



## 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 been represented on the Open for Iowa team and the Exceptional Effort Awards Committee. The executive director also serves on numerous committees and regularly attends administration team meetings.



## IECA investigates your Council's concerns and challenges

- IECA provides County Extension Councils **access to their own legal representation**. In FY21, one-third of Iowa's county extension councils have worked directly with Whitfield & Eddy to help with issues relating to employment law, staffing conflicts, policy review, contract management, and oversight. Additionally, Whitfield & Eddy has served the good of all extension councils by providing guidance for employer responsibilities during the COVID-19 pandemic and by delivering annual training webinars to staff and council members.
- Ninety-four councils provided the **Employee Assistance Program (EAP)** benefit to 388 employees through IECA's contract with the vendor, Employee & Family Resources. In 2021, the benefit was increased from three to six sessions of free counseling, matching ISU's EAP benefit. Two EAP Lunch & Learn sessions help staff learn more about EAP benefits and how to access them. A bi-weekly newsletter *EAP News* connects county staff with their benefits.
- IECA is at the table to **negotiate with vendors on behalf of extension councils**. This year IECA worked with First Advantage, our background screening vendor, to create a new package, offer an education verification search, and provide training to users.
- **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 and Outreach plans, policies and initiatives through regular e-mail newsletters directly to every 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 video conference.
- Follow the Iowa Extension Council Association on Facebook.



## 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 and Outreach.
- **IECA hosts a legislative day for extension council and 4-H members** at the Iowa Capitol in Des Moines each February. 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](http://www.iaextensioncouncils.org)