



KCEDC Presents: The Kossuth County Internship Program

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KCEDC Intern Committee first of its kind

The Kossuth County Economic Development Corporation's Intern Committee is setting the standard for future programs in Iowa.

The Iowa State University Community Vitality Center held a series of ten community forums to generate ideas to stimulate entrepreneurship in Iowa's communities.

Kossuth County Economic Development Corporation's internship program was one of six programs selected by the CVC to become a pilot program.

These programs receive funding from the CVC and are guides for other communities.

The Kossuth County Career/Intern Program was initially developed four years ago by KCEDC Executive Director Maureen Elbert as a means of guaranteeing a future workforce in the county. The program encourages young adults to settle and bring new business to the area.

The first step in developing the program was to contact businesses in Kossuth County and ask each one about possible internships and employment opportunities for college students and/or recent graduates within their companies.

This information was organized into a chart, which KCEDC representatives displayed and distributed at Iowa State University's College Career Day. The employment chart is also posted on the KCEDC web site.

At the ISU career fair, student resumes were collected. The resumes were then scanned and burnt onto a CD, which was later made available to Kossuth County businesses.

During the first few weeks of employment, interns were contacted with information about the real meat of the program, the intern committee.

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Intern Breakfast Brings Interns and CEOs together

The Kossuth County Economic Development Corporation Intern Committee hit the ground running at its annual intern breakfast on June 12, 2003. The meal was held at the Algona Public Library, where 60 interns and local business managers had the chance to communicate.

Jim Voigt, of Erpelding, Voigt & Co. was one of the featured speakers at the event.

Voigt used an example of his commute to work to illustrate how life is easier in Kossuth County. A five minute drive in Algona could take over an hour in a metropolis. Voigt views the time he saves as an added benefit of living in Kossuth County.

Scott Curtis, the Kossuth Regional Health Center Administrator, also addressed the interns, encouraging them to

find a mentor at their jobs.

Other Kossuth County CEOs who spoke at the breakfast were John Bilsten of Algona Municipal Utilities, Todd Schwartz of Titonka Savings Bank and Al Witt from Prestage-Stoecker Farms.

Students just starting internships received motivation from previous interns who have secured full time employment in Kossuth County.

Each intern who attended received a guide to Kossuth County. The packets included information on businesses, churches, points of interest and recreational opportunities.

After the breakfast, interns had the chance to sign up for the Intern Advisory Committee.



Pictured above are the speakers and interns who attended the breakfast on June 12, 2003. (Left to Right): Front Row—Kristy Gray, Natalie Spray, Erica Ray, Kim Kollasch, Darla Walker, Amanda Hilbert. Second row: Ashley Boyken, Samara Simonson, Jay Johnson, Sara Berg, Jamie Roethler, Nicole Forburger, Halicia Zwiefel. Third Row: Jessa Sachs, Amanda Berg, Stephanie Boyken, Jim Voigt, Bobbi Beenken, Shannon Krapp, Ed Elbert, Scott Curtis, Erin Yunginger, Calvin Berte, Todd Schwartz, Molly Nelson, Robert Goodheart.

With a county like Kossuth, who would ever want to leave?

Kossuth County provides numerous activities and entertainment for all ages. It is a wonderful area for gathering with family and friends from home-town celebrations to excellent restaurants.



The Algona Aquatic Center pool area consists of diving boards, two slides, lap lanes, a water basketball hoop, water fountains and shaded areas for relaxing.

Down the sidewalk, the 18-hole mini golf course will challenge any pro golfer. The sloping and rising greens, rocks and water keep people of all ages on their toes.

Various parks in Kossuth County provide other recreational activities. Call State Park, in Algona, provides camping areas, trails for walking and a shelter house for larger gatherings. Some other parks include: Veterans' and Central Park in Algona, the latter of which includes skating

facilities. Bancroft Park and Pool, Reynolds Park in Swea City and Noah's Park in Whittemore provide fun in the sun and shade.

Golfers can enjoy a peaceful afternoon on any of the area courses. Not only are they clean, but their green fees are relatively inexpensive compared to that of larger cities, such as Des Moines. Most of the surrounding courses host various tournaments for both couples and individuals.

Kossuth County has many restaurants available. The range of food types satisfies most everyone and includes bakeries, fast-food restaurants, cafes, fine dining establishments, Chinese, Mexican, Italian, pizza eateries, coffee houses and a confectionery too!

When the weather changes there are also many indoor locations to visit, which include bowling lanes, a movie theater, a YMCA and other activity complexes, community centers and several other places for social gather-



One of Kossuth County's many golf courses.



Reynolds Park, Swea City

ings.

Kossuth County also has events and attractions scheduled throughout the year. Small town celebrations, the county fair and the ABATE motorcycle rally on the Fourth of July provide a handful of activities for the summer months.

Kossuth County it is a safe, comfortable and friendly place to live or visit.

Smith Lake Barbeque

On July 30, interns from across Kossuth County met for a little fun in the sun.

Everyone gathered at Smith Lake, one of Kossuth County's gathering places, to once again interact with each other. After a brief welcome, the interns dove into playing volleyball and socializing about the summer and the approaching college year. Stu Simonson, a Whittemore Legionnaire, was in attendance to grill the famous Whittemore Legion burgers. The Legion donated the patties and HyVee donated the chips and water, Algona Publishing Company donated watermelon, Prestage-Stoecker Farms donated all paper products and the use of a grill, Pharmacists Mutual donated buns and DayLight Donuts donated fresh baked cookies to accompany the meal.

BBQ Pic

How can a business benefit from an Intern?

Although internships are important for college students to prepare for the future, they are also becoming more and more important to businesses.

"[Internships] are key for any business. Even though employers feel like they are helping the intern out, the intern must produce something for the company as well," said Randy Hildreth, United States Department of Agriculture. Hildreth said that an intern brings fresh ideas to a business. With technology advancing rapidly, interns are sometimes the first to know about the latest computer software and technology.

Through a questionnaire presented to CEO's in Kossuth County during the summer of 2003, all of the executives said an intern brings advanced technology, creative ideas and an energetic mind to the workplace.

Another positive impression an internship program can give to a business is the increased chance an employer will hire an individual who is familiar with their organization and will need less training to become productive. An internship program allowed Scott Curtis, the Administrator at Kossuth Regional Health Center, to evaluate the performance of these potential candidates as well as recruit the interns in a way that wasn't otherwise available.

Pharmacists Mutual has hired five interns since their start in the internship program.

"[Internships] have been very beneficial to

our company. [The interns] knew the company, employees and had knowledge of the insurance industry," said Marilyn Deal, vHuman Resources vice president for Pharmacists Mutual.

Todd Schwartz from Titonka Savings Bank said he felt more comfortable employing his interns because he was familiar with the individuals and did not have to base the decision on a resume and interview alone. He also felt the learning curve was much shorter.

Kuehl and Payer, a local engineering firm has had great success hiring previous interns. Since 1996, three interns at their office have been hired as full time employees.

Selecting a future employee can be a difficult and time-consuming task. Instead of sifting through a pile of resumes, an internship allows an employer to examine how quickly the intern acquires desired skills, their personality, relations with co-workers and demeanor with customers.

Chuck Peter, Agronomy Department Manager of StateLine Cooperative, agrees with the preparation an internship provides.

"[Internships] give them an idea what our business really is about, what our customers expect, what a good service level it takes to make it happen and how teamwork is vital to the success of our business.

With this in mind, consider whether a business should select applicants from words on paper, or from the candidate one step ahead of the others?

This summer's edition of the Kossuth County Internship Program Newsletter was made possible because of the hard work of the Intern Advisory Committee.

~Natalie Spray ~Amanda Hilbert
~Samara Simonson ~Jay Johnson
~Sara Berg ~Jamie Roethler
~Amanda Berg ~Shannon Krapp
~Erin Yunginger ~Molly Nelson
~Bobbi Beenken ~Nick Roethler
~Mike Walker

The Value of an Internship

The chicken and the egg syndrome is plaguing graduating college students. However, most of them could care less which one came first.

What they do care about is finding a job. But, in order to get a job a graduate needs experience, and in order to get experience he or she needs a job. It's the same repetitive circle as the chicken and the egg.

How can this problem be solved? An internship before graduation will often do the trick.

Students who have at least one internship under their belt at the time of graduation gain most of the experience employers look for in entry-level applicants.

Internships often serve as the first taste of the real world for students. They learn what to expect in a job and how to handle the everyday stress and pressure of their selected career.

An internship provides practical application of skills learned in the classroom. A student may do accounting problems in a class and a company's payroll during an internship.

Another important part of an internship is learning how a company or business works. An intern learns the rituals and customs of a company, which is practically impossible to teach in a classroom. This prepares interns for future experiences in the workplace.

Interns learn responsibility as well. Deadlines are important in the classroom, but they take on a new meaning in an internship. A missed deadline in college can mean a bad grade. A missed deadline at an internship can hold back progress and cost money.

Over the past few years, the importance of internships has increased greatly. Some colleges and employers even recommend up to three internships before graduation.

College curriculum will always play an important role in preparing students for a career, but internships are becoming just as important as classes.

So, in the end, it doesn't really matter if the chicken or the egg came first, as long as it had an internship in college.



KCEDC Interns had the opportunity to network with University of Northern Iowa President Dr. Robert Koob at the CEO Networking Luncheon



Intern Golf Outing

Eighteen interns and company associates attended the annual golf outing for fun and food on July 18, at Hillside Golf Course in Wesley.

Some exercised their golf abilities and others opted to participate in alternate activities. Everyone enjoyed a meal donated by the golf course and agreed the food was top notch!

Members of the KCEDC Intern Advisory Committee spoke about the group's mission statement and the progress of the newsletter.

KCEDC would like to extend its thanks to those who attended the events, showed their support, donated items to the intern program and employed interns. With continued support, the intern committee will continue for years to come.

Graduates consider entire package

What are students looking for after graduation? The most obvious answer is a job with a good paycheck. However, there is a lot more to consider.

Even though salary is a big factor, benefits can seal the deal. An average income with a great benefit package can make the job offer just as appealing as one with larger earnings.

Cost of living is also a factor. While looking for a job, a graduate will consider living expenses, housing availability, recreation facilities, safety, entertainment and the community atmosphere; many things need to be offered in a community to bring people to the area.

Kossuth County has towns with strong

community ties and a variety of activities and entertainment venues. It is a safe area, where people leave their doors unlocked. The people of the county are willing to welcome new faces.

There is something for everyone in Kossuth County!

Cost of Living Chart

***All prices are averages. Costs may vary per month and individual. Gas, parking, Internet, cable and food expenses not included.**

City	Rent	Electric	Water	Phone	Total
Algona	\$375	\$68	\$18	\$20	\$481
Des Moines	\$575	\$35	\$15	\$25	\$650
Kansas City	\$500	\$40	\$20	\$20	\$580
St. Paul	\$900	\$40	Included	\$25	\$965
New York	\$2,000	\$60	Included	\$65	\$2,735
San Francisco	\$2,000	\$75	\$50	\$15	\$2,140



Kossuth County Economic Development Co.
105 North Hall Street
Algona, IA 50511

Phone: 515-295-7979
Fax: 515-295-8873
Email: kcdec@ncn.net

KCEDC

Acres of Opportunity

We're on the Web!
www.kossuth-edc.com

The Kossuth County Interns would like to thank the following area businesses for their generous support and donations:

- ~Algona Family YMCA
- ~Algona Good Samaritan Center
- ~Algona Publishing
- ~Aqua Message
- ~Bank of America
- ~Corn Belt Power
- ~Country Side Catering
- ~Curves for Women
- ~Daily Grind
- ~Dairy Queen
- ~Daylight Donuts
- ~Elbert Chevrolet
- ~Ernie Williams LTD
- ~Hutzels
- ~HyVee
- ~Innovations
- ~Iowa State Bank (Algona)
- ~Jim Gage, CPA
- ~KFC
- ~Klein Insurance
- ~Kemna Auto Center
- ~Kossuth County Engineer's Office

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- **Algona Publishing:** Natalie Spray, Halicia Zwiemel
- **Ag Advisory Ltd:** Brian Arndorfer, Wade Kent
- **Bancroft Drive Inn:** Stuart Kennedy, Louie Reeves
- **Brian Thul Law Firm:** Sarah Schmitt
- **Central Financial Services:** Amber Behnkendorf, Erica Rahe, Jenny Ulrich
-
- **Elbert Chevrolet:** Edmund Elbert
- **Exceptional Opportunities:** Bobbi Beenken
- **Farmers State Bank:** Nathan Hannover, Samara Simonson
- **Iowa State Bank:** Erin Yunginger
- **KCEDC:** Sara Berg, Jamie Roethler
- **Kossuth Co. Engineer's:** Nick Roethler
- **Kossuth Regional Health:** Jamie Decker, Nicole Forburger
- **Northwest Internet:** Jared Auten, Cole Goodchild
- **Peterson & Lipps Law:** Calvin Berte
- **Pharmacists Mutual:** Amanda Berg, Jay Johnson, Kim Kollasch, Darla Walker
-
- **Pioneer Hi-Bred:** Pat Thilges
- **Prestage-Stoecker Farms:** Amanda Hilbert, Molly Nelson, Mike Walker
-
- **Security State Bank:** Jessa Sachs
- **Titonka Savings Bank:** Ashley Boyken, Stephanie Boyken, Kristy Gray
-
- **USDA Rural Development:** Shannon Krapp

KCEDC Intern Committee

Continued from page 1

The intern committee is made up of all interns in Kossuth County. A smaller group of students make up the Intern Advisory Committee. The Intern Advisory Committee meets two to three times a month during the summer to help direct the intern program.

As the result of the intern program, an average of 40 interns have come to Kossuth County each year for summer employment. A few have even stayed in the community as full time employees following their summer internships.

"Business leaders are looking at this program as it has grown over the years to come to understand the overall impact it can have to their business down the road," said Elbert. "These young people have many talents and skills they can initially bring in, but creating the relationship with them will make them want to come back to Kossuth County!"