

Business Leadership Network

BUILDING A HEALTHY AND PRODUCTIVE WORKFORCE

Community Forum Summary

May 17, 2018
SIOUX CITY



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.

MESSAGE FROM THE UI COLLEGE OF PUBLIC HEALTH

In spring 2018, the UI College of Public Health through its Business Leadership Network, continued to reach out to communities regarding local business and community public health issues. The community forum in Sioux City provided opportunities for area business, community, and public health leaders to discuss shared workplace issues, develop practical solutions, and determine potential areas to collaborate with the UI College of Public Health.

Additionally, the College is collaborating with Iowa communities through the Business Leadership Network Community Grant Project. Grants are awarded on a competitive basis to community nonprofit organizations or local government agencies to foster collaboration to begin or strengthen partnerships among businesses and industry to address an identified public health issue and link with the UI College of Public Health. Six grants have been awarded for 2018 with projects in Atlantic, Fayette, Fort Madison, Davenport, Muscatine, and Waterloo. The call for proposals for the 2019 grant cycle will go out this fall.

The summit in Sioux City was the 20th community gathering, and the first in Sioux City, held by the College through the Business Leadership Network since 2013. The summit could not have come together to focus upon the issues important to the Siouxland region without the active participation, guidance, and work to help frame and organize the event into a true community effort. A special thanks to Steve Warnstadt at the Northwest Iowa Regents Resource Center for working with the University of Iowa College of Public Health to organize the day and co-sponsors, Western Iowa Tech Community College, Jackson Recovery Centers, Siouxland Community Health Center, St. Luke's College/Unity Point Health, and the Siouxland District Health Department. Thank you also to Western Iowa Tech Community College for hosting the event at their campus. This summary provides a focus on key regional issues and a glimpse into the days' discussions.



Edith Parker

Dean

University of Iowa College of Public Health

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 wellbeing 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. The dramatic achievements of public health in the 20th and 21st centuries have improved our quality of life: an increase in life expectancy, safer workplaces, worldwide reduction in infant and child mortality, and the elimination or reduction of many communicable diseases.

WWW.PUBLIC-HEALTH.UIOWA.EDU/BLN

The Mission of the UI 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.

OBJECTIVES OF “BUILDING A HEALTHY AND PRODUCTIVE WORKFORCE: A COMMUNITY FORUM”

The purpose of the community forum was to bring together public health, local businesses, and community organizations to engage, identify and access tools and community resource options to effectively address workforce needs, particularly as they relate to community public health issues. Jointly sponsored by the UI College of Public Health Business Leadership Network, Northwest Iowa Regents Resource Center, Western Iowa Tech Community College, Jackson Recovery Centers, Siouxland District Health Department, Siouxland Community Health, and St. Luke's College/UnityPoint Health, community stakeholders worked with UI staff to identify significant public health issues in the Siouxland region and how these issues may impact worker health and productivity. Three panels were convened to address topics relevant to employers and public health professionals in the region. Panel topics included: *Worker Wellness and Safety*, *Soft Skills Development/Worker Readiness*, and *Behavioral Health*.

SHARED ISSUES/SHARED SOLUTIONS

Worker Wellness and Safety Panel Discussion

There is a plethora of data indicating that healthy workers are more productive and that worker wellness programs can reduce worker health risks, absenteeism, and health care costs. The goal of this panel was to discuss wellness and safety initiatives that could be implemented in their workplace. The Worker Wellness panelists highlighted several strategies that are low cost and require small amounts of employee time that can be implemented to improve worker health and productivity.

Panelist Michael Salvatore, the Sioux City Parks and Recreation Director, indicated that the mission of their agency is to promote health and wellness in the Siouxland community. A major priority for the Sioux City Council is the development and expansion of the trail system. To date, 26 miles of trails have been developed in the area, but some of the trails do not connect. Connecting trails is a top priority, in addition to completing the 14 mile Riverfront trail by 2019. In addition to the trail system, Cone Park was opened last year and was voted the number one tourist attraction in Iowa, with over 20,000 visitors. This all-season park offers a tubing hill, ice skating rink, fire pit, day lodge for rentals, public splash pad and 2-mile bike trail. An attendee asked Salvatore about the possibility of extending a bike trail over the Missouri River. He indicated that they have a cost estimate of \$1.2 million for the extension and they are gauging the interest of Dakota Dunes, SD. There are state and federal funds available for building trails.

Panelist Michelle Lewis, the health promotions and planning coordinator at Siouxland District Health Department, highlighted a few of the wellness initiatives that they have implemented at her office. An ergonomic checklist was developed to ensure that each worker environment is comfortable and safe. At designated times of the day, music is played throughout the office to encourage movement and stretching. In addition to an on-site gym, other wellness spaces are provided including lactation and break rooms. Each fall, they offer employee health screenings where they check blood





pressure, BMI, height, weight, and stress, and each employee receives a grade relating to their healthiness. Employees receive incentives to improve their health grade. As health improves, insurance rates go down. To assist with employee health improvement grades, an Employee Wellness Committee plans events to encourage employee participation, including circuit training, massages, stairs challenges and more. She also reported that her organization offers vending machine assessments to the community in order to score foods by their health levels.

Panelist Kira Oregon of Innovative Business Consultants focused on how workplace wellness initiatives can help to reduce the health risks of tobacco use and obesity. Oregon reported that smokers who are injured on the job cost an estimated \$6,300 more to recover, or a 36 percent greater cost to their employer than nonsmokers. She described several tobacco cessation support services available to employers who want to encourage employees to quit smoking, including, communicating resources available in their health plans; promoting Quitlines; participating in the Great American Smokeout; providing tobacco cessation classes or coaches; and, making the workplace tobacco free. The obesity rate in Woodbury County hovers at 35 percent, higher than the statewide average of 32 percent. Oregon reported the direct correlation between obesity and increased worker injuries. She outlined several weight management support initiatives to assist their employees, including healthy hydration; healthy vending and cafeteria options; providing standing work stations; health monitoring equipment; mapped walking routes inside and outside of the office; onsite fitness equipment; onsite gardens; and biometric screenings. Progress on health managements systems should be measurable so that employers can evaluate what is working and make adjustments when progress is not made.

Panelist Diane Rohlman from the UI College of Public Health, outlined some workplace behaviors that may not be commonly viewed as risky, such as working through lunch or checking your cell phone first thing in the morning, but may have a long term negative impact on worker health. She indicated that all workplaces need to reexamine their work environments and redesign those that are lacking to lessen the stress of workers and prevent employee burnout. She highlighted a video series developed by the UI Healthier Workforce Center of the Midwest that outlines workplace wellness solutions and is available to anyone free of charge: www.public-health.uiowa.edu/hwcmw/for-the-workplace/videos.

Soft Skills Development/Worker Readiness Panelist Discussion

Empirical data indicates that some employers struggle to retain workers who may have the technical skills necessary for the job, but lack certain soft skills to be successful. Soft skills are the personal attributes that enable someone to interact effectively and harmoniously with other people and may include: consistently getting to work on time and ready to work; being able to work with people at any level in the company; dressing appropriately for a specific job; and, being reliable at completing tasks. The goal of this panel was to review the necessary skills that employees need to be successful in the workplace, as well as impediments to worker readiness.

Carmen Wilson with the Division of Corporate College at Western Iowa Tech Community College has provided soft skills training to employers and employees for over 20 years. She has assessed the soft skills needs of all types of businesses from the shop floor to the board room. She indicated that soft skills are important for both managers and employees and that 75 percent of long-term job success depends on these skills. Wilson explained that soft skills help people have productive crucial conversations, which can be high stakes, emotionally-charged, and involve multiple varying opinions. Western Iowa Tech provides a 14-week course for CEOs and upcoming leaders in the community offered twice a year, or they also offer



customized classes for businesses as well. Included are classes on soft skills, crucial conversations training, cultural training and business writing etiquette.

Christine Salem of Aventure Temporary Services Agency has spent 35 years in the staffing industry and has worked with employers seeking employees and employees seeking employment. Part of her job is to keep abreast of the changing trends in the industry. To hire and keep good employees, employers need to provide competitive pay, a benefits package, a wellness program and a safe workplace that complies with industry standard regulations. As the unemployment rate continues to remain at a record low, additional employee incentives may need to be added. On the other side, Salem counsels potential employees on hygiene, wage negotiation skills, cell phone etiquette, professional posture, dressing professionally and etiquette at business dinners. Her counsel for job seekers is free of charge. As these skills are no longer taught in high school or college curriculums, she often teaches these skills in the classrooms to fill the gap and increase the job seeker's chance of employment.

Panelist Dave Faldmo has spent 26 years at the Siouxland Community Health Center. It is a federally-qualified health center and provides multiple services for thousands of low-income patients in the community, including, urgent care, prenatal, dental, pharmacy, lab work, radiology, HIV care, behavioral health, medication-assisted treatment, and interpretation. Last year, eighteen providers saw 26,000 unique patients at 100,000 patient visits. Additionally, the center is also involved in a national effort to collect data on the social determinants of health. As part of this work, they ask patients about housing concerns, food scarcity, utility bills, child care, stress, transportation needs, safety concerns, and experiences with domestic violence. So far, they have screened 11,000 patients or 36.4 percent of their population. Through analyzing the data, they hope to see how all of these determinants can affect a patient's health, including the development of diabetes and hypertension. These determinants can also affect a person's ability to be a productive worker. Questions centered on whether there was a way to geographically map the locations of the determinants to derive where they are more prevalent so that additional infrastructure can be dedicated to these areas. Parker and Rohlman indicated that the University of Iowa may have geo-mapping resources available for this purpose.

Behavioral Health Panel Discussion

Panelist Dr. Dave Paulsrud from Jackson Recovery Center focused on the impact that addiction can have on overall health. He referenced a Lancet study, published in April, which reviewed 900,000 alcohol users and discovered that the risk threshold for heart failure, diabetes, and liver disease is three drinks a week. He explained that addiction is a disease of the brain's reward and memory system, and it is a disease of the will or lack of will. At Jackson Recovery Center, 70 percent of patients are low-income and on Medicaid. Since Medicaid managed care has been implemented, it has been exceedingly difficult to treat addiction and recover costs. "Managed care is administrative waterboarding and demoralizing. The politicization of public health is driving us nuts," stated Paulsrud. Their programs accepts walk-ins two days a week and no one is denied treatment. All of their 130 available beds for adults are full and their largest unit is for adolescents and psychological stabilization. Paulsrud indicated that employers can combat employee addiction by offering Employee Assistance Programs and implementing drug screening tests. Because unemployment is currently so low, many employers are no longer testing for drugs. Unity Point Occupational Health performs employee drug screens on a regular basis and has found that 22 out of 30 are positive.



Kristine Bornholtz is a Resource Coordinator at Women Aware, a non-profit organization dedicated to transforming the emotional and economic future of women and men in transition through advocacy, education, information, and referral. Women Aware helps by removing the barriers that stand between individuals and their goals, both short term and long term. She discussed the impact that mental illness can have on a person's work productivity. Nationally, 15.1 million people experienced at least one depressive episode in 2014. Yet, only one in four employees suffering from anxiety tell their employers because of the stigma around mental illness. Stigma surrounding mental illness is especially potent for those from different cultural backgrounds. Depression in the US costs employers more than any other health condition, an estimated \$17-\$44 billion in lost work days. On average, depressed employees lose 27 work days per year and 80 percent of those treated reported improvements. Bornholtz suggested that employees, managers, and administration be trained on how to recognize the signs of mental illness in their employees. Women Aware provides training to employers on identifying and breaking the stigma of mental illness and creating a culture of acceptance so that employees can become happier, confident and more productive.

GROUP DISCUSSION

A group discussion followed the panel discussions. The group examined a key social determinant of health affecting low income workers – transportation. More bus routes, especially during second and third shift, were suggested. However, the city cannot add more routes without some guarantee of more utilization. The cost for a monthly bus pass is \$48, which is still prohibitive for some low-income workers. A focus on bicycling and more pedestrian-oriented solutions was suggested as it would be more practical and healthy for workers. Companies who provide transportation for their employees to and from work saw greater worker attendance.

It was suggested that the community work to build strong neighborhoods to provide socialization and neighborhood attachments to the community. Familiarity between neighbors and affinity for a particular neighborhood is a positive public health determinant. It will help to alleviate the problems associated with a transient population as it is harder to move away from a familiar area.

Additional funding would help to solve a lot of the problems discussed at the forum. There is tremendous corporate philanthropy locally. However, the community needs to broaden its fundraising base so that there are more companies assisting with local needs, and broaden the sectors that are involved in order to help the community realize that public health is everyone's issue.

The assistance structure is in place, but the community must reach out to different subsections of Siouxland by addressing cultural sensitivity and awareness, understanding disparity and providing inclusionary services, especially for immigrants and refugees who are new to the area.

The group discussed the UI College of Public Health's goals for the forum. Parker indicated that intended outcome from the university perspective was to learn about the issues, share ideas with one another, and to be a resource for the entire state. She acknowledged that Western Iowa is underserved compared to the rest of the state and wanted to collaborate, where possible. Rohlman indicated that the University of Iowa is renowned for its research and can be tapped for that purpose. It can also serve as a facilitation agent and partner to link services with research. They also encouraged the group to apply for Business Leadership Network community grants available in the fall: www.public-health.uiowa.edu/bln-community-grant-project.

COMMUNITY FACILITATORS



Kristine Bornholtz



Dave Faldmo



Linda Kalin



Michelle Lewis



Terry Murrell



Kira Oregon



Dave Paulsrud



Christine Salem



Matthew Salvatore



Carmen Wilson

Kristine Bornholtz – Resource Coordinator, Women Aware

Dave Faldmo – Quality Director/Medical Director, Siouxland Community Health Center

Linda Kalin – Executive Director, Iowa Poison Control Center

Michelle Lewis – Health Promotion Coordinator, Siouxland District Health Department

Terry Murrell – President, Western Iowa Tech Community College

Kira Oregon – Director of Health Initiatives, Innovative Business Consultants

Dave Paulsrud – Medical Director, Jackson Recovery Centers

Christine Salem – Regional Manager, Aventure Temporary Services Agency

Matthew Salvatore – Director, Sioux City Parks & Recreation

Carmen Wilson – Project Manager, Division of Corporate College, Western Iowa Tech Community College

COLLEGE OF PUBLIC HEALTH FACULTY AND STAFF



Edith Parker



Diane Rohlman



Tara McKee

Edith Parker – Dean, UI College of Public Health

Diane Rohlman – Associate Professor, Department of Occupational and Environmental Health

Tara McKee – Business Leadership Network Coordinator

BUSINESS LEADERSHIP NETWORK STEERING COMMITTEE



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



Maureen Elbert – Algona;
Executive Director of
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A. Eric Neu – Carroll;
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Tony Cannon – Oelwein; Firm
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Mona Everson – Webster
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Rich Paulsen – Creston;
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Tom Douglass – Mason City;
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Greg Fenton – Centerville;
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Diane Rohlman – Iowa
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Gerald Edgar – Garner;
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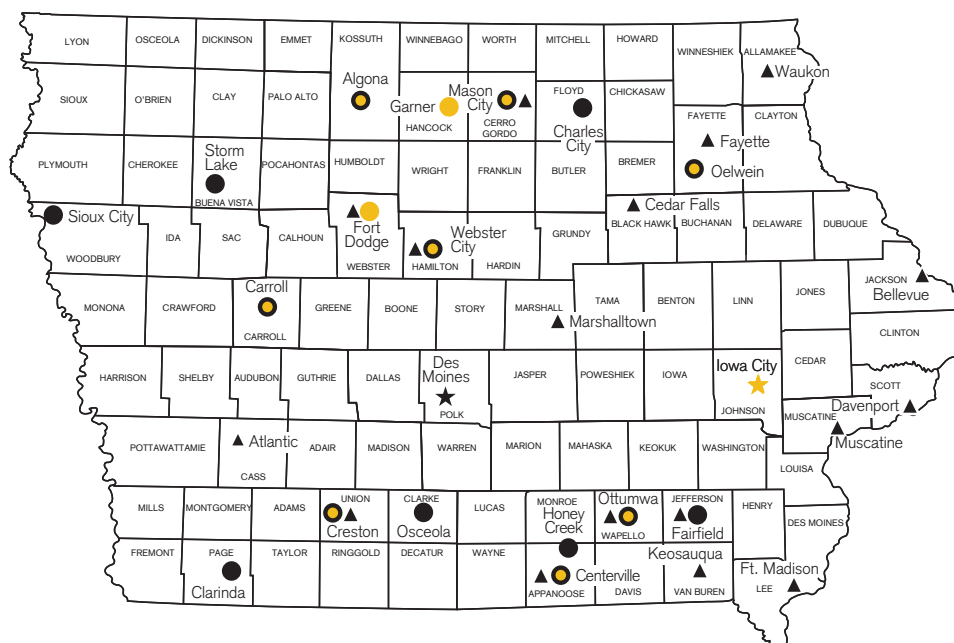


Claudia Gates – Ottumwa;
Manager of the Pickwick
Branch at US Bank



Don Woodruff – Fort Dodge;
President of Woodruff
Construction

BUSINESS LEADERSHIP NETWORK AREAS OF FOCUS



● Steering Committee Member ● Forum Location/Conversation Café ● Steering Committee Member and Forum Location ▲ Community Grant Locations



Business Leadership Network



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