

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 29, 2019**  
CONTACT: Anne Roth, Iowa Business Council  
[ARoth@IowaBusinessCouncil.org](mailto:ARoth@IowaBusinessCouncil.org)



## **ADVISORY: Community Forum to Address Economic Inclusion, Collaboration & Regional Development**

*Forum will address "Paving the Way for Community Vibrancy & Growth – Cedar Valley's Economic Inclusion"*

(DES MOINES)—The Iowa Business Council (IBC) will hold its final Vision to Vitality in Waterloo on **Monday, September 30 from 5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at Hawkeye Community College in the Van G. Miller Adult Learning Center** (120 Jefferson St, Waterloo). This community forum will be hosted by IBC member Raj Kalathur, President of John Deere Financial and Chief Information Officer of Deere & Company.

The fourth Vision to Vitality forum will focus on the theme "Paving the Way for Community Vibrancy & Growth – Cedar Valley's Economic Inclusion." Panelists will address community-wide efforts to increase economic inclusion by creating economic and workforce access for everyone through targeted programs. The discussion will examine initiatives to increase work-based learning opportunities to all students and programs to increase diversity in the workforce to meet local demands. The forum will conclude with audience participation and comment.

Vision Vitality forums are held across the state and are candid discussions with IBC members and local community members about Iowa's economy and best practices for future growth. After the release of the IBC's 2019 Competitive Dashboard, members recognized a critical part of strengthening the workforce includes bolstering the school to career pipeline and increasing Iowa's population and diversity.

"We are looking forward to meeting with leaders from the Cedar Valley region," Georgia Van Gundy, Executive Director of the Iowa Business Council, said. "We know the community is working hard on solutions to create pathways for success, increasing workforce diversity and building a strong talent pipeline. We're eager to hear their best practices."

Panelists' comments and audience feedback is used to help instruct Iowa Business Council's policy advocacy work and priority initiatives.

The event is free to attend and open to both the public and the media. Panelists include:

- Cary Darrah, President & CEO, Grow Cedar Valley
- Quentin Hart, Mayor, City of Waterloo
- Dr. Jane Lindaman, Superintendent, Waterloo Community School District
- Tim Murphy, Global Director, Large Tractors, John Deere

Please RSVP to [ibc@iowabusinesscouncil.org](mailto:ibc@iowabusinesscouncil.org).

For more information on the IBC and to access its research and data, please visit [www.IowaBusinessCouncil.org](http://www.IowaBusinessCouncil.org).

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### **About the Iowa Business Council**

The Iowa Business Council (IBC) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization whose 23 members are the chief decision makers of major Iowa employers. One in six jobs in Iowa are tied to an IBC company. IBC member companies have invested billions of dollars of capital in Iowa's commercial infrastructure; lead the way in technology innovation, R&D, and grants procured; and are often the driving financial and volunteer forces behind philanthropic efforts all over the state.

IBC member companies include: Alliant Energy; Casey's General Stores, Inc.; Collins Aerospace; Corteva Agriscience; Deere & Company; Fareway; FBL Financial Group, Inc.; HNI Corporation; Hy-Vee, Inc.; Iowa Bankers Association; Kent Corporation; MercyOne; Meredith Corporation; MidAmerican Energy Company; Pella Corporation; Principal; Ruan Transportation Management Systems; UnityPoint Health; The University of Iowa Health Care; Vermeer Corporation; The Weitz Company; Wellmark Blue Cross Blue Shield of Iowa; and Wells Enterprises, Inc.