of the resources outline specific policy options that local officials can implement to promote active living and healthy eating, as well as offer descriptive examples of how these projects have been locally implemented.

## Regional Drought Continued...

als are striving to get communities to plan for moving forward. As families face economic stress, communities are also striving to plan for the public health issues that are beginning to be seen by the mental health system.

Secretary Vilsack stressed his support for a comprehensive recovery response that takes into consideration the ideas and inputs of local leaders. The federal government is coordinating the drought recovery response through the implementation of the National Disaster Recovery Framework (NDRF). The framework is designed to link local, state, tribal and federal governments, the private sector and nongovernmental and community organizations that play vital roles in recovery. The resources available for all stakeholders, including planning, data and loan availability to develop community economic recovery plans can be found at <http://www.drought.gov/drought/> and <http://www.whitehouse.gov/drought>.

There are many challenges facing producers, businesses and counties in the current drought situation. However, county officials stressed the need to focus on opportunities for a stronger and more resilient future. "The drought situation is very difficult, but I encourage those of us responding to this situation to think about how we can adapt to mother nature's whims," said Supervisor Melvyn Houser, Pottawattamie County, Iowa. "We should con-

The resource center also contains a section on health promotion strategies and offers examples of counties that have implemented policies and initiatives in the following topic areas:

- Promoting and creating environments to support active living;
- Promoting healthy eating and increasing access to healthy foods;
- Building effective local health promotion coalitions;
- Demonstrating the return on investment in health and community engagement and messaging; and
- County employee wellness programs and initiatives.

Visit: <http://www.uscounties.org/kit/HealthyCounties/index.html> to view the Healthy Counties Resource Center.

sider fostering new opportunities for rural entrepreneurs to develop water resource conservation and reuse solutions that help producers and communities adapt to less water."

The day's events were the first in a series of USDA roundtable/workshop sessions. NACo, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension and the City of Omaha partnered to sponsor the meeting. USDA also partnered with other stakeholders on additional meetings during the month of October in Pueblo, Colorado, Pine Bluff, Arkansas, and Archbold, Ohio.



Melvyn Houser, Bill Peterson, ISAC Executive Director, and Larry Dix, Nebraska Association of County Officials



## Public Risk Pools: Membership = Ownership

Nationally, public entity risk pools have increasingly become the preferred source of local governments for coverage of both expected and unexpected losses. Thirty-four states now sponsor or endorse public entity risk pools that provide coverage for a variety of exposures from property, liability and workers' compensation to health and employee benefits. Since pool members/participants have ownership in the process, coverage is designed to meet their specific needs and they have a vested interest in the performance of their pool.

### History

The concept of pooling governmental risks was born during the insurance crisis of the late 1970's and early 1980's when market conditions forced standard insurance carriers to reevaluate their books of business. Faced with declining investment returns and deteriorating claims experience, they decided to stop insuring what they deemed to be high-risk municipal business. Even a smaller city with an excellent loss history represented greater risk than insurers were willing to assume. This resulted in a call for action by cities across the nation.

Iowa was one of the first states to identify a solution for its municipalities. In 1976, the Iowa League of Cities (League) Executive Board appointed a committee to study the issue and recommend a course of action. Over the next four years, committee members worked with both insurance agents and local insurance companies but were unsuccessful in attempts to create any type of municipal program.

Then in 1980, with the market becoming even more difficult, discussions turned to the possibility of pooling. This arrangement would allow cities to pay premiums into a "pool" from which their claims would be paid. It was determined that the best vehicle to use in creating this type of arrangement was Chapter 28E of the Iowa Code. By July 1, 1981, the Iowa Municipalities Workers' Compensation Association (IMWCA) was organized and ready to accept municipal members.

IMWCA grew steadily, attracting more and more cities each year. In the meantime, counties were experiencing the same difficulty acquiring coverage and approached the League and IMWCA about membership in the association. As a result, the 28E Agreement was restated to include counties as municipalities, making them eligible for membership beginning July 1, 1987.

In the 1990s, other entities organized according to Chapter 28E, as well as other political subdivisions, were deemed eligible for membership in IMWCA. As of this writing, membership has

**By: Curt Svalstad**

Iowa League of Cities'  
Director of Risk Services



grown to 498, including 350 cities, 68 counties and 80 other political subdivisions.

### Governance

What is unique and attractive about pooling is that the members govern the organization and have a stake in the process. Their ability to govern allows them to make choices that create rate stability and ensure coverage availability regardless of economic conditions and cycles.

Pool members accomplish this through an elected board of directors or trustees. IMWCA is governed by a nine-member board of trustees, all of whom are elected or appointed officials of member entities. Their first-hand knowledge and experience with local government operations guides the decisions they make for the pool.

### Administration

While governance is generally provided through a board comprised of elected and appointed officials, the administration of member services is handled in different ways depending on the structure of the pool and its relationship with the state league. The Iowa League was instrumental in creating IMWCA and thus has always been viewed as the overall administrator, even in the early years when the administrative services were provided through contracts between IMWCA and companies acting as third-party administrators. In the early 1990s, the IMWCA Board of Trustees (Board) made the decision to move all services in-house to the League. This was accomplished over a period of years and has greatly enhanced member services, which was the primary goal driving the Board's decision.

Today there are 15 full-time equivalent employees of the League who provide services that include loss control, claims management, underwriting, marketing and financial management. IMWCA reimburses the League for these services through an administrative agreement renewed and adjusted annually.

The Board meets with League administrative staff five times each year to review and approve operations, set policy and make decisions regarding pricing and program changes. At each meeting, League staff provides comprehensive reports and makes recommendations for the Board's consideration. In addition, IMWCA financials are audited annually and an actuarial evaluation of its rates and unpaid claim liabilities is performed each year. These two reports are especially critical for

Continues on next page.

## affiliate highlights

### Assessors Outstanding Member Award

John M. Deegan, Jasper County Assessor, was nominated and selected to receive the "Outstanding Member" Award at the Iowa State Association of Assessor's (ISAA) Annual Conference and School of Instruction held in Des Moines September 30-October 3, 2012. The recipient of this award is selected based on leadership qualities, professionalism and contributions to ISAA.

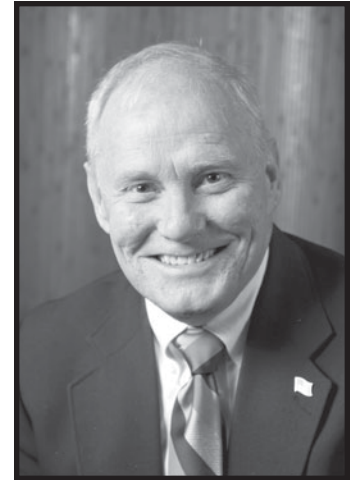
John received his B.A. degree in Political Science from Loras College in Dubuque. John started his assessment career in 1976 when he was hired as an appraiser for the City of Waterloo. John was appointed Waterloo Deputy Assessor in 1976, and held that position until 1986 when he was appointed the Jasper County Assessor. John is a member of the International Association of Assessing Officers (IAAO), ISAA, and has earned the designations of and Iowa Certified Assessor (ICA) from the Institute of Iowa Certified Assessors (IICA) as well as Accredited Senior Appraiser (ASA) from the American Society of Appraisers.

John's attitude has always been that everyone, pulling together,

can make a difference and indeed he has made a difference. He has served the ISAA everywhere from Washington, D.C. to the Iowa Capitol to his local jurisdiction.

John has served the ISAA, IAAO and IICA in several capacities over the years, currently serving as ISAA Parliamentarian, NCRAAO Representative, Iowa NACo Representative and IAAO Representative. While a member of IICA, he has served on the Board of Directors, then as Vice-President, and President in 1987. John also served as ISAA President in 2003.

John resides in Newton. Special surprise guests attending the award presentation in Des Moines on October 2nd included his wife Anne, son Justin, brother Jerry and sister Elizabeth, as well as co-workers from his office.



## miscellaneous

Continued from page 18.

the Board to review in making pricing and other financial decisions.

#### **Focus on Safety, Loss Prevention and Cost Containment**

Risk pools in general place great emphasis on risk management and work with members to successfully implement programs in these areas. League loss control and claims administrative staff work together closely in helping IMWCA members understand the importance of these programs and provide guidance and personal assistance in their implementation. Many training and education programs, both on-line and in classroom settings, are also available to members at no cost.

Many other resources are available through the League and by contacting League administrative staff for direction to other resources. League staff members pride themselves on quick response to member requests and are committed to providing exceptional member service.

#### **Commitment to Local Governments**

The Iowa League of Cities was founded in 1898 as one of the first state leagues in the nation and was instrumental in forming IMWCA in 1981. The League Executive Board and the IMWCA Board of Trustees along with League staff are committed to providing local governments the training, advocacy and support necessary to strengthen the ability of their officials and employees in delivering quality services to their communities. The success of these organizations is an excellent testament to what can be accomplished when local governments work together toward common goals.

*Curt Svalstad oversees IMWCA as the Iowa League of Cities' Director of Risk Services; he may be reached at 800.247.2708 or [curtsvalstad@iowaleague.org](mailto:curtsvalstad@iowaleague.org). Learn more about IWMCA at [www.imwca.org](http://www.imwca.org).*

# preferred vendor highlights

## DEVNET Incorporated

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- **Exhibit Booth:** 15
- **Hospitality Suite:** Wednesday, November 28 from 6:30 pm-8:30 pm on the 30<sup>th</sup> Floor of the Des Moines Marriott Downtown.

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## miscellaneous

### Making Medicare Make Sense

**Q: I'm hearing about Medicare's Open Enrollment Period again. But I'm already enrolled. Do I have to do anything or worry about this?**

A: You don't have to do anything, but it could be well worth it to check into your choices, because you may find a different Medicare Health and/or Prescription Drug plan with better coverage for your needs, higher quality, and lower cost. Medicare's Open Enrollment Period, October 15, 2012 through December 7, 2012, is when you can find options for next year that reflects the fact that Medicare is stronger than ever. You may find better choices than you had last year, with lower costs. You'll also get better information, as Medicare will show you which plans have the best performance.

Best of all, average monthly premiums next year for both stand-alone prescription drug coverage, and Medicare health plans, will be stable. Your current plan must send out information about their 2013 premiums and coverage, which you should read carefully. If your health or drug needs have changed over the past year – or if your current plan is raising premiums, or other out of pocket costs, it's usually worth the time to consider other plans. There may be a more cost-effective option. If not, and you're satisfied with your current plan, you can decide to do nothing and your enrollment in the current plan won't change in 2013. If you do enroll in a new Medicare Health and/or Prescription Drug plan during Open Enrollment this Fall, your new plan will be effective January 1, 2013.

**Q: Where can I get help with making the right Medicare Health and/or Drug Plan Choice for 2013, as I think I need some help in doing all of this.**

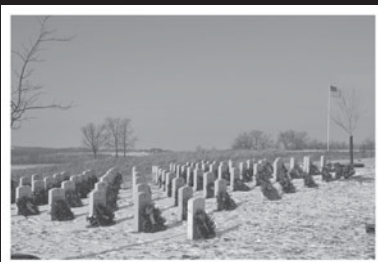
A: Medicare, and our partners are here to help! You, a relative, or someone you trust can go on the internet, at [www.medicare.gov/find-a-plan](http://www.medicare.gov/find-a-plan) to compare the coverage you have now with all of the 2013 options available in your area. All the information you need, including plan quality ratings, has been posted. If you want to make a change, you can do that online, too.

If you would feel more comfortable having a trained Medicare specialist help you, you can also get one-on-one help from the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) in your state. They offer free unbiased counseling and assistance as they are a grantee program of the Medicare agency. They can help you, in person by appointment, or over the phone, compare plans, and even enroll you into a new one between October 15, 2012 and December 7, 2012. The number to reach this program is printed on the back page of your *Medicare & You* handbook. If you can't find the handbook, just call 1.800.MEDICARE (1.800.633.4227) to get the phone number of the SHIP program in your state.

Or, a customer service representative at 1.800.MEDICARE (1.800.633.4227), can assist you with comparing plans over the phone, 24 hours every day. Our trained Medicare representatives can help you find out more about your coverage options. TTY users should call 1.800.325.0778.

You can also find the latest information about the plans available in your area in the *Medicare & You 2013* handbook, which is mailed to people with Medicare in late September and lists plans to choose from near the back.

## About the Cover



The cover photo was submitted by Peggy Dettmann, Sac County Veterans Service Officer. The Wreaths Across America is held on the second Saturday of December, at precisely 11:00 am. In 2011, over 600 cemeteries participated in the event. This photo was taken at the Iowa Veterans Cemetery (IVC) in Van Meter, Iowa. Family members and volunteers placed wreaths at each headstone, and at the Columbaira Plaza where cremated remains are inurned. Seven ceremonial wreaths were placed on memorials for the Army, Marines, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, Merchant Marines and the POW/MIA. There are currently 1,029 veterans and spouses buried or inurned at IVC. For more information please visit [www.wreathesacrossamerica.org](http://www.wreathesacrossamerica.org).

I'm always looking for interesting photos for the cover of the magazine and interesting feature stories - please contact me at [rbicego@iowacounties.org](mailto:rbicego@iowacounties.org).

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# 2012/2013 calendar

## November 2012

- 1 CCMS Advanced Case Management Meeting  
(Hilton Garden Inn, Johnston)
- 2 Fall School Housing Bureau Deadline
- 13 Fall School Pre-registration Deadline
- 11-14 County Attorneys Fall Training Conference  
(Dubuque)
- 28-30 ISAC Fall School of Instruction  
(Veteran's Memorial Community Choice  
Credit Union Convention Center, Des Moines)

## December 2012

- 4-6 Engineers Statewide Annual Conference  
(Scheman Center, Ames)
- 13 ISAC Board of Directors Meeting  
(ISAC Office, West Des Moines)

## January 2013

- 8 CCMS Administrators Meeting  
(Hilton Garden Inn, Johnston)
- 23-24 New County Officers School  
(The Meadows Events and Conference  
Center, Altoona)
- 25 ISAC Board of Directors Meeting  
(ISAC Office, West Des Moines)

## February 2013

- 6 Statewide Supervisors Meeting  
(Courtyard by Marriott, Ankeny)
- 21 ISAC Board of Directors Meeting  
(ISAC Office, West Des Moines)
- 27-28 CCMS Fundamentals Training  
(Courtyard by Marriott, Ankeny)

## March 2013

- 2-6 NACo Legislative Conference  
(Washington, D.C.)
- 13 County Day at the Capitol  
(State Capitol, Des Moines)
- 14-15 ISAC Spring School of Instruction  
(Des Moines Marriott Downtown)

## April 2013

- 9 CCMS Administrators Meeting  
(Hilton Garden Inn, Johnston)
- 21-25 NACE Annual Conference  
(Des Moines)

## May 2013

- 2 CCMS Advanced Case Management Meeting  
(Stoney Creek Inn, Johnston)
- 9 ISAC Board of Directors Meeting  
(ISAC Office, West Des Moines)

## June 2013

- 6 CCMS Supervisors Meeting  
(Hilton Garden Inn, Johnston)
- 12-14 ICIT Mid-Year Conference  
(West Des Moines Marriott)
- 19-20 CCMS Fundamentals Training  
(Courtyard by Marriott, Ankeny)

## July 2013

- 9 CCMS Administrators Meeting  
(Stoney Creek Inn, Johnston)
- 19-23 NACo Annual Conference  
(Fort Worth, TX)
- 31-2 CCMS Annual Conference  
(Embassy Suites Des Moines Downtown)

## September 2013

- 10-12 ISAC Board of Directors Retreat  
(Plymouth County)

## October 2013

- 8 CCMS Administrators Meeting  
(Hilton Garden Inn, Johnston)
- 16-17 CCMS Fundamentals Training  
(Courtyard by Marriott, Ankeny)
- 17-18 ISAC Board of Directors Meeting  
(ISAC Office, West Des Moines)

## November 2013

- 7 CCMS Advanced Case Management Meeting  
(Stoney Creek Inn, Johnston)
- 13-15 ISAC Fall School of Instruction  
(Veteran's Memorial Community Choice  
Credit Union Convention Center, Des Moines)

## December 2013

- 4 ISAC Board of Directors Meeting  
(ISAC Office, West Des Moines)

Please visit ISAC's online calendar of events at [www.iowacounties.org](http://www.iowacounties.org) and click on 'Upcoming Events.' A listing of all the meetings scheduled for 2012-2013, 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](mailto:shorner@iowacounties.org).



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