



The Iowa Extension Council Association Benefits YOUR Extension Council

IECA is your direct communication link to decision-makers

- Our **board members and executive director meet regularly with administrative team members** to voice your concerns, opinions, and suggestions. The Association sits at the table with Extension Administration to explain the challenges, formulate policies and practices that help solve local problems, smooth out local difficulties, and help county staff and councils be more effective with less effort.
- **Representation on many ISU Extension and Outreach state-wide committees** allows the association to represent county interests in many important decisions. In the last year, council members have served on the Vice President for Extension and Outreach search committee, Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) committee, county fair partnership agreement committee, and the finance committee.

IECA investigates your Council's concerns and challenges

- IECA provides County Extension Councils **access to their own legal representation**. Over half of all county extension councils have worked directly with Whitfield & Eddy to help with issues relating to employment law, staffing conflicts, policy review and contract oversight. Whitfield & Eddy have also served all 100 extension councils by representing councils' interests in guidance on their responsibilities under the Affordable Care Act, overtime rules, open meeting law concerns, and background checks.
- **Employee Assistance Program** for councils to offer to their county-paid employees. In 2018, over 330 county employees have access to benefits to help them with their problems and challenges in their everyday lives.
- IECA is at the table to **negotiate with vendors on behalf of extension councils**. Recently, IECA helped negotiate a revision to the American Income Life (AIL) accident policy, which covers youth participants and screened volunteers. This reduced premiums roughly 40% and increased coverage 10-fold.

IECA facilitates the sharing of best practices

- **IECA helps facilitate Extension Council training** designed by council members, when possible, to best meet the needs of council members. This includes webinars, extension council orientation, and the Extension Council Conference.
- Periodic meetings of IECA allow members representing counties across the state to meet and **discuss best practices, common issues, and solutions to common problems**. This invaluable sharing of knowledge has facilitated rapid adoption of changes impacting councils.
- Quick, easy, and affordable **volunteer screening**. Over 18,000 volunteers and staff have been screened. Because the association was able to negotiate a price reduction of approximately \$10/person, that is a savings of \$180,000 statewide – or an average of \$1,800 in savings for each county.

IECA communicates with its membership

- **The IECA website is maintained with a goal to provide easy-to-access information** for council members to fulfill their roles, including contact information for your IECA representative, timely news stories, regional news, and extension council training resources.
- **County Extension Council Members and Staff are kept up-to-date** on ISU Extension plans, policies and initiatives through regular e-mail messages directly to each IECA member.
- IECA board members and the IECA executive director are **available to visit with the council members** in your county or region - by email, phone, in-person, or webchat.

IECA provides legislative monitoring and leadership

- The legislative sub-committee **monitors legislative action** and keeps IECA members alerted to any proposed legislation that might affect Extension.
- IECA works with **state legislators to adapt legislation to assist councils**. Currently they are working to push back the publication date of the year-end financial reports and to reduce the cost of replacing extension council members.
- **IECA hosts a legislative day and 4-H public leadership experience** at the Iowa Capitol in Des Moines each spring. Council members, 4-Hers, and Extension supporters learn about the legislative process and meet with their legislators to discuss ways that Extension and Outreach serves their constituents. It is also an important opportunity to articulate how legislators can support Extension.

For more information about the Iowa Extension Council Association, visit
www.iaextensioncouncils.org