

JCED BULLETIN

Jones County Economic Development Newsletter

Juy/August/September 2026

JCED PARTNERSHIPS WITH SCHOOLS PAYS DIVIDENDS FOR THE FUTURE!

The success of any community is measured in a variety of ways. However, one of the main measures is by how the future workforce and leaders of tomorrow are incorporated into the communities. While schools educate our students in a number of ways, Jones County Economic Development has been playing a role in that future development as well. JCED works with schools to do Community Career Videos; 9th grade field trips; and more! This year JCED partnered with the Monticello School District on Community Career Speakers. Additionally, JCED partnered with both Anamosa and Midland schools for the Knight Moves project.



In Monticello, JCED lined up community members that own or operate major business sectors in Jones County. Not only did the students hear from people who live and work locally about jobs they could do, but they go to hear plenty of great advice as well. Here are a few key statements from the students about their experience:

“The products Carla DeShaw brought in from Polo were very interesting. I have been thinking about jobs available at Polo that relate to my interests and I would want to work at.”

“Joel Althoff taught me how to use technology differently and to think outside of the box.”

“I loved learning about Christie Remley’s job because I am interested in writing. She seems like an expert in her field.”

Additionally, several students shared their favorite or most memorable pieces of advice they received from the speakers:

“Don’t give up on anything or anybody!” “Have a good work ethic.”

“Think it will happen and make it happen.” “Your ego is your biggest enemy.”

JCED is excited to continue this partnership with Monticello and hopefully expand to other Jones County schools in the future as well.

Concurrently, Jones County Economic Development has been working on a computer science curriculum program with the Anamosa and Midland School Districts. The Knight Moves program gives high school students the equivalency of a 4-year computer science degree while still in high school. Additionally, it sets them up into an immediate job pipeline after their graduation from high school. Multiple students from both schools participated in the pilot project year and have signed up for Year 2 while many more students have signed up to participate for their first year of classes in 2027. Anamosa was effusive in praise for the program:

(Continued on Page 4)

Scale-Tec Receives Manufacturing 4.0

Scale-Tec was awarded a full \$75,000 Manufacturing 4.0 grant from the State of Iowa in the first quarter of 2026. The company will use this award for a proprietary engineered project involving a hydraulic load cell press used to match calibrated load cells within its manufacturing process. The full project is estimated to cost over \$153,000. The calibration press is expected to be put into service in July of 2026.

The Manufacturing 4.0 grant will be put to immediate and good use to ensure the success of the hydraulic calibration press operations. Manufacturing 4.0 characteristics are used within the press to allow for automated tasks during operation, as well as recording manufacturing data when the press takes measurements for force loading and load cell calibration. This implements a proprietary and custom design that allows for easy operation with less knowledge and skill, creating success for repeatable calibrations in the load cell manufacturing process and improving workforce trainability. The press also facilitates quick setup times to suit both high volume production runs and low volume and high mix production runs, lowering production costs and creating flexibility to produce on demand solutions for customers, as well as facilitating rapid R&D load cell sensor projects for our customers.

Nick Von Muenster, President of Scale-Tec says, "This will be the third load cell press Scale-Tec has engineered and built to sustain its growth and progression of producing load cells in the agriculture industry since 2020. This will provide future stability in operations as well as anticipated future company growth."

For Scale-Tec it has been a great project amongst the various team members, including our operations, procurement, safety, quality, and machining teams, and other third party collaborating companies within the immediate corridor area, truly showcasing innovation in Jones County and the state of Iowa.

Jones County Business Lab Gets Important Updates!

Jones County Economic Development has partnered with the Rural Ideas Network to provide extra tools, resources, and connections to help rural innovators achieve their goals faster and more effectively!

Thanks to our partnership, you can get a FREE rural innovator membership, a \$300 a year value.

All of the old resources will still be there, including:

- Google Career Certificates
- Business Lab, which includes personalized coaching and website design
- Personal Idea Advisor

Additionally, new services have been added for everyone, including but not limited to:

- Member Directory
- Rural Resource Talent Directory
- Dupaco Money Makeover
- Rural Innovator Showcases
- Online Discussion Groups
- 50% off savings for the Rural Ideas Summit

All of these great benefits are available just for signing up. Go to the following link and get signed up today:

[Jones County | Rural Ideas Network](#)

If the above link does not work, you can manually enter the link from the postcard on Page 5 of this newsletter.

METAL DESIGN SYSTEMS ENHANCE TECHNOLOGY WITH MANUFACTURING 4.0 GRANT

At Metal Design Systems, our mission is to empower creativity and deliver exceptional value through innovative specialty metal fabrication solutions. Headquartered in Anamosa, Iowa, we proudly serve as a national leader in engineered systems and design resources, supporting a wide array of creative concepts. Our portfolio of unique and sustainable cladding materials—including ACM, Plate, Stainless Steel, Phenolic Material, and Fiber Cement—enables architects and builders to bring complex design visions to life.

Metal Design Systems (MDSI) operates in a highly customized manufacturing environment where precision, coordination, and efficiency are essential. However, our current technology landscape consists of disconnected systems, limiting our ability to scale, optimize processes, and fully leverage data across the organization. Addressing these challenges is critical to maintaining competitiveness and advancing our operational capabilities.

The implementation of a modern Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system—supported in part by the Manufacturing 4.0 grant—represents a transformative investment in MDSI’s digital infrastructure. This system will unify core business functions into a single, integrated platform, creating a centralized source of truth across sales, engineering, production, and finance. By eliminating data silos and improving cross-functional collaboration, the ERP will drive measurable gains in efficiency, accuracy, and responsiveness.

In alignment with Manufacturing 4.0 objectives, the ERP system will significantly enhance real-time visibility into operations through advanced dashboards and reporting tools. These capabilities will allow leadership to monitor key performance indicators—such as production efficiency, job costing, and inventory levels—enabling faster, data-driven decision-making and proactive issue resolution.

The new platform will also introduce critical Industry 4.0 functionalities, including process automation, barcode and QR code tracking, and system integrations. These features will strengthen traceability across the manufacturing lifecycle, reduce manual processes, and minimize human error—ultimately improving quality, throughput, and customer satisfaction. Additionally, standardized workflows and best practices will support workforce alignment and long-term adoption of digital tools.

This investment directly supports MDSI’s ability to modernize operations, increase productivity, and build a scalable foundation for future growth. By transitioning from fragmented systems to an integrated digital platform, we are strengthening our position as an innovative manufacturer and enhancing our contribution to the regional manufacturing economy.

We are very excited to begin ERP implementation later this month and are sincerely grateful for the Manufacturing 4.0 grant funding that has made this advancement possible. This support is instrumental in accelerating our digital transformation and positioning Metal Design Systems for continued success.



KNIGHT MOVES *(Continued from Page 1)*

“Overall, [Anamosa] has had a very positive experience working with Knight Moves. As we became more familiar with the coursework and expectations, we recognized that the program is more advanced than we originally anticipated and requires a strong level of independent learning and problem-solving skills. Because of this, we have expanded to an intro to computer science class that aligns with the intro skills needed to move into Knight Moves so they could build foundational skills and be better prepared for success within the program.

One of the biggest strengths of working with Knight Moves has been the communication and support provided to our school. Their team has consistently been responsive, helpful, and easy to work with throughout implementation. The course modules have also been well organized, smooth to navigate, and easy for both students and myself to follow, which has made the experience much more manageable and successful within our classroom.

We also appreciate that Knight Moves provides opportunities for students beyond graduation through internships and mentorship experiences. One of our graduating students will be transitioning into their internship program after graduation and will also have opportunities to mentor students involved in the program next school year while helping expand guided coding opportunities. Having access to those real-world experiences and continued pathways after high school I believe is extremely valuable. I anticipate one of our returning students to be able to participate in this internship his senior year as well.

Overall, our school has appreciated the partnership and opportunities Knight Moves has provided for our students interested in computer science and coding pathways.”

If you would like to know more, either about the Knight Moves program or about the community careers program through Jones County Economic Development, please do not hesitate to reach out.



SOLD!



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



UNLOCK YOUR NEXT BIG IDEA!

This postcard unlocks a Rural Innovator Membership (a \$300 value), completely free for you. We believe in the power of your ideas. Whether it's a business, an event, or something entirely new, your next step could make a real difference in our community.

YOU'LL GET TO: MAKE CONNECTIONS, BUILD SKILLS, INSPIRE & GET INSPIRED, AND GET ADVICE!

GET YOUR FREE MEMBERSHIP AT: RURALIDEAS.NET/JONES

**A \$300
MEMBERSHIP
...ON US!**