



Business Leadership Network



Community Forums Summary

Spring 2014

Honey Creek/Moravia • Algona

Message from the Dean

The College of Public Health understands that our work is very place based. Working closely with Iowa's businesses and communities is essential for the College. The Community Forums in Honey Creek/Moravia and Algona, conducted in partnership with the Business Leadership Network, provided opportunities for area leaders to engage with the training, service, and research initiatives offered by the College and to network with other businesses and community organizations. Our faculty and students who participated in the forums gained meaningful knowledge of Iowa communities and their public health interests.

Since the fall of 2012, the Business Leadership Network and College of Public Health have conducted community meetings and forums in nine communities and anticipate connecting with four additional communities in Fall 2014. The Business Leadership Network Steering Committee and I are pleased to announce the addition of 14 counties to our initial Network Regions, which brings the total reach to 46 Iowa counties.

This summary of the Spring 2014 forums in Algona and Honey Creek/Moravia provides a focus on key community and state issues and a glimpse into the engaging discussions and connections between the College and communities.



Sue Curry
Dean
University of Iowa College of Public Health

Business Leadership Network

The Business Leadership Network is comprised of 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 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. www.public-health.uiowa.edu/prospective-students/what-is-ph.html



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 Forums is always the interactive and engaging discussions in small groups. Participants leave energized, with ideas, and having connected with some new people. The Spring 2014 forums focused on four topics of broad community interest.

- » Aging Populations and the Workforce
- » Community and Behavioral Health
- » Cyberbullying in Schools and the Workplace
- » Workplace Health and Safety

Aging Populations and the Workforce

In Iowa's communities, more attention is being paid to the health, well-being, community activities, and the quality of life of older Iowans. As the percentage of older Iowans increases in many rural areas, community leaders are working to develop additional ways to support their time-honored community residents. In Algona and in the Centerville area, the economic development corporations, YMCA, hospitals, faith community, clubs and organizations, as well as Senior Centers work together to provide a range of health and wellness, education, and cultural activities in which seniors take part.

But some seniors want to work or need to work to supplement their income. Finding appropriate work is difficult and there are few opportunities. Salaries are limited, but older Iowans want to remain active as long as possible. It is essential that communities engage and provide employment opportunities for seniors that fit the needs of individuals for livable wage and flexible hours or schedules. There have been efforts to link together the generations in education, cultural arts, and volunteerism. Inter-generational activities provide great value to different-age participants, as well as the entire community.

Community and Behavioral Health

"There are lots of problems out there and we need to start collaborating at all levels in our communities." Community leaders very clearly understand the challenges of healthcare, personal wellness, and one's behavioral health in their cities and towns. Small communities take on the challenge of doing everything they can to support the journey from early childhood care and education to end of life. That requires not only an understanding of health and behavioral health, but that community action is required to implement prevention and wellness programs, workforce training and mentoring for all ages, and a sense of community that welcomes all, no matter one's age or income.

To be effective, the community needs to use education and community behavior to reach out to all facets of the community. Creating accessible and welcoming public places are essential. Encouraging healthy workplace environments is critical of people of all ages and abilities. Addressing mental health and behavioral issues of people living in the community through support and referral is the right thing to do.

The College of Public Health, in concert with the Business Leadership Network held community forums in Honey Creek/Moravia and Algona in May and June 2014. Both forums drew a cross-section of business owners and managers, health care providers, economic and community development leaders, educators, and representatives from a number of local organizations. Sue Curry, Dean of the College of Public Health led a contingent of faculty, post-doctoral staff, and graduate students to participate in the forums.

The keynote topic addressed Cyberbullying as a Public Health Issue. The College of Public Health is partnering with Working Group Theatre and Hancher in Iowa City in research related to visual arts and cyberbullying. Thanks are extended to the presenters of this important information. Corinne Peek-Asa, MPH, PhD, presented the keynote in Honey Creek. Jennifer Fawcett, Associate Artistic Director of Working Group Theatre presented in Algona, with Hancher's Chuck Swanson offering comments as well.

Appreciation is extended to the Business Leadership Network Steering Committee members and local hosts and sponsors. Special thanks go to Scott Curtis, Administrator of Kossuth Regional Health Center, and to Maureen Elbert, Executive Director of Kossuth/Palo Alto County Economic Development Corporation.

There are great challenges. There are many more single parent families, more poverty, increased awareness of mental health conditions, and, in the last ten years, drastic changes in how people communicate with each other in a new technological age. Mental health issues are concerns not only at home, but in the workplace where others can easily be impacted. There are fewer professional mental health care providers in the state, and as often is the case, funding for services continue to diminish. Staying positive and collaborating in a community are big steps in doing what is necessary to keep ahead of the problems and prevent many from re-occurring.

Cyberbullying in Schools and the Workplace

“Cyber-bullying is fast-growing and kids don’t understand it.” The use of cell phones is becoming commonplace in ages 10 years old and up. In the least, how a person uses their cellphone and what they might “say or write” will be with them in some way into their early years of adulthood.

While it may be an essential communication or safety device for users, for teens and pre-teens text-messaging, photo-posting, and Facebook can change lives and careers. This far-reaching technology has also changed the face of bullying; now there is no place to hide and bullying is sustained and exponentially more intense.

Educators at all levels are becoming more concerned. They see on most days that kids don’t really understand that “friend” on Facebook is not always a friend, that humor isn’t accurately conveyed in many electronic communications, that photos can be misinterpreted and misused in many ways, and “sharing” can mean sharing with the entire community or even the world. Schools and community groups are taking additional steps to make parents more aware of the effects of cyberbullying, whether intentional or “in fun.”

The greatest focus of discussions was on cyberbullying among young people. Some participants expressed interest in learning more about all forms of bullying, particularly involving adults and in the workplace.

Workplace Health and Safety

Workplace safety is not synonymous with OSHA. Safe and healthy work sites are a matter of good community economics and quality of life, not of occasional compliance checks. While most small businesses have not carved out a special program or staff, most managers recognize that prevention and motivation are two primary challenges in the workplace. To integrate a prevention and motivational culture, it is most common in smaller businesses to use incentives that reinforce positive safe and healthy behavior.

In all sizes of businesses, there is a growing awareness of the value of health and safety practices. But while machinery, lighting, and other safeguards may all be improved, a worker who is not physically or mentally healthy has potential for great disaster. Health insurance incentives are a first step, but often that is not enough. Businesses and managers must be aware of the health of their workers (as well as their own health) and determine the best way individuals can improve their own health.

Sometimes, especially in smaller companies, workplace safety and health takes a back seat if there is little knowledge or staff to set up and maintain a program. Connecting to other organizations, businesses, or community activities is one alternative while promoting health and safety. The foundation for workforce health and safety improvement is strong and likely more successful when the business leader makes a serious and personal commitment to a wellness and health program, and continues to stay connected to the people in the workplace.

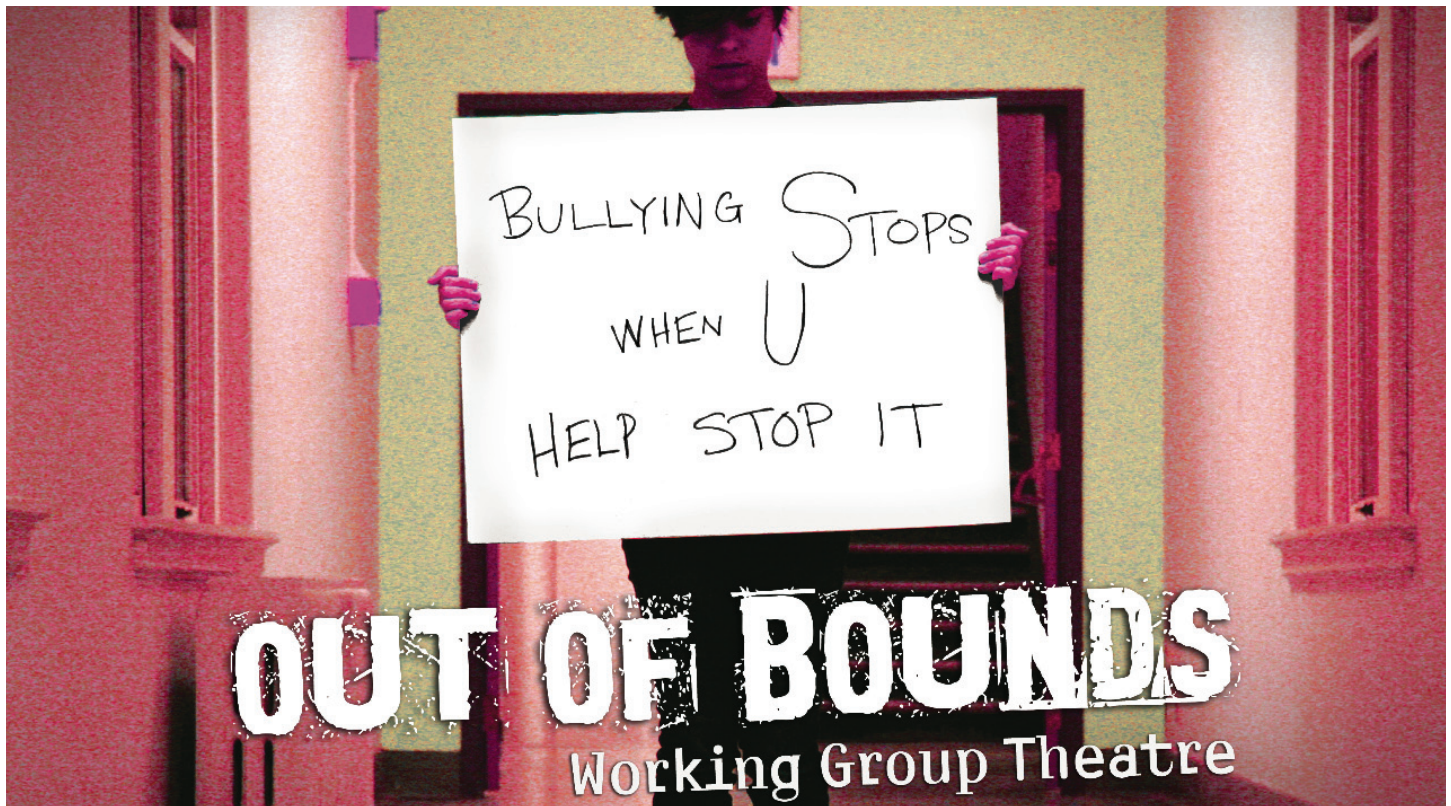
How the College of Public Health Fits In

The College of Public Health is a resource to Iowa’s communities – that is part of the College’s mission. The College of Public Health can provide information on best practices, model programs, and research to help on certain issues. Students and faculty can be made available to help in developing prevention, wellness and health and safety programs. The College, which receives half of its funding through research grants, may be seeking a research site and partner with a community for mutual benefit. Most important, through the Business Leadership Network, the College and the communities can remain connected to learn from each other, to help each other, and make Iowa’s communities an even better place to live.

Topics for the community discussions are determined through conversations with the Business Leadership Network Steering Committee and through Network surveys. Faculty and graduate students volunteer their time to come to the community to help facilitate the discussions and to connect with the community on research and projects.

Cyber-Bullying – Strictly Out of Bounds

The impacts and prevalence of cyber-bullying in schools and the workplace is becoming a serious issue. The College of Public Health has recognized that this is an important topic and is a public health issue of concern for communities. Over the last two years the College, in cooperation with the Working Group Theatre, has conducted a research project to examine the effect on teen behavior of live performing participative art focused on cyberbullying. — Sue Curry, Dean



While bullying is being addressed in school and community programs across the state, the University of Iowa's College of Public Health is partnering with the Working Group Theatre and Hancher to present, research, and evaluate the impacts of cyberbullying prevention messages presented in ways that are interesting and most effective for middle school age youth.

Working Group Theatre has developed and performed the play, *Out of Bounds*, focused on a middle school audience. Jennifer Fawcett, Associate Artistic Director, wrote and directed the play to explore the many effects of school-aged bullying and, through the play's performance, works to combat bullying behavior in a non-traditional manner that students will respond to. Evaluations have shown that presenting anti-bullying messages to children in a traditional, academic way is not very effective.

Developmental research shows that appealing to a middle school-age child's emotional system will elicit a stronger response and, potentially, lead to a change in behavior. The play, *Out of Bounds*, is written and performed to access this emotional part of the brain, thereby eliciting a positive response from students, which makes it a far more effective tool than traditional anti-bullying messages delivered in classroom

lectures. Teacher materials and discussion guides are also a part of the comprehensive materials used in performance.

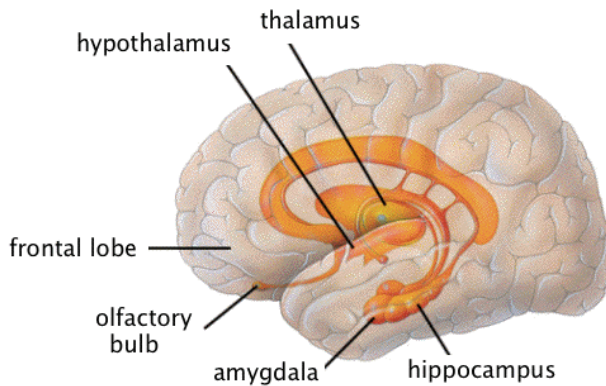
The Working Group Theatre and the College of Public Health's Injury Prevention Research Center are developing arts-based bullying prevention materials for schools that can be used even without the actual play performance. The arts-based approach to cyberbullying prevention considers the stages of the brain development typically found at the middle school ages, with a focus on the brain's limbic system that supports a variety of functions, including emotion, behavior, and motivation.

As one student commented after a recent performance of *Out of Bounds*, "All of that stuff happens in real life, everything they talked about in the play is believable and better than the videos we watch on bullying in homeroom. I really liked how it was funny and seemed real."

Cyberbullying is a timely and increasingly important topic for discussion in our communities. It is the fastest growing form of bullying and is becoming only more prevalent in our schools as more and more students become active on various social media applications and websites.

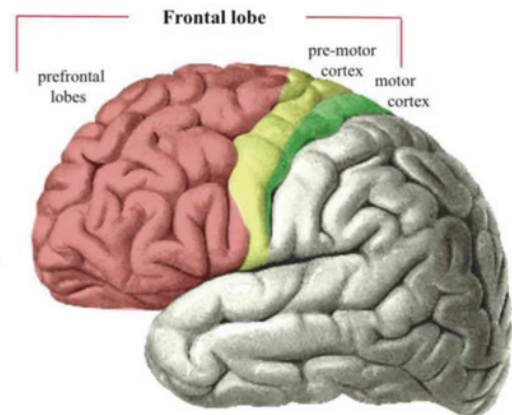
Why an Arts-Based Approach?

The Limbic System



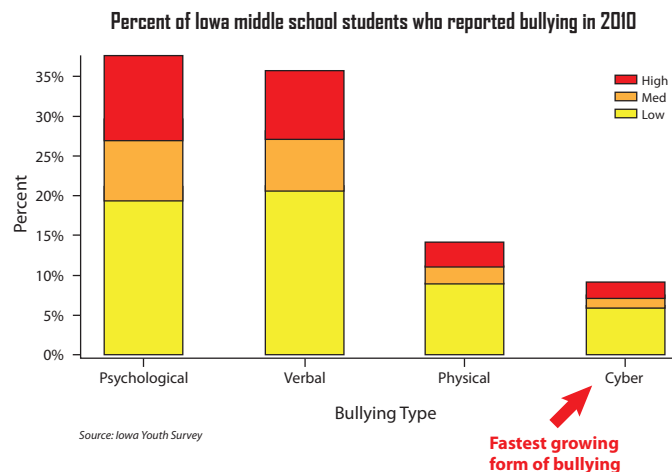
The limbic system supports a variety of functions, including emotion, behavior, motivation, among other things.

The Frontal Lobe



The frontal cortex is the “executive” system and is the home of complex decisions, learning, integration, among other things.

In studies of brain development, it is not until people reach their early 20s that the reason and logic portions of the brain mature. Middle school-age student behavior is more controlled by the portion of the brain where the more emotive activity occurs. This contributes to the behavior of those in their early teen years. Thus, making anti-cyberbullying messages resonate with the emotive side of middle school youth though visual arts may be more successful in achieving prevention goals.



Corinne Peek-Asa, Professor and Director of the Injury Prevention Center, in partnership with the Working Group Theater, has led research and creation of arts-based bullying prevention materials for schools.

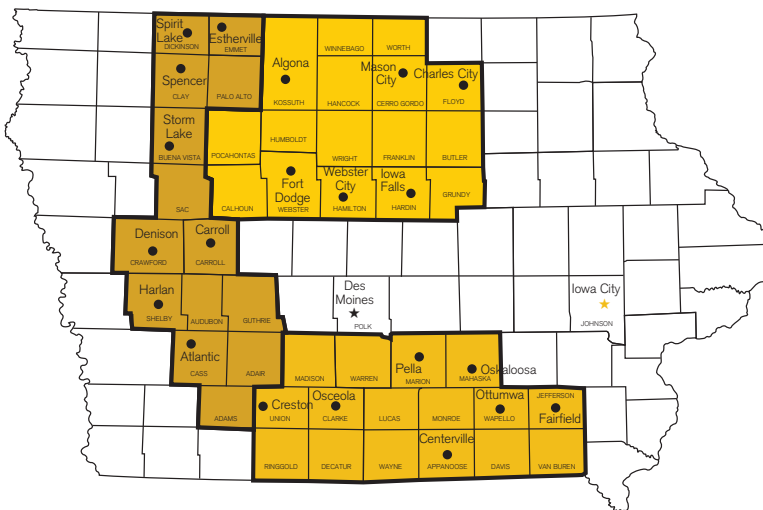


Jennifer Fawcett is the Associate Artistic Director a founding member of Working Group Theatre and the playwright of *Out of Bounds*, a play focusing on cyberbullying by teens. Her work has been performed in theatres across the United States and her home country, Canada. Ms. Fawcett is a graduate of the Iowa Playwrights’ Workshop.



Chuck Swanson is the Executive Director of Hancher. Over the years, Mr. Swanson has worked to expand the scope and reach of Hancher across the state, understand the importance of audience development, provide extraordinary performances, and highlight Hancher’s emphasis on being a statewide resource.

Business Leadership Network Regions



The Business Leadership Network, formed in 2012, is expanding to an additional 14 counties in west central and northern Iowa. The Business Leadership Network is led by a Steering Committee comprised of business and community leaders from across the 46 counties.

College of Public Health Faculty – Community Facilitators



Sue Curry



Barbara Baquero



Shelly Campo



Ryan Carnahan



Matt Nonnenmann



Corinne Peek-Asa



Leah Wentworth



Robert Wallace



Mitch Overton

Sue Curry – Dean, UI College of Public Health

Barbara Baquero – Assistant Professor, Community and Behavioral Health

Shelly Campo – Associate Professor, Community and Behavioral Health

Ryan Carnahan – Clinical Associate Professor, Epidemiology

Matt Nonnenmann – Assistant Professor, Occupational and Environmental Health

Corinne Peek-Asa – Professor, Occupational and Environmental Health

Leah Wentworth – PhD Student, Occupational and Environmental Health

Robert Wallace – Professor, Epidemiology

Mitch Overton – Business Leadership Network Coordinator and Alumni Relations Coordinator

Cyberbullying Presenters

The College of Public Health works closely with the arts and performance arts community in activities and research initiatives. The Working Group Theatre, Hancher, and the College of Public Health are working together on research related to visual arts and cyberbullying.



Jennifer Fawcett is the Associate Artistic Director a founding member of

Iowa's Working Group Theatre and the playwright of "Out of Bound," a play focusing on cyber-bullying by teens. Her work has been performed in theatres across the United States and her home country, Canada. Ms. Fawcett is a graduate of the Iowa Playwrights' Workshop.



Chuck Swanson is the Executive Director of Hancher Auditorium. Over

the years, Mr. Swanson has worked to expand the scope and reach of Hancher across the state, understanding the importance of audience development, in providing extraordinary performances, as well as highlighting Hancher's emphasis on being a statewide resource.



Corinne Peek-Asa is Associate Dean for Research in the College of Public

Health, Professor of Occupational and Environmental Health, and Director of the University of Iowa Injury Prevention Research Center. She is an injury epidemiologist with expertise in many injury content areas and methodological approaches. Workplace violence, road traffic injury, and workplace interventions are among her areas of expertise.

North Central Region Business Leadership Network Members



Gerald
Edgar



Maureen
Elbert



Mona
Everson



Don
Woodruff

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

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

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

Don Woodruff – Fort Dodge; President of Woodruff Construction

South Central Region Business Leadership Network Members



Jill
Baze



Greg
Fenton



Claudia
Gates



Michael
Halley



Kevin
Klemesrud



Rich
Paulsen

Jill Baze – Centerville; Human Resources Manager for Van Gorp in Pella

Greg Fenton – Centerville; Plant Manager at Lee Container

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

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

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

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



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