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Iowa Workforce Development Awards Funds to Expand Registered Apprenticeship Opportunities

DES MOINES – Three organizations were selected by Iowa Workforce Development to receive funding to strengthen or grow Registered Apprenticeship Programs and Quality Pre-Apprenticeship Programs in Iowa – [Iowa Jobs for America’s Graduates \(iJAG\)](#), [UnityPoint Health – Des Moines](#) and [The University of Iowa Labor Center](#).

“As we continue helping Iowans and employers connect through the Future Ready Iowa initiative and innovative programs, it’s exciting to see growth in our Quality Pre-Apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship efforts,” stated Gov. Reynolds. “Today’s announcement reaffirms the power behind public-private partnerships as another way to build a world-class workforce throughout our state.”

“Congratulations to Iowa Jobs for America’s Graduates (iJAG), UnityPoint Health and the University of Iowa Labor Center on their selection to receive grants that will further support their commitment to growing Quality Pre-Apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship Programs in Iowa,” said Beth Townsend, Director of Iowa Workforce Development. “All three organizations’ efforts will help Iowa to meet our Future Ready Iowa goal as well as increase opportunities to develop more jobs skills in high demand careers.”

iJAG is receiving \$10,000 to provide on-going support of a Quality Pre-Apprenticeship program.

“The Quality Pre-Apprenticeship award to iJAG from Iowa Workforce Development is both exciting and timely,” said Laurie Phelan, iJAG President/CEO. “The iJAG Board of Directors and staff are committed to assuring every student in iJAG, prior to graduation, will have at least one quality work-based learning engagement. Quality Pre-Apprenticeships will help us achieve this goal as well as ensure more underrepresented young lowans are well on their way to being future ready.”

UnityPoint Health – Des Moines is receiving \$75,000 to start a Registered Apprenticeship Program in the health care sector.

“Developing a Registered Apprenticeship Program at UnityPoint Health – Des Moines is one strategy we are implementing to improve retention and open new career pathways for our team members,” said Joyce McDanel, FACHE, SPHR, Vice President of Human Resources and Education at UnityPoint Health – Des Moines. “Creating an opportunity like this allows team members to minimize or avoid college loans and long-term debt while incrementally increasing their hourly wage - positively impacting their lives and the community at large. We are grateful for the support and partnership with Iowa Workforce Development and the State of Iowa to begin this program; we see this as a great investment in lowans that will allow them to stay within our organization throughout their education and career growth.”

University of Iowa Labor Center is receiving \$125,000 to pilot a Quality Pre-Apprenticeship Program.

“We are excited to begin work with our statewide network of partners on a new Quality Pre-Apprenticeship Program to bridge the gap between underrepresented lowans and opportunities to ‘earn and learn’ via Iowa’s Registered Apprenticeship programs,” said Jennifer Sherer, Director of the Labor Center. “This project is a perfect opportunity to enhance important ongoing work to promote high-quality jobs and diversify Registered Apprenticeship Programs in Iowa.”

Iowa Workforce Development was recently awarded an additional \$1 million ApprenticeshipUSA State Expansion Grant from the U.S. Department of Labor to strengthen and grow Registered Apprenticeship opportunities in Iowa. The grant is focused on expanding opportunities in healthcare and advanced manufacturing, the fastest growing and largest employment sectors in the state, as well as increasing the participation of women, youth, minorities, veterans and people with disabilities.

These three organizations selected to receive funding through the expansion grant are in addition to the 10 schools and organizations **who received** funding from the grant in September of 2018.

Registered Apprenticeship Programs help recruit, train a skilled workforce and retain talent. There are currently more than 1,000 apprenticeable occupations in industries that include energy, information technology, healthcare, financial services, transportation, advanced manufacturing, food and beverage preparation, and the building trades. Growing Registered Apprenticeship opportunities is an important strategy to help Iowa reach its Future Ready Iowa goal of having 70 percent of its workforce with education or training beyond high school by 2025.

Iowa employers and job seekers can explore Registered Apprenticeship opportunities at earnandlearniowa.gov. The website helps employers understand how a Registered Apprenticeship Program works, the value it brings to their business, the resources available to help them set up a program and has a **form** to complete to receive more information.

Job seekers who are interested in exploring Registered Apprenticeship opportunities are encouraged to visit the website and fill out an online **form** to connect them to a local **IowaWORKS Center**. In addition, IowaWORKS Center staff can help with resume preparation, cover letter assistance and mock interviews.

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