



Photo courtesy of Mike Donahey with Marshalltown Times Republican

The Iowa Business Council in conjunction with UnityPoint Health is grateful for your participation in our Vision to Vitality forum in Marshalltown.

The panelists and community members provided excellent feedback as we continue our journey to learn from communities that are already putting strategies into place to grow and diversify their population.

The top-line themes and takeaways from the forum include:

- Inclusion efforts must be genuine, and there is a difference between "not excluding" and "including." Understanding the difference is critical to success.
- Engaging local diverse populations upfront is vital when considering what change will be and how to make that change. Asking what the population needs/wants instead of assuming what they need/want is a good first step.

- Celebration of diversity and addressing our workforce shortage must start early and be visited often; Marshalltown School District and local businesses are working tirelessly to connect business to students and parents to create a workforce pipeline.
- Strategies of inclusion in business means employees of the workplace look, speak and have similar cultural traditions or knowledge of the clients and customers they are serving.
- Marshalltown has an immense amount of community pride, leaders and citizens are working on how to impart this pride to young people to either stay to work or study in Marshalltown or return home after studies.
- City and recreational resources should reflect cultural diversity.
- Community allies are important, understanding and teaching cultural competencies to the workforce and community can be a start.
- Proactive engagement between government services (such as law enforcement, city administration, and the census bureau) and all subsections of the population can create a more engaged and productive society.

As the Iowa Business Council's mission is to serve as an economic catalyst for **all** of Iowa, we will share the feedback from this forum with our membership and work to incorporate what we heard from your community and the others throughout the year into our policy priorities and action items.

As Marshalltown continues the conversation around these topics, please let us know if you would like Iowa Business Council to be involved. As we form our recommendations for moving forward, we look forward to sharing them with the community to hear your feedback.

If you were not able to make a comment at the forum or would like to include further commentary, please [visit our survey to provide feedback](#).

Again, thank you for taking the time to attend and participate in the Iowa Business Council's Vision to Vitality forum in your community. We are encouraged by the great work taking place throughout our state to keep all of Iowa thriving.

We would love to continue to engage with you throughout the upcoming year, so we encourage you to connect with us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [LinkedIn](#).