

# POWER POINTS

## Economic Development Update

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### ▶ DC Delegation Shares Priorities, Concerns



A PowI-80-led delegation met with both of Iowa's US senators, three House members and a number of congressional staffers during a two-day visit to Washington, DC.

This was the third year a Poweshiek group has visited the Capitol, but the 2007 delegation was by far the largest. The delegation featured 16 individuals representing government, business, health care, education and environmental concerns.

The group shared with Senators Charles Grassley and Tom Harkin, as well as Representatives Leonard Boswell, Bruce Braley and David Loebsack its ideas regarding Medicare reimbursement, rural entrepreneurship, workforce development and training, recreational trails, education mandates, the Iowa Transportation Museum and the federal bio-based product purchasing preference program.

As luck would have it, the Senate was engaged in debate on the minimum wage at the time the delegation was to meet first with Grassley and then Harkin. However, floor activity suddenly stalled and both senators wound up in the meeting room at the same time — something staff later said rarely happens. The two senators spent about 30 minutes with the group, brainstorming together on possible solutions to the county's priorities.

The group also spent time with Representative Braley, who is a native of Brooklyn. He said he views Poweshiek County as an extension of his own 1st District, since he owns a house on Holiday Lake and his mother still lives in Brooklyn. Braley told the group that the county should view itself as having "two congressmen"—their own representative, Boswell, and their home-grown representative, Braley.

Feedback from the trip has been overwhelmingly positive, both from participants and from DC-based staffers. Steps will be taken in the not-too-distant future to secure dates for a 2008 trip, likely in late January or early February.



*Pow I-80*

*Serving Brooklyn, Deep River, Hartwick, Grinnell, Guernsey, Malcom, Montezuma and Searsboro*

### ▶ PowI-80 Helps to Nurture, Connect Entrepreneurs

Poweshiek Iowa Development's focus on entrepreneurship continues to pay dividends, both for local entrepreneurs and the county at-large.

In cooperation with Iowa Valley Community College and the MyEntreNet program based at the University of Northern Iowa, PowI-80 has hosted a series of topical business workshops this winter. They included sessions on insurance and legal issues facing small businesses, marketing and website development. More than 25 individuals from a three-county area attended the website course.

This spring, a second session of the nationally-renowned FastTrac program will be offered. That intensive small-business training, which will be led by PowI-80 Economic Development Planner Gloria Bachmann and PowI-80 Shareholder Dean O'Regan, will begin April 3 and run every Tuesday for nine weeks.

Developed by the Kauffman Foundation, the country's preeminent proponent of entrepreneurial training, the FastTrac program has a record of helping both new entrepreneurs and existing business owners looking to grow.

In addition, several sessions of the SmartStart and SmartGrowth business development classes will be offered this spring. Also developed by the Kauffman Foundation, SmartStart and SmartGrowth are three-hour overviews of best practices, techniques and skills. SmartStart is geared toward those looking to start a business, while SmartGrowth works with those who already have a small business.

For more information on all of these small business trainings, call PowI-80 at 641-236-1626.

PowI-80, with resources provided by UNI, IVCCD, the Small Business Development Center at Newton and the Small Business Administration, is working closely with several small businesses throughout Poweshiek County.

The group is providing business planning services that range from business plan development to identifying financial options to market analysis. Economic Development Planner Gloria Bachmann spends significant time each week working directly with business owners, as well as prospective entrepreneurs, brainstorming and problem-solving.



## ► *SoyClean Receives PowI-80 Microenterprise Grant*

Brooklyn-based SoyClean was awarded a \$1,000 PowI-80 "Microenterprise Grant" recently. The company uses soy-based oils to manufacture non-toxic household cleaners.

PowI-80 Executive Director Bill Menner presented the check to SoyClean President Rusty Clayton, who said the money would be used to help develop a tabletop display unit for trade shows. The company believes it has identified a sizeable niche of potential customers who want household cleaners that are safe and environmentally-friendly.

PowI-80 developed the grant program to assist small, start-up businesses for whom access to capital is a major challenge. For more information on this grant program, call 641-236-1626.

## ► *Iowa Connections Region Brings Counties Together*

A relatively new five-county economic development marketing alliance is beginning to make itself known around the state and the region.

Iowa Connections is a partnership of Poweshiek, Benton, Jasper, Marshall and Tama counties that focuses on promoting the five-county region as a destination for businesses, workers and tourists.

The group received a \$175,000 commitment from the Iowa Department of Economic Development to help administer the alliance. The five counties had to match that grant on a dollar-for-dollar basis. In Poweshiek County, alliance sponsors include Alliant Energy, F&M Bank, First Federal Bank, Grinnell Mutual, Iowa Telecom and TIP Rural Electric Cooperative.

Iowa Connections has developed a brochure that promotes the region's assets and will soon roll out a website. It is also working with IDED to participate in Sell Iowa trips and other trade shows.

It has also funded the recent laborshed study, which is a vital tool for companies that are looking at workforce trends as they consider expansion or location in Poweshiek County. That laborshed is a clear indication that these five counties are closely interrelated.

## ► *Thanks to Our Shareholders Who Make Our Work Possible!*

The third quarter of FY 2006-2007 is drawing to a close, yet PowI-80 is shy of its fundraising goal of \$90,000. The organization is working to help attract new businesses, enable entrepreneurs, improve the workforce and create new jobs. The economic impact of those efforts runs into the millions of dollars, affecting all of Poweshiek County.

To date, PowI-80 has received FY 2006-2007 investments from 43 businesses, organizations and governmental entities. Their tax-deductible support allows PowI-80 to be Poweshiek County's economic development organization.

**\$3,000 and above:** Poweshiek County, City of Grinnell, Manatts, Grinnell Mutual, Grinnell Regional Medical Center

**\$2,000-\$2,999:** Grinnell College, City of Montezuma, City of Brooklyn, First Federal Bank, Brownells, Patriot Bank

**\$1,000-\$1,999:** Iowa Telecom, Alliant Energy, TIP Rural Electric Coop, Poweshiek Publications, Montezuma Light & Power, Donaldsons, F&M Bank, JELD-WEN, Poweshiek Water Association, VanderLinden Construction, Wells Fargo

**\$259-\$999:** ASI Sign Systems, Poweshiek County Board of Realtors, ITWC, Big River Resources, Fremont Farms, Iowa Valley Community College, KGRN Radio, Miraco, Monsanto, Ramsey-Weeks, Sam Berman & Sons, Sho-Me Container, Bierman & McNally, Brooklyn Mutual Telephone, Executive Search and Recruiting, Wes Finch Auto Plaza, Grinnell State Bank, Jensen Builders, Lowry Electric, Mike and Patti Mahaffey, PAW Marketing, Pinnacle Construction, Schild Law Office

Contact Bill Menner at 641-236-1626 or [bill@powI80.com](mailto:bill@powI80.com) to learn how you can become a Poweshiek Iowa Development supporter.



*Pow I-80*

927 4th Avenue • Grinnell, Iowa 50112 • 641-236-1626 • [info@powI80.com](mailto:info@powI80.com)