



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 Structured for Success committee, Assistant Vice President for County Services search committee, and the MOU committee.

IECA investigates your Council's concerns and challenges

- IECA provides County Extension Councils **access to their own legal representation**. In 2019, nearly one-fourth of Iowa's county extension councils have worked directly with Whitfield & Eddy to help with issues relating to employment law, staffing conflicts, policy review and contract oversight. Additionally, Whitfield & Eddy has served the good of all extension councils by advocating for clearly defined roles and processes in the Structured for Success recommendation and the revised MOU agreement, providing guidance for employer responsibilities during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as updating personnel policy and the employee handbook templates.
- **Employee Assistance Program** for councils to offer to their county-paid employees. In 2020, over 350 county employees have access to benefits to help them with their problems and challenges in their everyday lives. This service has especially been helpful to employees in dealing with the extra stress of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- IECA is at the table to **negotiate with vendors on behalf of extension councils**. In 2019, IECA worked with First Advantage to provide a notification system for employees and volunteers needing to be rescreened.
- **Job postings of county-paid extension positions** on the IECA website assist with increasing qualified applicant pools.

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**. On average, a county processes 30-40 screenings per year. Because the association was able to negotiate over a \$10 savings per screening, most counties save about \$300-\$400 dollars a year.

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, and extension council training resources.
- **County Extension Council Members and Staff are kept up-to-date** on ISU Extension plans,

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 hosts a legislative day for extension council and 4-H members** 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