

JCED BULLETIN

Jones County Economic Development Newsletter

April/May/June 2024

SOLUTIONS FOR YOUR BUSINESS NEEDS WITH JONES COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Businesses are always on the go and trying to do more and be better. But there is always something to take care of, no matter how minor, and that can impede a business's opportunities to innovate and create more excitement around their product or service. And to help fill that gap, that is why organizations like Jones County Economic Development exist.

Jones County Economic Development is a public-private partnership dedicated to strengthening the economic base in Jones County by assisting existing businesses, attracting new investments and jobs, and fostering a business climate favorable for economic growth. Jones County Economic Development takes a comprehensive, strategic approach to community economic development. A community is built on economic vitality, quality of life, and physical image. Communities are built on the success and ideas of everyone involved.

Business owners need assistance at times just like the rest of us, especially with not enough hours in the day to get things completed. Jones County Economic Development has valuable expertise and statewide resources to assist businesses and communities with economic development. Jones County Economic Development wants to utilize these resources and connections to help our area businesses continue to thrive and prosper.

While membership investments in Jones County Economic Development at the \$250 level or higher automatically grant businesses access to the services and resources we provide, we understand that there are some businesses or ventures that might prefer a more direct pay-for-services rendered to show a better and more direct return on your investment. To that end, Jones County Economic Development has developed an a la carte menu of some of the services provided. They are listed below with their per service cost:

Advertising Opportunity in JCED Quarterly Newsletter (Maximum of 10 businesses per issue)	\$25.00
Grants/Tax Credits Assistance (Maximum of 10 hours per month; Maximum of 5 businesses per month)	\$75.00/hr.
Video development of business/community (Includes filming, editing, and rights to the final footage)	\$1,000.00
Business Plan/Marketing Assistance (Maximum of 10 hours per month; Maximum of 5 businesses per month)	\$50.00/hr.
Event Coordination and Execution (Maximum of 10 hours per month; Maximum of 2 events per month)	\$60.00/hr.

If you need assistance with a service that you don't see provided, please reach out to us and we can determine what would be an appropriate amount for time and services provided. Jones County Economic Development is committed to the long-term development of Jones County and we want to make you as successful as possible.

MONTICELLO MAIN STREET SEEKS INPUT ON DOWNTOWN OPPORTUNITIES

Monticello IA Main Street, a Designated Main Street Iowa organization and nonprofit focused on downtown revitalization, is asking area residents and visitors to take a survey that will help profile business and development opportunities that could make downtown Monticello an even better place to visit, live, work, do business, and invest.

Insights and suggestions from survey participants will be used to fine-tune business development and downtown enhancement strategies. The survey only takes a few minutes to complete, and all information is collected anonymously. To take the survey, visit theplace2be.bio.link or use your smart phone to be redirected to the survey via the QR code below.

"We really want to hear from anyone that lives, works, visits, or does business in the Monticello area," said Deb Bowman, Board President. "The community's input will help us identify business expansion and growth opportunities for downtown Monticello."

The survey only takes a few minutes to complete and will be available until April 19th. Survey results, along with information from other sources, will help equip Monticello IA Main Street to better promote downtown business, housing, and development opportunities and to focus resources on projects and initiatives that align with the community's priorities for downtown Monticello..

Since Main Street Iowa's Designation in August of 2022, 3 net new businesses have opened downtown creating 47 jobs. Total public and private investment during that time is estimated at \$3,238,000 and volunteers have contributed 1490 reported hours.



[Consumer Survey]

RURAL ENTREPRENEURS MASTERMIND COURSE!

The Rural Ideas Network and the Jones County Business Lab are teaming up to offer budding rural entrepreneurs a great opportunity to expand your horizons!

Join our virtual mastermind group tailored specifically for rural small business owners looking to thrive in their local communities. The purpose of the mastermind is to provide peer support, brainstorm ideas and offer a safe space for communication. In a mastermind group, the members are the main focus of the discussion and they run the agenda of the group. Each member's participation is important: Peers give each other feedback, help brainstorm new ideas, and set up accountability structures that keep each other focused on the end goal.

In these two intensive sessions, we'll focus on discussing challenges, sharing insights, and brainstorming solutions to help each other succeed. From marketing strategies to operational efficiencies, together we'll explore ways to overcome obstacles and leverage opportunities unique to rural entrepreneurship.

The next Mastermind Group starts on April 16th and ends on April 23rd. You can learn more and sign up for this amazing opportunity at: [Rural Entrepreneurs Mastermind | Rural Ideas Network](#)



FOSTERING EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT*

Growing up as a farm girl, I was no stranger to the concept of perseverance and hard work my parents championed. “Rub some dirt on it and get back to work” wasn’t just a saying; it was a way of life. This philosophy, deeply ingrained in my upbringing, has significantly influenced my professional journey over the past 25 years, especially in understanding and fostering employee engagement and helping to build healthy companies.

In a time where the dynamics of the workplace are ever-evolving, the concept of employee engagement has transformed. People yearn to be part of something bigger than themselves, seeking fulfillment in their roles that go beyond titles or financial rewards.

My experience in assisting companies recruit and retain talent has shown me that those who place a premium on employee engagement and culture have an easier time attracting quality staff and enjoy longer employee tenure, heightened innovation, and improved financial performance. This perspective is particularly relevant today against the backdrop of the Great Resignation and the movement of “quiet quitting.” What we’re seeing is a widespread expression of the Great Discontent.

Gallup’s 2023 State of the Global Workforce Report sheds light on some concerning trends: Economic growth is slowing; employee engagement in the US is declining, costing the economy 9% of GDP annually; and a staggering 77% of the workforce is not engaged. Surprisingly, factors like job location and salary don’t top the list of reasons why people leave their jobs. Instead, issues related to culture, connection, communication, growth opportunities, and a lack of vision are driving force behind employee turnover.

So, what exactly is employee engagement? It’s the strength of the mental and emotional connection employees feel towards their work and the organization. This can be measured through various indicators such as turnover rates, absenteeism, productivity, and customer satisfaction. The key to enhancing engagement lies in the 5 C’s: Care, Connect, Coach, Contribute, and Celebrate.

Implementing strategies for better engagement requires intention and should be a regular part of a leader’s monthly agenda. This includes offering more leadership training, ensuring leaders coach and connect with their teams regularly, making employees feel safe and known, encouraging feedback, and fostering a fun and inclusive work environment. Moreover, helping employees see how their roles contribute to the broader mission and encouraging relationship-building among colleagues can significantly boost engagement.

Over the years, my journey from the farm to the forefront of employee engagement strategies has taught me that at the heart of every successful organization are leaders who understand the value of connection, appreciation, and purpose. By fostering an environment where employees feel valued and part of something meaningful, organizations can navigate the complexities of today’s workforce challenges and pave the way for a more engaged, productive, and satisfied team.

**This article was provided by Sarah Hermanson of One Above HR at the request of Jones County Economic Development to discuss trends in employee recruitment and retention over the coming years. Stay tuned for more expert-directed articles in future newsletter editions.*



MIXING IT UP WITH JONES COUNTY YOUNG PROFESSIONALS!

Jones County Young Professionals has kicked off 2024 with a new format and some great new fun! Instead of meeting every month, we are choosing higher impact opportunities to get together once a quarter. We know your time is limited and we love that you choose JCYP, so we want to make it even easier to get together with us going forward.

March was our first quarter get-together and it was a blast. We had a Mixology Night at the General Store. (Special thanks to them as it was a last-minute venue change due to illness!) Melissa Wolken was a mixology guru and you could tell she had put a ton of time and effort into planning and preparing for this event. We could not have done it without her, so cheers to her as well!

Not only were the JCYP members able to meet some awesome new people from Jones County for this event, we also learned SO MUCH from Melissa about the different liquors, mixers, bartending tools/alternatives, how to cut garnishes/importance of presentation, how to make simple syrup, recipes, fun facts, and so

much more!

Participants in the class got to make an old-fashioned and learn the difference between a mule and a mojito by making those as well!

We are still finalizing details for our next event in May during the Day of Caring, so stay tuned to our Facebook page for more information! And enjoy the great pictures and recap from our Mixology event!



VOLUNTEER AT CAMP COURAGEOUS!

If you ever want to give back to the community and help a great cause at the same time, look no further than Camp Courageous in Monticello!

Camp has several different types of volunteering, perfect for all kinds of ages. You can volunteer for fundraisers, the Halloween Haunted Trail, dances, grounds work, and so much more!

If you would like to learn more and get you and your team involved, go to: <https://campcourageous.org/volunteer/>

Contact Us

Jones County Economic Development has two convenient offices:

107 S. Ford Street in
Anamosa inside City Hall

200 E. 1st Street in
Monticello inside City Hall

Our Executive Director, Derek Lumsden, can also be reached by Phone at 319-480-7446 or by email at: