

JCED BULLETIN

Jones County Economic Development Newsletter

July/August/September 2023

Jones County Economic Development Business Lab Open for Business!

Jones County Economic Development (JCED) 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. With this type of mission, it's crucial that JCED offers a wide-range of tools for all of our businesses, including new businesses looking to open in our communities. This is where the idea for the Jones County Business Lab was born!

The first iteration of this idea was in the partnership and development of the Monticello Innovation Lab, a place where businesses could go to meet clients, rent some space to get out of the house if needed, and interact with other great entrepreneurs. It also allowed for some direct business coaching and a chance for entrepreneurs to do a small scale test of their businesses after launching. The Innovation Lab had quality internet access, videoconferencing capabilities, private space, and more that would be ideal for early stage entrepreneurs that were not ready to make the commitment yet to a larger space for the business.



Monticello Innovation Lab Open Space Area

“However, we realized that there was a component missing from this paradigm,” states Derek Lumsden, Executive Director of JCED. “Where were the opportunities for existing businesses to get some coaching opportunities? How could those businesses still in the beginning phases access resources to help them decide what they should do next and how they should move forward? While there are some answers with the Small Business Development Center, our office, etc., this did not address all of the needs of local businesses, including the ability to have consistent online coaching and mentoring.”

The second iteration of the idea for the Jones County Business Lab was a partnership between Jones County Economic Development and the Rural Ideas Network, a national non-profit organization that partners with rural communities and economic development organizations to provide a robust set of services to entrepreneurs. With a grant from the Economic Development Administration, the Rural Ideas Network was able to build out a website for Jones County that allows access to all services. The Business Lab provides a variety of high-quality business support services that entrepreneurs (including both new and established businesses) can access at no cost!

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Cascade Communications to Bring Fiber Internet to Monticello

Cascade Communications Company is expanding into Monticello, bringing the fastest and most reliable internet and voice (VoIP) services on their state-of-the-art Fiber Optic Network. This expansion comes in response to the overwhelming support received from local businesses and residents.

Phase 1 construction is already underway and will cover a significant portion of the downtown area. Cascade Communications is committed to revolutionizing the internet experience in Monticello, and their Fiber Optic Network will play a key role in achieving that. With their services, customers can enjoy unlimited use, no data limits, and no contracts, providing customers with the freedom and flexibility they deserve. Whether browsing, streaming, or communicating, expect a seamless and uninterrupted online experience.

Cascade Communications invites all individuals and businesses in Monticello to seize this opportunity and join a growing request list. Experience the benefits of local customer service and enjoy superior fiber optic internet and voice service. To ensure that everyone has the opportunity to connect to the fiber optic network, everyone is being encouraged to contact the local office or fill out the survey on their website. By doing so, you will be added to their growing request list, giving your area potential priority in connecting to the high-speed internet and VoIP services.

"As we prepare for the network expansion, our team will be actively engaging with residents and businesses in the Phase 1 area. Throughout the summer, we will reach out to complete preapproval and design work, ensuring a smooth and hassle-free transition to our new fiber optic network," states Chris Summerall, General Manager of Cascade Communications Company.

"We are incredibly excited to bring our fast and reliable internet and voice services to Monticello," continues Chris. "Our state-of-the-art Fiber Optic Network will enable residents and businesses to stay connected, work efficiently, and enjoy seamless online experiences. We are committed to providing exceptional local service and serving the Monticello community."

Since its establishment in 1954, Cascade Communications has remained steadfast in its commitment to delivering local, high-quality service and products that meet the expectations of our valued customers. Since 2009, we have been at the forefront of deploying fiber broadband, continuously expanding our reach and ensuring that rural areas of Iowa benefit from local, consistent, and reliable communications services.



To find out more, contact Cascade Communications at 563-852-3710 or via their website at: <https://cascadecomm.com/>

Workplace Learning Connection Offers Opportunities to Area Students

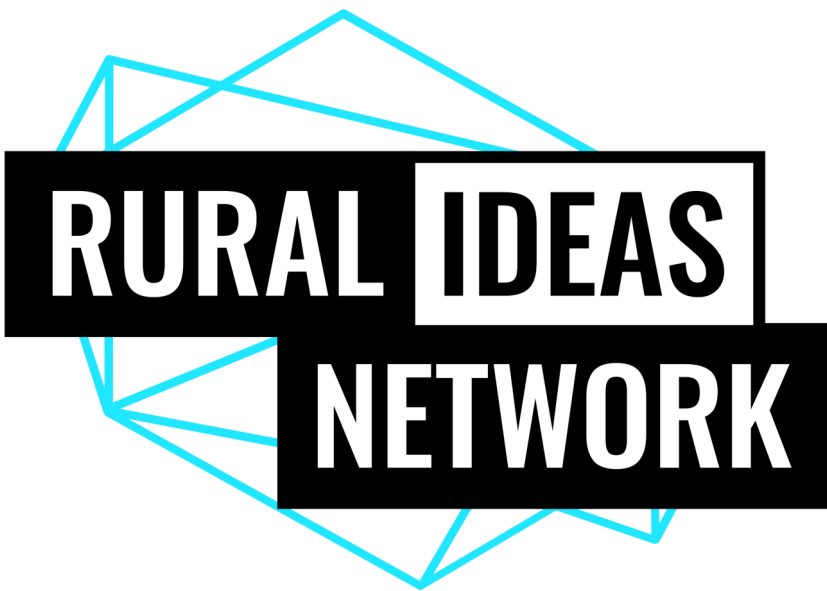
Job shadow opportunities are available for high school sophomores, juniors and seniors through Kirkwood Community College's Workplace Learning Connection starting August 14th! Both in-person and virtual opportunities are available and participation is free.

Shadows are typically 2-4 hours in length and students get the opportunity to explore a career field and connect classroom learning to real world work. The [job shadow application portal](#) will be open August 14, 2023 through September 22, 2023 at 3pm.

"I am so glad that I signed up for this job shadow because I have been interested in becoming an athletic trainer and this made my decision much clearer. During this job shadow I learned a lot of things, like how athletic trainers help rehab injured athletes and that there is more paperwork involved than I thought! I liked how we were up and moving and not sitting the whole time. Also, I really enjoyed the people who spoke to us about what they do on a day-to-day basis." – Abigail Sharlow, Monticello High School student.

Encourage the students in your life to apply today and explore their future career!





“At the Rural Ideas Network, we’re seeing a growing number of rural communities across the country refocus their economic development efforts on supporting the entrepreneurs who are already within their communities,” notes Jordan DeGree, executive leader of the Rural Ideas Network. “This ‘grow you own’ approach to economic development makes a lot of sense when you consider that more than 50% of jobs in this country are generated by small businesses. We’re thrilled to help communities like those in Jones County support local business owners.”

Where these business labs have launched in other areas, the businesses are effusive in praise:

“This was really helpful! It’s great to have tools to structure our thinking and someone to talk to.”

“Our coach helped us achieve a 200% annual revenue increase, in the middle of the pandemic...”

“I really valued the coaching and it was great to get ideas from someone outside of my bubble.”

The Business Lab is designed to provide tools and solutions that quickly and effectively help businesses achieve their goals. All Business Lab services are delivered remotely via videoconferencing, making it easy to use these resources to grow a business. It also allows local businesses to access the Business Lab 24/7 and take advantage of these services from anywhere. Services include:

- **1:1 Startup Coaching**

This service is for entrepreneurs with a business idea and are ready to take the next steps to get it started with experienced entrepreneurs serving as startup coaches.

- **Business Management Coaching**

This service helps new and established ventures overcome common growth obstacles, develop effective strategies, identify new income opportunities, and stay focused on success.

- **Succession Plan Coaching**

This service helps guide an entrepreneur who is ready to transition a business or just to plan ahead. Businesses answer key questions and gather information that potential buyers will need to understand the value of the business.

- **Website Evaluations**

This service offers a fresh set of eyes to review an entrepreneur’s website to provide constructive feedback and offer tools to help them accomplish any necessary changes.

- **Website Design Bootcamps**

This service offers great resources for entrepreneurs who need a website but don’t want to pay thousands of dollars for someone to develop it. These camps teach entrepreneurs how to use WIX to build and manage a website that truly represents their brand.

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- **Peer Learning Roundtables**

This service allows entrepreneurs to connect with rural business owners from across the country to talk shop with these online video discussions. Each roundtable is facilitated and focuses on important topics to business owners.

- **Peer Learning Forum**

This virtual platform allows entrepreneurs to exchange ideas and get advice from other entrepreneurs from across the country. The forum helps new and experienced business owners connect with each other, share valuable advice and perspectives, learn from each other, and move their business forward.

- **Curated Workshop Library**

This service showcases vetted business development workshops and training opportunities, making sure that only the “best of the best” are offered to clients.

- **Curated Podcast Library**

Much like the Workshop Library, this service showcases vetted podcasts, making sure only to deliver a handful of episodes each month that are the most relevant, most valuable, and most interesting to businesses and communities in rural areas.

“These services are huge for businesses looking for some extra help on topics important to them and on their time,” said Derek Lumsden. “Jones County Economic Development is proud to be able to offer these services free of charge to our entrepreneurial community and encourage everyone to make use of these resources to grow and improve their business.”

To find out more information, you can contact Derek at director@jonescountydevelopment.com or go directly to the Jones County Business Lab: <https://www.ruralideas.net/labs/jones-county>

JONES COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPEN HOUSE!

Join JCED for an open house on Friday, August 4th from 7am-9am at Boondocks at 200 W. Main Street in Anamosa.



Come learn more about the potential opportunities JCED can offer your business and why investing make sense!

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: director@jonescountydevelopment.com

P.E.O Educational Loan Fund Opportunity!

Established in 1973, the PEO Program for Continuing Education is a need-based grant program providing one-time financial assistance to women whose education has been interrupted and who find it necessary to return to school to complete a degree or certification that will improve their marketable skills for employment to support themselves and/or their families. The PEO Educational Loan Fund allows women a chance to get a low interest rate on their educational funding needs.

The Educational Loan Fund has a maximum loan amount of \$12,000 for non-degree accredited programs, an associate or bachelor degree; \$15,000 for a Master's, and \$20,000 for a doctoral degree. The current interest rate is 2% and there are no loan origination fees. Online programs and internships/study abroad programs in the US or Canada may be eligible.

Women must have a high school diploma or equivalent; have two qualified co-signers for the loan; meets the minimum credit score of 625; and submits the application within six to 24 months prior to stated graduation or course completion date.

Applicants can only submit for the loan online and must have an online chapter recommendation form submitted. Applicants must agree to all loan terms and applications are processed year-round. The local PEO Chapter must approve of the applicant and send the chapter recommendation.

This is a great opportunity for women to go back to school and help get some of their costs covered at better financing than what would be possible through other student loan providers. If you are interested in learning more and to find out if you qualify, visit <https://peointernational.com> and click on ELF.

Any member of Jones County Young Professionals can also reach out to Bri Langdon at blangdon2013@gmail.com to get in touch with the local PEO Chapter and learn more about submitting an application for financing.



Meet the Member!

Hi! My name is Morgan Ginn. I'm from Olin, Iowa. I work at Unity Point Health in Anamosa as a housekeeper. I work at Little Lion Learning Center in Olin as a teacher's assistant. I also help out with twins and a 3-year-old on Mondays.

In my spare time I like going for walks, shopping, hiking, hanging out with friends and family.

I joined the Jones County Young Professionals because I wanted to meet new people, make new friendships, and become more outgoing in a way. I like the activities that they do, and the people that are there.

We will see you there!



Don't forget to like our Facebook page:

Jones County
Young Professionals!

JOIN JCYP FOR SOME GREAT SUMMER FUN!

The Jones County Young Professionals have had a great start to the summer so far. In April, we got to listen to Michael Wampler from the Small Business Development Center talk about everything to keep in mind when considering whether to open or buy a business. In May, a number of volunteers took part in helping the Olin Community School get ready for the National Day of Caring. Our volunteers took the time to prepare the school's greenhouse and outdoor areas for community gardens in conjunction with the Jones County Healthy 5-2-1-0 program. We tilled the gardens, for both produce and pollinators, as well as cleaning out the old greenhouse so it could be put back into service. Finally, JCYP floated the Wapsipinicon River in June, enjoying the bright summer day and cleaning out two bags of garbage from the river, keeping it safe and attractive for everyone.

But that was just the start to our summer of fun! JCYP will be hosting a Mental Health Night on **Monday, July 10th at 6pm**. Mental Health has been a huge topic the last few years, especially with the pandemic changing the way we view our relationships with work and with each other. It has changed the way we do business and the ways we interact more than has been done in over a century. Join JCYP for a night of learning more about mental health. Melissa Paulsen-Oberbreckling will be the featured speaker and the event will take place at her office (Rise Counseling and Consulting) in Anamosa at 213 E. Main Street.



RISE
COUNSELING
& CONSULTING

JCYP will be hosting a social on **Thursday, August 10th** at 6pm at Savor the Barn in Langworthy. Bring Your Own Beer or participate in a wine-tasting. And don't forget to check out all of the other great offerings this local business offers, including cheese, honey, bread, different meats, booze, and so much more! Come hang out with some other JCYP members and enjoy a relaxing night!



Finally, JCYP will be partnering with Camp Courageous on Sunday, September 10th from 1pm-4pm. We will be doing a camp clean-up volunteer project so everyone is welcome. Bring your family and friends to help with the volunteer aspect and then stay for some fun. The fun will include the opportunity to play a round of mini-golf or use the zipline. These excursions are \$10 per person per activity. This is a great way to have fun and do some great volunteer work in our community.

The Jones County Young Professionals thrive on learning more about themselves, the world they live in, and the communities where they work and reside. If you are between the ages of 18-40 and either live/work in Jones County or Cascade, this would be a great chance to meet some colleagues in the region and start growing your professional network too!



JONES COUNTY YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

**DO YOU LIVE OR WORK IN JONES COUNTY
OR CASCADE?
ARE YOU 40 YEARS OLD OR UNDER?
DO YOU HAVE A JOB?**

**IF YOUR ANSWER IS YES, COME JOIN
JCYP!!**

JCYP is an organization focused on
developing networks and friendships
and leaders among community
members.

Join JCYP the 10th of EVERY Month for
networking, professional
development and volunteering!

For more information on events and locations,
scan the QR code or contact Bri Langdon at
(319) 310-5078 or blangdon2013@gmail.com



SCAN ME