

To make sure you receive future emails,
please add staff@iarcog.com to your address book or safe list.



COURIER

IOWA ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

Bringing leaders and communities together to promote economic growth.

VOLUME 8 | ISSUE 1

FROM YOUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

It has been a privilege to have been selected and to represent IARC over the past two months. As we enter our new fiscal year I would like to share my thoughts and strategy on leading your organization into a new era.



I am a believer in practicing the four Ms of successful nonprofit practice. This is not another program you will find in books or online; instead it is the result of running both non-profit and for-profit entities over the years.

I find every organization has these basic tenets that are paramount to running a successful organization. They are Model, Money, Management and Marketing.

Model

First, Model is understanding what your organizational purpose, structure and value is to the members. It is the most fundamental and challenging stage to develop, because it asks the big question: What is our purpose and our object? Our strategic planning helped re-evaluate what the organization does well and what we need to improve on. Setting up our Action Plan for FY 2017 will give us a clear direction focused on visibility, awareness, education and continued work with partner agencies.

Money

Second, Money is critical to the sustainability of the organization. My focus will ensure dues, the partnership program and affiliate agency contracts are sustainable for the organization. We will have to take a hard look at creating a dues structure that corresponds to cost-of-living adjustments.

Management

The Management team assigned to your organization includes professionals in the association management and marketing arena. Our best practices learned from the American Society of Association Executives will be implemented across your organization dealing with auditing organizational files and building an association management system within CVENT that will keep track of membership, financials, e-communications and event management.

Marketing

Finally, Marketing is the cornerstone to any successful organization. Marketing is more than just your website and brochure. It is the brand promise to members and perception among the community. Relationship-building among affiliate agencies and stakeholders will be one of my priorities for this fiscal year. One of our goals from our June Action Plan is to rebrand IARC.

As we move forward through the years, the objectives within each of these core tenets may change but the four Ms never do. I look forward to working with all of you in the future and believe IARC has a tremendous future in front of it.

Sincerely,
Carl Lingen
Executive Director
Iowa Association of Regional Councils

IDPH NUTRITION PROJECT SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED

Five area COGs have successfully finished the IDPH Nutrition Project. These COGs have worked to bring the right people to the table to help make their communities better.

These COGs have made an impact in communities across Iowa. Their efforts have helped build infrastructure or implemented programs for a healthier lifestyle.

Buffalo

- Started healthy cooking classes and demonstrations
- Began planning and development for new walking path
- Created a trails map

Madrid

- Created a community garden that helped re-connect neighbors
- Developed health and wellness initiatives that include free fitness classes

Pocahontas

- Worked with county public health and small business owners to establish a bicycle rental operation

Hudson

- Re-energized a local farmers market by assisting and working with community leaders on finding better location



Maquoketa

- 228 preschool through second graders participated in the Healthy Choices Healthy Bodies program. Students gained increased knowledge about healthy food after completing the program.

Erin Olson, from IDPH, stated that the department is impressed with what the COGs have accomplished across Iowa. Contracts are in the works for IARC to handle the next fiscal contract. Contract changes will allow for any community to apply to receive grant funding even if they were chosen in the past.

MEDICAID MANAGED CARE: GOVERNOR V. LEGISLATORS

The governor and legislators seem to have differing opinions on the success of managed care plans. Governor Branstad told the Iowa Legislative News Service, "Managed care has given patients a choice from three new health plans that will offer better access and quality of care for the Medicaid population, and it will help create a more predictable and sustainable Medicaid program."



Senator Mathis, who will be holding a meeting at the Capitol on July 26th concerning changes to Medicaid, stated, "The transition from Medicaid to managed care continues to be a major burden on Iowa families and Iowa health care providers. I know because legislators continue to receive an unprecedented number of emails, phone calls and face-to-face questions from Iowa families and health care providers desperate for help. Their concerns include complicated, frustrating problems involving billing, pre-authorization, transportation and rates. It is not getting any better; in fact, it is getting worse."

At the Iowa Public Transit Association MCO meeting there seemed to be frustration in two primary areas of transportation.

- 1. Billing.** Many individuals handling billing are having to hire additional full-time

staff to navigate and audit the complexities of managing three different systems. United Healthcare came up most often as being difficult to deal with. When one coordinator asked Director Mikki Stier, if the Department of Transportation would work on one integrated system to submit claims that integrated into each of the MCOs, he was met with silence and no comment.

2. Selection of Transportation Riders. MCOs did not seem to have a clear understanding of how providers were chosen for rides. One MCO stated clients can choose a preferred provider. However, in the absence of one provider, the ride would go to the lowest-rate provider in the area.

If you are a COG that handles transportation and are frustrated by a certain area that should be addressed with the Department of Transportation, please send your comments to staff@iarcog.com.

IARC TO HOST AMERICORPS MEMBERS

The Iowa Association of Regional Councils (IARC) was recently awarded an AmeriCorps State Formula Grant by the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service in the amount of \$74,995. The funding will allow five AmeriCorps members to assist with capacity building interventions that will enhance program delivery; increase, expand, and enhance services to address pressing community needs; and ensure sustainability of those services after members' service has ended.



AmeriCorps members will serve in three regions in Iowa: the East Central Intergovernmental Association (Dubuque), the MIDAS Council of Governments (Ft. Dodge) and the East Central Iowa Council of Governments (ECICOG) headquartered in Cedar Rapids. Members will have the opportunity to assist with a variety of identified collaborative efforts including, but likely not limited to, the Clear Creek Watershed Cooperative (CCWC), the East Central Brownfields Coalition, the Parks to People Grant Woods Region, and the Dodger Area Rapid Transit System.

By the end of the first program year, the AmeriCorps members will provide interventions to a minimum of 35 organizations, assist in the creation of a least seven community assessments, and assist in the creation and administration of program evaluation methods. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage an additional 180 volunteers, who will be engaged in capacity building activities.

THE IOWA WATERSHED APPROACH (IWA) PROGRAM

Through the Iowa Watershed Approach, Iowans will work together to address factors that contribute to floods and nutrient flows. Iowans will enjoy improvements in quality of life and health resulting from upstream watershed investments tied to community resilience activities. This adaptive model, supported by U.S. Housing &

Urban Development dollars, will leverage the principles of Iowa's innovative Nutrient Reduction Strategy to make our communities more resilient to flooding and help improve water quality.

The IWA will accomplish six specific goals: 1) reduce flood risk; 2) improve water quality; 3) increase resilience; 4) engage stakeholders through collaboration and outreach/education; 5) improve quality of life and health, especially for vulnerable populations; and 6) develop a program that is scalable and replicable throughout the Midwest and the United States.

Iowa's COGs will have the opportunity to assist in the IWA by facilitating watershed management authority formation, assisting with the creation of watershed management plans, and administering Community Development Block Grant funds at the local level.

To learn more about IWA, [click here](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS



August 12 | Board Meeting
September 9 | Board Meeting
October 14 | Board Meeting
October 15-18 | NADO 2016 Annual Training Conference
November 4 | Board Meeting
December 9 | Board Meeting

Iowa Association of Regional Councils
www.iarcog.com