

Business Leadership Network



COMMUNITY FORUMS SUMMARY

Spring 2015
Creston and Carroll

BUSINESS LEADERSHIP NETWORK

The Business Leadership Network comprises Iowans who are leaders in business, educators, public health professionals, health care professionals, and community leaders who are interested in improving the health and well-being of their community through a mutually beneficial relationship with the College of Public Health. The Network is guided by a Business Leadership Network Steering Committee which serves in a primary advisory role and assists the College in building meaningful and practical initiatives and support with Iowa's businesses and communities.

WHAT IS PUBLIC HEALTH?

Public Health is the science and art of protecting and improving the health of communities through education, promotion of healthy lifestyles, and research for disease and injury prevention. Public health helps improve the health and well-being of people in local communities and often, while operating in the background, helps meet the public expectation for ensuring a quality of life – safe water, clean air, and protection from injury. See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KAPtLiDx-7I>. The dramatic achievements of public health in the 20th and 21st centuries have improved our quality of life: an increase in life expectancy, worldwide reduction in infant and child mortality, and the elimination or reduction of many communicable diseases.

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MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

In late spring 2015, the College of Public Health continued to reach out to communities regarding local business and community public health issues. We understand that our work is very place based. To date, the College of Public Health has conducted Community Forums and meetings in three regions of the state of Iowa (see map on page 7). Our recent Community Forums in Creston and Carroll, which were conducted in cooperation with the College's Business Leadership Network, provided opportunities for area leaders to look at their communities with different perspectives and to develop network opportunities and potential partner opportunities with the College of Public Health and its faculty. Our faculty and students who participated in the Forums gained meaningful knowledge of these Iowa communities and their public health interests.

This is the fifth set of Community Forums conducted by the College and Business Leadership Network since 2012. Steering Committee Members Rich Paulsen of Creston and Eric Neu of Carroll were instrumental in the planning and success of both Community Forums. This summary of the Creston and Carroll Forums provides a focus on key local community issues and glimpse into the days' discussions.



Sue Curry
Dean
University of Iowa College of Public Health

The Mission of the University of Iowa College of Public Health is to promote health and prevent injury and illness through commitment to education and training, excellence in research, innovation in policy development, and devotion to public health practice.

SUMMARY OF FORUM DISCUSSIONS

The highlight of the Business Leadership Network Forums is the interactive and engaging small group discussions. In each community, a small planning group, led by Business Leadership Steering Committee members, met with the College to plan each Forum to ensure that the subject matter and discussions were well-suited for Creston and Carroll. Discussion topics for the two Community Forums were:

Creston

- » Immunizations as a Community Health Issue
- » Aging Populations and the Workforce
- » Substance Abuse Issues in Community Health

Carroll

- » Agricultural Health and Safety
- » Aging Populations and the Workforce
- » Women's Health Issues



Creston Municipal Complex



Carroll Chamber of Commerce

PRESENTATIONS

Forum luncheon presentations were delivered in Creston by Miesha Marzell, Assistant Professor, Community and Behavioral Health; and in Carroll by Brandi Janssen, I-CASH Director and Clinical Assistant Professor, Occupational and Environmental Health. Summaries of the presentations follow.

Talking With Teens About Alcohol

Miesha Marzell – Assistant Professor, Community and Behavioral Health

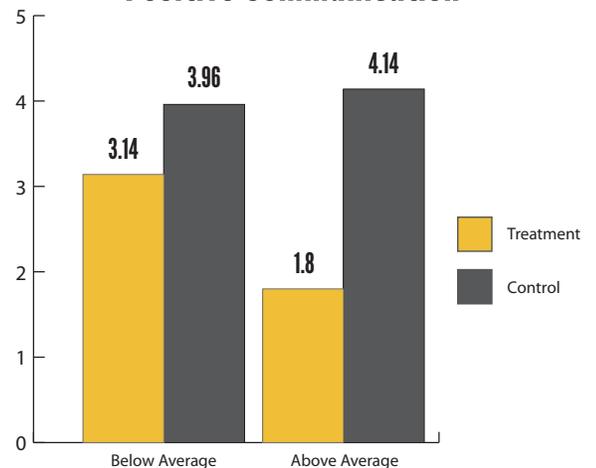
No matter where – metropolitan areas, middle-size towns, and rural areas – alcohol use is ubiquitous. Nationally, teen alcohol use kills approximately 6,000 young people each year. One in five teens binge drink and about one in three 8th graders has tried alcohol. Many parents have declared, “I let my teens drink at home so I know they are safe and responsible.” But the facts remain that three of four teens try alcohol outside the home before graduating from high school. Even though careful parent engagement with their teen is the greatest deterrent, simplifying the situation with an easy fix is not effective.

Nothing is more powerful and influential in teens’ lives than the pressure of their peers. We can all remember our buddies and girlfriends and how important it was to please and emulate each other – to be included. To experiment and take risks in one’s teen years is normal. The influence of friends and groups of friends where drinking is not only accepted, but expected, is a struggle for most teens. It has become easier to obtain alcohol. Teens can find it, whether at home in the family’s basement, refrigerator, or liquor cabinet or through a willing older sibling, friend, and, oftentimes, parent.

The challenge parents have to communicate the travails that can come as a result of alcohol use is daunting. Successful communication goes well beyond a warning or castigation. It requires a close connection of parents with their children. Reports show that three in four teens say their parents are the leading influence on their decisions about drinking. Simply, kids who are connected to their parents and families who intervene reduce underage drinking.

For parents who may want a little help and direction, the *Power of Parents – Talking with Teens About Alcohol* is a handbook developed and sponsored by MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving). MADD is a national public interest and advocacy group with the mission to end drunk driving, help fight drugged driving, support the victims of these violent crimes, and prevent underage drinking. MADD’s parenting handbook addresses issues around the negative impact of authoritarian parenting style, as well as the overprotective and permissive parenting style.

Positive Communication



Source: Penn State University

Of course, there is a middle ground between those parenting styles that includes a focus on communication, conversation, and connection. Talking with one's teen about alcohol is essential. Techniques for having conversations are suggested in the MADD Handbook. Knowing how best to communicate family values and consequences, as well as being able to handle your teen's questions regarding the parents own history and experience of underage drinking can be very effective for the family.

Behavioral research by Penn State University shows that positive communication between parents and families positively affect weekend drinking and driving under the influence.

There is a growing number of education and advocacy organizations, as well as state and federal programs that work toward reducing underage drinking. For example, Mariah's Challenge, a national movement forged by the father of a young teen killed by a driver who had been drinking, has spread across the country. The goal: "Let's prevent drinking and destructive decisions from taking any more of our most valuable asset - its youth." The movement, which started in Montana, has spread to other states. Creston is the only community in Iowa where someone is actively participating.

The simple lesson is to talk, talk, talk... parents to children, families together, and in Iowa's communities. That can make a difference.



Iowa's Center for Agricultural Safety and Health: Leading Statewide Partnerships to Make Farming Safer

Brandi Janssen – I-CASH Director and Clinical Assistant Professor, Occupational and Environmental Health

After coal mining, farming is the second most dangerous occupation in this country. While Iowa's limited coal mining has disappeared over the years, farming and agriculture continue as the mainstay of the Iowa economy. Farming is not only dangerous, but leads to chronic illness. Tractor rollovers, grain bin deaths, and farm equipment accidents make the local news, but farmers are also faced with long-term debilitating illnesses such as high rates of noise-induced hearing loss, musculoskeletal disorders, respiratory disorders, and skin cancer.



In 1990, the Iowa General Assembly created the Iowa Center for Agriculture Safety and Health (I-CASH). I-CASH is housed at the University of Iowa College of Public Health and leads the collaborative effort with Iowa State University, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, and the Iowa Department of Public Health. Oversight and support is provided by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), as well as the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). In addition, I-CASH has brought into the collaboration a number of state and national partners representing a variety of agriculture-related organizations, associations, and publications.

I-CASH and its partners have worked hard to reach out to all facets of Iowa's agricultural community. Grants to Iowa's 4-H and FFA Chapters have helped support local projects related to hearing loss, fatigue, tractor and livestock safety, and hygiene. Seasonal education and awareness campaigns are conducted on specific topics, through public service radio announcements and in conjunction with ISU Extension and through Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices' regular contacts with farmers. The University Mobile Museum, which features I-CASH information, has travelled to 48 cities and 36 counties and continues to visit Iowans throughout the state.

Mission: To enhance the health and safety of Iowa's agricultural community by establishing and coordinating prevention and education programs.

In mid-summer of 2015, I-CASH is conducting a Journalists' Workshop, to bring journalists from various media categories and Iowa media markets together with farmers and agricultural safety professionals. The annual state wide conference will be held this year, on November 17-18, in Decorah, Iowa.

While agricultural practices may continue to shift from what many consider as "traditional farming," Iowa's farmers and agricultural workers' health and safety remain at risk. I-CASH and all organizational and institutional collaborators will continue to closely work with each other, with input from Iowa's farmers and rural communities through outreach and education.

The Forums in Creston and Carroll drew a cross-section of business owners and managers, local elected officials, public health professionals, health providers, economic development leaders, and the general public. As a result of planning and with discussions with local Network Steering Committee members, the Forums in each community had a distinct focus.

CRESTON

In Creston, the overall theme of the day related to disease prevention and preparing for the community's issues for the future. Miesha Marzell, Assistant Professor, Community and Behavioral Health, gave the luncheon presentation *Talking with Teens About Alcohol*. Great appreciation is extended to Rich Paulsen, Steering Committee Member and Publisher of the Osceola Sentinel-Tribune and Creston News Advertiser, and Tim Ostroski, Executive Director of the Southern Iowa Council of Governments for their assistance in planning and guidance.

FORUMS

Creston Forum

Most Iowa rural communities and regions face challenges as the demographic landscape changes across the state. For those regions where people have lower incomes and find it harder to find jobs, it is an even more significant challenge. The “baby boomer” generation has become a greater percentage of the population; they are retiring as well as living longer. The retention of young people in many regions is difficult. Iowa’s community colleges, such as Southwestern Community College, and communities and organizations in the Creston region are working hard and recognize that disease and substance abuse prevention and preparation for the future are critical.

“We are running out of room,” one local elected official remarked as he related a story of his difficulty in finding a facility (bed) where he could place his elderly parent. While there is a focus on nursing and health care training at the community college, it remains difficult to match up available beds with the level of care needed for the senior. Finding an appropriate placement nearby is even more difficult.

As noted by the College of Public Health (CPH) facilitator, more research is being done relating to the pending challenges of the older population, including how individuals are aging and dying. Without doubt, one’s lifestyle and individual preparation is critical in planning for one’s older years and death. More advanced care planning by individuals is essential, and that way of thinking should be integrated into routine care practices across the continuum of care and embedded in community venues and discussion. La Crosse, Wisconsin’s Gundersen Health System was suggested as an evidence-based innovative model of an advance-care planning program. Respecting Choices has demonstrated that such planning leads to high-quality care for patients and the population while also reducing healthcare costs. The bottom line is that more thought and community discussion should be given in preparing for the future.

Jenny McCarthy, an anti-immunization spokesperson, has not spent any time in the Creston region in the past ten years (that we know of). Given that observation, childhood immunization rates in Union County are pretty high and improving, from the county public health agency’s perspective. For Iowa’s county childhood immunization rates, see the most recent IDPH Immunization Report – <http://idph.ia.us/IDPHChannelsService/file.ashx?file=5DB36CF2-20A2-4A2F-ABAI-339962D5AOD>. In some areas of the state and nation, some physicians will not accept or treat children whose immunizations are not current.

There is continuing discussion about the HPV immunization for boys and girls. HPV is the defined cause of cervical cancer. The discussion of boys getting immunized is new, and some changes in understanding of the need for boys to be vaccinated are necessary, often through education. The American Council on Immunization Practices is continuing its research and will give clarity and recommendations about booster shots for children. It was noted that there are perils with an overtreatment of HPV, so prevention and surveillance are essential to understand the virus and its impacts. It is a fact that the HPV vaccine takes the number of people who get cervical cancer to 0%.

More and more attention is being given to healthy food and good nutrition. Across the state, communities have focused over the last few years on community gardens. In restaurants, including some in Creston, customers are made aware of the menu items’ nutrition, sometimes if it was grown locally, and how the food could be prepared in healthier processes. There are more options and people are making choices in how they eat to make sure they have a healthy diet. Hy-Vee and Fareway, large Iowa grocery chains, are buying some products locally and emphasizing healthy eating. The Creston region is making a concerted effort to improve health through healthy foods.

In any community, whether urban or rural, alcohol and drugs have become even more prevalent, more easily accessible, and more young people are starting use at an earlier age. Drug use affects brain development in young people and most often impairs opportunities for eventual employment and careers. As is the case with many local difficult issues, understanding, admitting, or working to prevent alcohol and drug use can be daunting. Drugs and alcohol are readily accessible, and use starts as early as middle school. Poverty, lack of jobs for those ages 18-25, and the culture of some families are determinants of drug and alcohol use and abuse.

Like parents who need to communicate with teens regarding underage drinking, it is essential for families, schools, institutions, and communities to work diligently to address substance abuse. Often families do not provide the necessary support, so it is necessary for the community to develop a support and awareness system that not only reacts to the problem, but works towards prevention. It is clear that one’s quality of life is often why some young people turn to drugs.

Again, poverty, lack of jobs and alternative social activities, and family culture remain challenges, but communities can provide prevention alternatives. Collaborative programs between Southwestern Community College and IowaWORKS is a great step forward. Their focus on training, jobs, education, and engagement of young people are essential in improving the quality of life for young people and for the region. Given that rural communities often “pull together” to support each other in the town, there is a strong belief that more preparation and prevention can be accomplished to address substance abuse in the Creston region.

CARROLL

In Carroll, Brandi Janssen, Clinical Assistant Professor, Occupational and Environmental Health and Director of Iowa’s Center for Agricultural Safety and Health, gave the luncheon presentation, *Leading Statewide Partnerships to Make Farming Safer*. Eric Neu, attorney at Neu Minnich Comito & Neu, and Business Leadership Network Steering Member from Carroll, played a significant role in the support and planning of the Forum. Maureen Elbert, a Steering Committee member who is the Executive Director of Kossuth/Palo Alto County Economic Development Corporation, also participated in the Carroll Forum.

Creston is a key community in Southwest Iowa and serves as a commercial and social center for the region. Businesses, schools, civic organizations, and health providers have a keen interest in improving the health and well-being of the people who live there. Disease and substance abuse prevention and preparation for the wave of aging Iowans are the watchwords for rural communities such as Creston.

Carroll Forum

How can we make our community and region better, safer, and healthier? Paying attention to these issues and initiatives a responsibility of the entire community. Carroll, Iowa, has a historical reputation for community activism and economic success. Its location on the Iowa map, with its very productive farm ground, is a part of that success. Deliberate planning and supporting local businesses and schools are also a part of the culture and expectations of the region.

Like many communities, there are challenges as well as opportunities. Over the last decade, there has been a growing awareness around health and nutrition. It is not a fad; it is an understanding that they are important for one's higher quality of life. While times have changed, the fact is that the "mom" or woman of the house continues to have the primary responsibility for shopping, food decisions, and cooking. She is not only the decision-maker for her entire family, but also for health during pregnancy. How she makes food choices establishes eating habits as that child grows to adulthood.

Mom needs some help here. Families need to be involved in healthy eating. Husbands, partners, and children should all be a part of the family's food choices and preparation. Working together and with great intention, families can promote more family cooking, shopping for food, and make an effort to have more family meals. Getting school-age children to better understand food and get them (and the community) involved in gardening will help change behavior over the long term.

As in many Iowa communities, people are working longer, living longer, and are more active in their senior years. That is a good news/bad news situation. With the growing challenges in matching jobs with trained applicants, one might think that older workers, even some who have retired from their long-time jobs, might be candidates for some of the available jobs. That is not necessarily the case at this time. People often need to work longer after their retirement age or eligibility as a matter of lack of income, health insurance accessibility, or their personal interest in continuing to work. There are many who seek jobs, but many are unwilling to work full-time or on weekends or what they consider "difficult hours." Specialized training by the community college or a job-sharing initiative by local businesses may be options that would benefit the community. Working from home can be an option, but those opportunities are rare. Many seniors volunteer, but many need paid employment for the income.

Carroll is growing and deemed the commercial center of West Central Iowa. Changing demographics require adaptation by communities and decision-makers. Safe, affordable, and appropriate housing is necessary. Housing stock should be sustained, and housing should be available to seniors who are looking for adapted or alternatives to a single-family home, thus, opening up more housing for younger people. Transportation services throughout the region and increasing opportunities for healthy living are also needed for a growing and successful community and region.

Carroll depends upon farmers and agriculture as its core economic sector. With that comes challenges: the need to farm more acres to make a living, the average age of Iowa farmers (58), large concentrations of livestock production, agricultural workers, and water quality issues. All of these, in some way, require an awareness and understanding of farm safety and health.

Farmers and rural folks are notoriously independent in how they make decisions for their farming operation, their family, and themselves. The Iowa Center for Agricultural Safety and Health (I-CASH) is willing to work with farmers and local partners to assist in supporting awareness and programs to promote health and safety. There are demonstrations of new equipment and practices available. The "inclinometer," for example, is a tool to demonstrate risk of tractor turnovers. In addition, while the regional hospital has worked to promote farm safety and health, it has been difficult to engage some health care providers and others to participate in programs. Unfortunately, there has been reluctance by farmers and agri-workers to take part in farm safety and health programs.

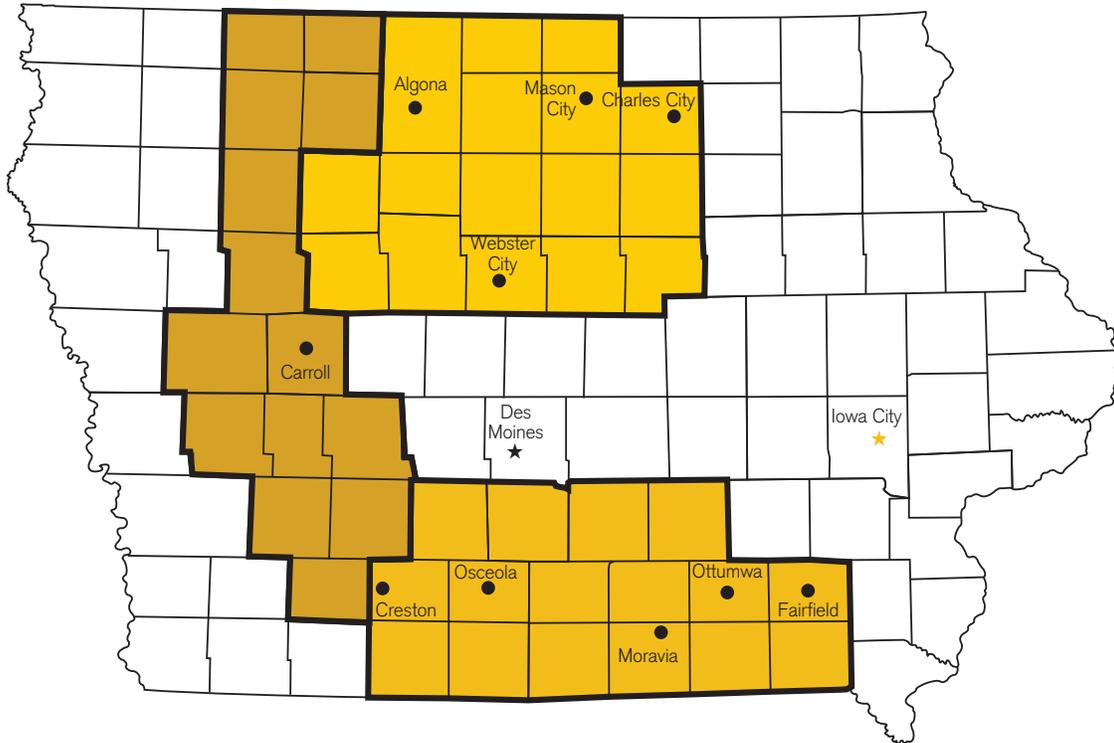
Farming is a high-stress occupation, and the economic and structural complications of farming sometimes result in behavioral health issues. Like in other occupations, farmers might feel reluctant to seek help, even though some of the stigma of earlier times has diminished. Unfortunately, there are very few qualified behavioral health providers available in rural areas. Placements for in-patient treatment requires accessing a bed in a city or 100 miles or more away if none is available nearby.

Large animal operations have different health and safety issues. Regulation and oversight is very limited, with none for operations with less than 10 employees. There are language barriers on occasion and sometimes a failure by some workers to understand the equipment or its safe operation. Trips and falls in livestock operations remain prevalent; the dangers posed by livestock attacks remain.

In general, there are many hazards in day-to-day farm living. Pond drownings and drowning in lagoons happen too often. Electrocutions occur with faulty equipment or wiring, and safety equipment on machinery is sometimes altered for a variety of reasons. Safety equipment and safety precautions have increased over the years, but many farmers and agri-workers will be marked in their life with skin cancer, lung cancer, hearing loss, and other maladies.

Water quality, limiting soil erosion, and good conservation practices are the lifeblood tenets of rural economic growth and in sustaining a healthy and safe quality of life in the state. Community leaders and elected officials, as well as Iowa farmers, understand that and know that partnerships and working together is the only way to achieve a healthy, safe quality of life.

BUSINESS LEADERSHIP NETWORK REGIONS



Cities shown on the map in shaded regions have hosted Community Forums. The Business Leadership Network, formed in 2012, now includes 46 counties. The Business Leadership Network is led by a eSteering Committee composed of business and community leaders from across the 46 counties.

COLLEGE OF PUBLIC HEALTH FACULTY – COMMUNITY FACILITATORS



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BUSINESS LEADERSHIP NETWORK STEERING COMMITTEE



Gerald Edgar – Charles City; Environmental, Health & Safety Manager for Mitas Tires North America



Greg Fenton – Centerville; Former Mayor of Centerville



Maureen Elbert – Algona; Executive Director of Kossuth/Palo Alto County Economic Development Corporation



Claudia Gates – Ottumwa; Manager of the Pickwick Branch at US Bank



Mona Everson – Webster City; Founder and CEO of Life and Health



Michael Halley – Fairfield; City Council Member and Founder of Natural Selections



Don Woodruff – Fort Dodge; President of Woodruff Construction



Kevin Klemesrud – Osceola; President and CEO of American State Bank



A. Eric Neu – Carroll; Attorney at Law for Neu, Minnich, Comito & Neu, P.C.



Rich Paulsen – Creston; Publisher for Creston News Advertiser & Southwest Iowa Advertiser



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Business Leadership Network



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