



## Investing in People: Workforce Development in Action

The Boone County Workforce Partnership was born out of a key work session with the Boone County Board of Supervisors in August 2023, following a change in leadership on the Central Iowa Workforce Development (CIWD) Chief Elected Official Board. Supervisor Bill Zinnel had expressed frustration over the lack of tangible benefits to Boone County and transferred his board responsibilities to Supervisor Erich Kretzinger. This transition and the onboarding of Eric Kress as the new Executive Director for CIWDB, prompted reassessment of Boone County's involvement in CIWD.

Bill had been concerned about the county's financial exposure to CIWD's potential crises, such as the 2006-2007 CIETC scandal where Boone County was financially liable without oversight. This history of risk led Supervisor Kretzinger to convene a work session to evaluate Boone County's options.

Following a productive discussion with representatives from CIWD, DMACC, Children and Families of Iowa, and local economic development agencies, it became clear there was strong interest in developing a workforce initiative to directly address employment challenges in Boone County.

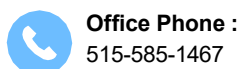
On September 14, 2023, the Boone County Workforce Partnership was formed, bringing together key stakeholders to address local workforce needs. The group identified several target populations to focus on:

- 55+ Seniors
- Young Adult "20-Somethings" who exited the workforce during the Pandemic
- Military Veterans
- Second-Chance Citizens (formerly incarcerated)
- Disabled Individuals
- Immigrants and Refugees

To engage employers, the Boone County Workforce Partnership hosted a Lunch-n-Learn at DMACC Boone, where local employers learned about available workforce programs, how to access them, and the benefits for their businesses. The event was well received, with several attendees expressing interest in follow-up opportunities.

On October 9, 2024, the Workforce Partnership took part in the Boone County Senior Resource Fair, promoting part-time job opportunities for seniors in the local community. This initiative continues to grow, with the Partnership actively seeking nonprofit and government employers to offer part-time positions through the Senior Community Service Employment Program, which provides compensation support for seniors meeting income guidelines.

While progress may feel slow at times, the Boone County Workforce Partnership has made great



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strides in connecting local employers with workers and professional agencies. Thanks to the leadership of Executive Director Eric Kress, Boone County is seeing the benefits of its participation in Central Iowa Workforce Development.

“With the critical assistance of Executive Director Eric Kress, Boone County has no doubt we are gaining benefit from our membership and participation in Central Iowa Workforce Development,” shared Erich Kretzinger, Boone County Supervisor.

### Workforce Development in Action:

- Are you an **employer** looking to expand your workforce or an individual seeking new opportunities? **Join us** in building Boone County’s workforce by reaching out to our Workforce Development team. Together, we can create lasting impact for local businesses and residents of Boone County.
- If you are outside Boone County but within the region of Central Iowa, connect with our team and explore launching a **County Workforce Partnership** to benefit your local workforce. [County representatives](#) are available on our website.

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