



**Advanced Manufacturing Sector Board Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, February 8, 2024**  
**8:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.**

**Sears Seating**  
**1718 S Concord St. Davenport, IA 52802**

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**Welcome and Introductions**

- Approximately 30 in attendance
- Industry Representatives: Tri-City Electric, Sears Seating, HNI, Sterilite, John Deere, Conor Flaherty, SSAB, Crossroads Muscatine, Wertzbaugher Services
- Education Representatives: EICC, Mississippi Bend AEA
- Other Representatives: QC Chamber, Illinois American Job Center, IowaWORKS, Mississippi Valley Workforce Development Board, Grow Clinton, CIRAS

**Host Update - Enrique Riojas, Sears Seating**

- Family-owned for 6 generations!
- Started in 1855 making harnesses, saddles, and other leather goods in Davenport, IA, then began making tractor seats in 1947. They have continued to adapt and expand along with the needs of the industry and are now a global company with branches in North America, South America, Europe, and Asia!
- Make seats for Agriculture, Construction, Industrial, and On Highway Trucking customers, including John Deere, CNH Industrial, CAT, Bobcat, Toyota, Komatsu, Mack, Peterbilt, UPS, and more!
- Best practices:
  - Continuous growth and improvement of their comfort, suspension, and taking the needs of the different industries into account.
  - Diversification of the industries served. Previously, they primarily served Construction and Agriculture industries, but have engaged with Trucking and Industrial over the past 5 years.
  - Lead, Perform, and Grow - Continue to supply innovative solutions for commercial vehicles, deliver financial strength through the business cycle, and serve key customers while winning new targeted customers and markets.
    - Achieve these goals through customer support and management, supply chain performance, targeted growth strategies, technology and innovation, and global footprint optimization, among other strategies.

## Workforce Development Updates

- Tyler Lanz has started as the new Strategic Partnership Specialist for the Mississippi Valley Workforce Development Board and Louise Butherus has started as the new Communications Assistant.
- Minutes, website updates, and monthly newsletters will be communicated by Tyler Lanz. Please send any news, announcements, events, or feedback to [tyler@mississippivalleyworkforce.org](mailto:tyler@mississippivalleyworkforce.org).
- Strategic Support Update: Iowa Workforce Development is working with consultants from the Center for Workforce Excellence International to develop best practices and training for sector partnerships, with some funding available to support sector strategies down the line as well. There is no update about the funding availability, but we have received tentative information for a two day training presented by CWEI and IWD, which will hopefully provide some additional guidance and information to be shared at the next Sector Board meeting.
- Job Quality Academy surveys are still accepting responses to increase understanding of good jobs in our region based on hiring and recruitment practices, pay, benefits, career advancement opportunities, work environment, company culture, DEIA, empowerment, and representation.
  - Employers – Tell us how you create “good” jobs at your business by responding to the survey at [www.tinyurl.com/employerjqa](http://www.tinyurl.com/employerjqa)
  - Employees/Job Seekers – Share this survey with your workers! We’d love for them to tell us what a “good” job means to you by responding to the survey at [www.tinyurl.com/jobseekerjqa](http://www.tinyurl.com/jobseekerjqa)
  - Both surveys are anonymous and have been accepted by St. Ambrose University’s Institutional Review Board.

## Announcements & Resources

- Made in Illinois Productivity and Innovation Grants for Manufacturers. These are matching grant funds for IL companies with 5-250 employees. Matching grant funds up to \$50K will be awarded. Application deadline is March 31, 2024. Apply here.
- Iowa Prison Industries support manufacturers in Iowa with outsourced manufacturing projects.
  - <https://www.iaprisonind.com/>
  - Tammy Nielsen, Private Industries Program Manager, 515-669-1954, [Tammy.nielsen@iowa.gov](mailto:Tammy.nielsen@iowa.gov)

## SkillBridge Presentation - Tracie Timmerman, IowaWORKS

- SkillBridge is an opportunity for military service members to gain valuable civilian work experience through specific industry training, apprenticeships, or internships up to the 180 days of military service prior to separation.
- Service members participate while on Active Duty, helps to bridge the gap between the end of service and the beginning of civilian careers.
- Each military branch has a separate process for service members and vetting employers.
- Iowa businesses can contact Tracie Timmerman for additional information at [tracie.timmerman@iwd.iowa.gov](mailto:tracie.timmerman@iwd.iowa.gov) for more information.
- Illinois businesses visit the Department of Defense website at <https://skillbridge.osd.mil/>

## 2024 Planning

- Only 12 surveys were completed following the November sector board meeting.
  - Thursday mornings are still the preferred meeting time.
  - Primary reasons for attending sector board meetings are collaboration and networking with other industry members.
  - All in support of planning a Manufacturing Month Event
    - A planning committee has been established and has had one meeting so far.
    - October 17, 2024 from 4:00 – 7:00 p.m.
    - Location TBD, but we are thinking about spaces that could accommodate a large celebration of industry such as the River Bandits Stadium.
    - Will loop in other partners as plans progress.
- Youth Engagement was another common theme from the 2024 planning session in November.
  - 3 Youth/Young Adult apprentices from John Deere, HNI, and Wertzbaugher Services who were in attendance at the meeting shared their experiences.
  - There was discussion about engaging other disconnected talent pipelines as re-entry populations, individuals with disabilities, etc. and alternative workforces like Iowa Prison Industries.

### Open Forum/Upcoming Events

- **February 22<sup>nd</sup>**: QCESC STEM Celebration from 5:00 – 9:00 p.m. at The Bend Event Center in East Moline. Register at <https://qcesc.org/stem-celebration/>
- **February 26<sup>th</sup>**: Education and Business Partnership Symposium from 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. at Eagle Point Lodge in Clinton. RSVP at [qrco.de/Symposium24](http://qrco.de/Symposium24). See attached flyer.
- **February 29<sup>th</sup>**: Leap Into Inclusion Lunch & Learn for Disability Awareness at IowaWORKS in Davenport. SHRM and HRCI credit available. Lunch provided to registered attendees. RSVP by Friday, February 23, 2024 at <https://forms.office.com/r/vCMZzC77JZ>. See attached flyer.
- **March 7<sup>th</sup>**: Kewanee Life Skills Center is hosting an open house for businesses to attend to learn about hiring incarcerated individuals making the transition into the civilian workforce. See attached flyer.
- **March 22<sup>nd</sup>**: EICC Welding advisory Group. Join welding faculty and other EICC staff at 9:00 a.m. to discuss the welding program and provide feedback on what is current in today's industry. RSVP by March 15<sup>th</sup> by emailing [mredens@eicc.edu](mailto:mredens@eicc.edu) or [mjclark@eicc.edu](mailto:mjclark@eicc.edu). See attached flyer.
- **April 23<sup>rd</sup>**: Student Success Symposium from 9:30 – 1:30 p.m. at the River Center in Davenport. A hands-on career experience fair hosted by the QC Chamber to bridge the gap between industry leaders and high school students. Visit <https://member.quadcitieschamber.com/events/details/quad-cities-chamber-student-success-symposium-22518?calendarMonth=2024-04-01> for more information.
- Additive Manufacturing User Group at the Blong Technology Center in Davenport every 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month from 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.
- Tentative future events. Caves will provide more details and plans finalize.
  - ABI – Automation Summit April 2024
  - IMA – Automation Summit March 2024
  - QCBJ – Manufacturing Conference September 2024

### Host Tour - Enrique Riojas, Sears Seating

**Save the Date:**

Q2 Meeting (Virtual): May 16, 2024 from 8:30 – 9:30 a.m.

Q3 Meeting (Virtual): August 8, 2024 from 8:30 – 9:30 a.m.

Manufacturing Month Event: October 17, 2024 from 4:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Q4 Meeting: November 14, 2024, North Scott High School

# Employer Disability Awareness “Leap Into Inclusion”

## Thursday, February 29

11 am to 1 pm

1801 E. Kimberly Rd., Davenport, Iowa

Lunch provided with RSVP



**TO RSVP**

**Click Here**

<https://forms.office.com/r/vCMZzC77JZ>

- ◆ **Learn about Accommodations in the Workplace**
- ◆ **Participate in Windmills Disability Sensitivity Training**
- ◆ **Business Panel**
- ◆ **Q & A Session**
- ◆ **Community Resources**



**IowaWORKS**

A proud partner of the **AmericanJobCenter** network

**Mississippi Valley**

Equal Opportunity Programs/Employer Auxiliary Aids and services are available upon request for Individuals with disabilities.

Education & Business Partnership  
*Symposium*

Creating new partnerships  
Celebrating existing internships

**RSVP TODAY**  
[qrco.de/Symposium24](http://qrco.de/Symposium24)

QUESTIONS? (563)242-5702

26  
FEBRUARY  
2024

5:30  
7:30 PM

**Eagle Point Lodge**  
**4101 N 3rd St.**



HOME OF THE RIVER KINGS & RIVER QUEENS



# EASTERN IOWA COMMUNITY COLLEGE WELDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**MARCH 22ND, 2024**

Please join our Welding Faculty and other EICC staff on March 22nd at 9am to discuss our Welding Program and to provide feedback on what is current in today's industry. Your feedback helps provide students and employers, like yourself, with the best educational outcome possible. The meeting will take place face-to-face at The John Blong Technology Center (8500 Hillandale Road, Davenport IA) or by Zoom (<https://eicc-edu.zoom.us/j/99165512590>).



**SCAN ME**

Agenda Items will include:

- Automation
- Robotic Programing
- Fabrication
- American Welding Society
- 3rd Annual Welding Competition
  - Skill Gaps
  - And more



EASTERN IOWA COMMUNITY COLLEGES  
CLINTON ♦ MUSCATINE ♦ SCOTT

**THE Community's College**

Please RSVP by emailing Megan Edens at [mredens@eicc.edu](mailto:mredens@eicc.edu) or Michael Clark at [mjclark@eicc.edu](mailto:mjclark@eicc.edu). RSVPs will be due by March 15th.

# AN EMPLOYER OPPORTUNITY EVENT TO UNTAPPED TALENT

WHAT IF A SOLUTION TO YOUR WORKFORCE PROBLEM  
WOULD BE RELEASED IN THE NEXT 6 MONTHS?

## THIS ***1-DAY EVENT*** WILL GIVE YOU A PATH TO:

- ✓ **Untapped Talent**—You Never Knew Existed!
- ✓ **Supporting Your Community**—Offering Others An Opportunity To Thrive!!
- ✓ **Coach Enthusiastic Prospects**—Seeking Your Expertise To Become Successful Once Released!!!

**Come Join NTS Along With Other Businesses and Community Leaders**

Hosted By: **Rotary**  
Club of Galva



Kewanee Life Skills Re-Entry Center  
Community Corps

and



For more details or a personal R.S.V.P.,  
respond here for more information

**March 7, 2024**  
**8AM-5PM**  
**2021 Kentville Road**  
**Kewanee, Illinois**