

The knowledge economy is emerging worldwide.
There is new vitality and opportunity for Iowa in
growing our higher education industry.

**Iowans for a Better Future
Higher Education Task Force**

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Questions?

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Work here
Play here
Stay here

The Iowa Higher Education Initiative

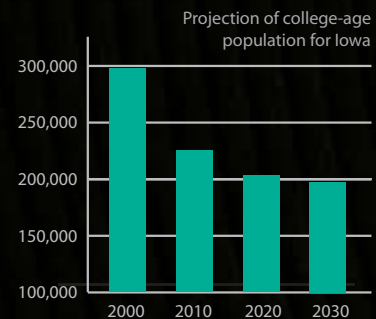
A new strategy to help secure the future of Iowa's colleges and universities by focusing on higher education as a "growth industry," fostering statewide economic vibrancy, positive population change and enhancements of the state's intellectual, cultural and recreational life.

here in Iowa

Every year about 45,000 students come to Iowa from all over the world to attend college. Each student spends about \$13,000 per year, meaning they bring \$585 million annually into the state.

If college enrollments decline in proportion to the college-age population – about 17 percent by 2030 – our state universities may be forced to lay off faculty and eliminate programs. Our community colleges, which have been in an extended period of growth, could suddenly find themselves overbuilt and overstaffed. Some of the small private colleges might risk closing. Economic challenges already threaten communities where our colleges and universities are located.

Iowa needs to raise its education profile across the country. In a recent nationwide survey, only 3 percent of respondents living outside of the state rated Iowa as one of the best states when it comes to education.



Census Bureau projections show a rapid and continuing decline in the college-age population. Iowa will have 22,000 fewer people between the ages of 18 and 24 in 2010 than it had in 2000. By 2030, that number will be down more than 51,000.

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These words represent an experience. An experience we would like to take to the Midwest ... to the United States ... to the world.

These words are the foundation on which the idea of higher education in Iowa is built – they are the foundation on which life in Iowa is built.

These words also represent the partnerships that are the foundation of Iowa – education, business, economic development and tourism – working together.

We are here because we believe that higher education, as a business, is a tremendous economic opportunity for the state of Iowa.

By working with higher education, every business and community has the opportunity to attract students, tourists, employees and employers to participate in a new era of growth and potential for the state of Iowa.

There are challenges. We need to build a stronger perception that Iowa is a great place to Live, Learn, Work, Play and Stay. We need to do this with great vigor, delivering the message to key sources of student populations here in Iowa, the Midwest, the United States and internationally.

This means creating and delivering a powerful message ... bringing together business partners to help bridge the needs of emerging growth.

It means tapping into the vast tourism potential of Iowa ... displaying the great promise of recreation and lifestyle choices that are on par with other exciting destinations around the nation. And it means explaining that our quality of life – our safety, comfort and community – welcomes every visitor.

Working together, we need to emplace the goals, the mission and the vision of the Higher Education Task Force into the very fabric of business, tourism and economic development practices throughout Iowa.

As part of our mission, we will begin a series of meetings that will bring together Iowa's student leaders, business leaders, civic leaders, political leaders and leaders in education. We will share ideas and plant the seeds that participants will take back to their communities, their businesses and their schools. We will enlist the Iowa community at-large as ambassadors of higher education and ask them to take our message out to the world.

Take a good look at Iowa. A great place to Live, Learn, Work, Play and Stay.

"Iowa needs to start putting as much energy into attracting students as it does attracting business. Attracting more students nationally and internationally to Iowa for college means more will stay here to start their careers. Those who find careers elsewhere may look back to Iowa when it's time to send their children to college. All of this adds up to huge economic growth potential for the state."

- Richard Doak
Des Moines Register

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