55th Annual Iowa Governor's Safety & Health Conference

October 27 - 28, 2026

The Meadows Events & Conference Center, Altoona, IA

STATE OF IOWA
KIM REYNOLDS
GOVERNOR

October 1, 2026

Dear Safety Professionals,

On behalf of the State of Iowa, it's our pleasure to welcome you today to the 55th Annual Governor's Safety and Health Conference hosted by the Iowa Occupational Safety and Health Advisory Council.

Advancing safety in the workplace is a very important role. A strong and vibrant economy relies on healthy and safe workers. We applaud the work you do every day to minimize injury to workers and ensure workplaces and work processes are safe. We are proud of the work you do every day to protect your employees so they can return home safely to their families each night.

This conference and the work of the Occupational Safety and Health Advisory Council is dedicated to sharing best practices and good ideas that you can take back to the factory floor, construction site, food processing facility and all other places of work.

We're confident that the knowledge and skills you gain at the Governor's Safety Conference will be invaluable in promoting workplace safety, preventing injury and saving lives across Iowa.

Thank you for what you do every day to make a difference for employees and employers. Enjoy the conference.

Best regards,

Kim Reynolds

Governor of Iowa

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Kirk Dighton

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Hawkeye Chapter

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CIRCLE OF SAFETY

The Circle of Safety logo was adopted by the Occupational Safety and Health Advisory Council in 1974. Since then, it has served as a symbol of purpose for all of their endeavors in Iowa.

Just as the wagon train was drawn into a circle for the mutual protection of the pioneers, the circle of safety is provided by the cooperative efforts of all concerned and surrounds the figure representing the employees of the state. The employee is not just the central figure, but is a part of the circle itself. This embodies the intent of the Occupational Safety and Health Act whereby the government, employers and employees must share in the rights and responsibilities for a safe and healthful environment.

CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDITS

Purpose

The Iowa Occupational Safety & Health Advisory Council is exclusively dedicated to promoting and providing continuing education concerning Iowa workplace safety & health regulations and best practices.

Intended Audience

The Iowa Governor's Safety & Health Conference is intended for occupational safety professionals, risk managers, consultants, business executives, supervisors, occupational health nurses, workers, or anyone that may have interest in, or impact on, workplace safety and health.

Continuing Education Credits

Certified Safety Professional (CSP)

Continuance of Certification (COC) points for Certified Safety Professional (CSP) may be claimed by attending this Governor's Safety and Health Conference, as authorized by the Board of Certified Safety Professionals. For more information please go to **bcsp.org**.

Certified Industrial Hygienist (CIH)

Certification Maintenance (CM) points for Certified Industrial Hygienist (CIH) may be claimed by attending this Governor's Safety and Health Conference, as authorized by the American Board of Industrial Hygiene. For more information please go to **abih.org**.

General Credit

General participation and education certificates will be available upon request after completion of the electronic post-conference evaluation from the Heartland Center of Occupational Health and Safety. 8 contact hours will be awarded for 2 day attendance.

BUILD A HEALTHIER WORKPLACE

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Scan to explore workplace wellness solutions from Hy-Vee.

SCHEDULE – TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27

8:00 – 8:45 AM	**Registration and Exhibits**		
8:45 – 9:15 AM	**Morning Announcements**		**Bishop Ballroom**
9:15 – 10:30 AM	**Keynote Speaker - Mitch Matthews - The Curious Leader**		
10:30—10.45	**Vendor Break**		
10:45 – 11:45 AM	**Breakout Session 1**		
	Skinner A	Creating the Legacy YOU Want to Leave	Mitch Mathews
	Skinner B	Beyond Compliance: An Employer's Perspective on OSHA's Warehousing and Distribution Center National Emphasis Program	Kyle Oberender
	Skinner C	Recordkeeping, Incentive Programs, and Supervisor Training	Anna Tuecke
	Salon 2/3	Understanding and Utilizing Safety Services from a WC Carrier and Broker	Tony Prospero Terry Lively
11:45 – 12:45 PM	**Lunch / Awards Ceremony / Vendor Time**		
12:45 – 1:45 PM	**Breakout Session 2**		
	Skinner A	Know the Job, Reduce the Risk: Using Physical Demands Analysis to Improve Workplace Safety	Todd Schemper
	Skinner B	Introduction to Arc Flash and Steps Needed to Meet OSHA and Insurance Regulations	Dave Sullivan John Waldron
	Skinner C	Oops! I Missed That One!	Kirk Dighton
	Salon 2/3	What a Review of 10,000 Incidents Revealed About Preventing Serious Injuries	Rune Haug Rebecca Timmins
1:45 – 2:00 PM	**Vendor Break**		
2:00 – 3:00 PM	**Breakout Session 3**		
	Skinner A	From Observation to Action: Preventing and Responding to Workplace Violence	Luke Longman
	Skinner B	The Struggle is Real: Safety and the Mind	Marie Dinwiddie
	Skinner C	AI Shifting Adoption to Affirmation: From Can We? To Should We? In OSH	Dan Tuuri
	Salon 2/3	Iowa Workers' Comp: What's Changing, What's Trending, & What You Need to Know	Jason Wiltfang
3:05 – 4:05 PM	**Breakout Session 4**		
	Skinner A	Building a Strong Safety Culture: Leadership, Engagement, and Accountability	Jose Gongora
	Skinner B	Prediction Power: Leading Indicators to Combat Strains, Heat, and Forklift Risk Using Wearables	Tom West
	Skinner C	EHS Management Systems 101- Fundamentals and How they Drive Organizational EHS Performance	Dylan Gaudineer
	Salon 2/3	Ahead of the Threat: Building a Layered Security Strategy	Steve Flann - Nathan Wolff - Billy Fox
4:05 – 4:35 PM	**Closing Announcements / Sponsor Speeches**		**Bishop Ballroom**
4:35—6.00 PM	**Vendor Reception**		

SCHEDULE – WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28

7:00 – 8:00 AM	**Registration and Breakfast**	
8:00 – 8:20 AM	**Opening Remarks**	**Bishop Ballroom**
8:20 – 9:20 AM	**Keynote Speaker - Bob Edwards - Building an environment of Ownership**	
9:20 – 9:35 AM	**Vendor Break**	
9:35 – 10:35 PM	**Breakout Session 5**	
	Skinner A — Learning is Doing Something	Bob Edwards
	Skinner B — Fall Protection: A B C's D's and E's	Chris Murray
	Skinner C — Best Practices in Conveyor Risk Assessment	Robert Ridpath
	Salon 2/3 — Causation/relationship building with Occupational Medicine	Dr. Charles Mooney
10:35 – 10:50 AM	**Vendor Break**	
10:50 – 11:50 AM	**Breakout Session 6**	
	Skinner A — Don't be afraid to be a good employer: When work rules are important.	Peggy Peterson
	Skinner B — Machine Guarding for Risk Reduction Measures	Shawn Mantel
	Skinner C — You are Not the Boss of Me: Addressing Difficult Safety Situations for the Non-Manager	Marie Dinwiddie
11:50 – 12:00 PM	**Closing Remarks**	**Bishop Ballroom**

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Mitch Matthews

Mitch offers a powerful and proven question-based strategy that will increase your ability to inspire buy-in, spark innovative solutions, and help you understand the "why" behind human behavior and decision-making. Because let's face it – some days are harder than others, and traditional approaches don't always work.

Through powerful stories, relevant case studies, and immediately applicable tools, you'll discover how to:

- Use "Solution-Based Thinking" to navigate those frustrating moments when people just don't get it
- Take new ideas from conferences like this one and successfully spread them back to your team (without hitting that dreaded brick wall)
- Build meaningful connections with fellow professionals who truly understand the challenges you face
- Lead with more curiosity, creativity, and resilience – even on the toughest days

Plus, these tools work at work AND at home! (Yes, even with teenagers.)

Bob Edwards

Bob Edwards is a Human & Organizational Performance (HOP) practitioner. Bob will share with you what he knows and what he does to help organizations gain a deeper understanding of their operations and the complex nature of work. He will also show how, through collaboration and mutual respect, organizations are becoming more reliable and resilient. Bob has a BS degree in mechanical engineering from Tennessee Technological University and MS degree in Advanced Safety Engineering Management from the University of Alabama Birmingham. His work experience includes time as a maintenance man, soldier in the U.S. Army, a design engineer, maintenance and technical support leader, safety leader and assistant plant manager. He is also the Co-Author of "Bob's Guide to Operational Learning."

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Course Overview:

This 3-part intensive class is designed to empower foremen, supervisors, safety representatives, safety managers, engineers, and project managers with essential skills in safety leadership and coaching. Through a blend of practical workshops, engaging discussions, and hands-on activities, participants will explore the foundations of effective safety practices, leadership techniques, and coaching methodologies to foster a culture of safety within their organizations.

Course Objectives:

- Advanced Safety Leadership Skills
- Practical Coaching Techniques
- Tailored Operational Excellence Proposal
- Enhanced Communication Techniques
- Safety Culture Development Plan
- Problem-Solving and Conflict Resolution Skills
- Networking and Collaboration
- Certification of Competence upon completion of course capstone project.

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DUCKSWORTH SOLUTIONS

SAVE THE DATE

OCTOBER 26 - 27, 2027

GENERAL SESSION DETAILS

Tuesday, October 27 | Bishop Ballroom

9:15 AM | Keynote: The Curious Leader

Mitch Matthews, - Professional Speaker / Success Coach

Get the buy-in, build the connections, and bring tangible tools back to your team! In this engaging and interactive keynote session, Mitch Matthews tackles one of the biggest challenges facing EH&S professionals: How do you get people to actually care about safety? The answer? Lead with curiosity. Mitch offers a powerful and proven question-based strategy that will increase your ability to inspire buy-in, spark innovative solutions, and help you understand the "why" behind human behavior and decision-making. Because let's face it - some days are harder than others, and traditional approaches don't always work. As Mitch likes to say: "True innovation doesn't take a 2-day retreat - it can simply come from two minutes spent with a better question."

10:45 AM | Breakout Session 1

Skinner A : Creating the Legacy YOU Want to Leave

Mitch Matthews, - Professional Speaker / Success Coach

Let's be honest: in EH&S, those calls to say you're doing a great job are rare. You hear about problems. You face frustration. And some days, it feels like you're not making a difference at all. But you ARE—and this session will help you see it, own it, and amplify it. Whether you're early in your EH&S career, approaching retirement (and still looking for better tools!) or anywhere in between, this session will leave you inspired, validated, and equipped with strategies you can implement immediately.

Skinner B : Beyond Compliance: An Employer's Perspective on OSHA's Warehousing and Distribution Center National Emphasis Program

Kyle Oberender, Director, Supply Chain Compliance & Food Protection - Hy-Vee, Inc.

OSHA's National Emphasis Program (NEP) on Warehousing and Distribution Center Operations, launched in 2023, focuses on powered industrial trucks, material handling and storage, walking-working surfaces, means of egress, fire protection, heat, and ergonomic hazards. This session offers an employer's view of what the NEP means in practice: how it shapes operational priorities, workability, and workforce engagement across a multi-site distribution network. Rather than a technical review of the standards, the discussion centers on practical approaches that go above and beyond compliance, including leadership engagement, employee involvement, and data-driven injury and claims reduction, along with lessons learned along the way.

Skinner C : Recordkeeping, Incentive Programs, and Supervisor Training

Anna Tuecke, Safety Consultant, IOSHA Consultation & Education

Is your recordkeeping at risk for a citation? Could your incentive program be damaging your safety culture? Are your supervisors at risk of being zombie-fied? Don’t be scared – we’ll answer these questions (and more!) during this interactive and resource-heavy presentation.

Salon 2/3 : Understanding & Utilizing Safety Services from WC Carrier and Broker

Tony Prospero, CSP, CSHM, CHMM; Sr. Safety Consultant - Marsh Agency
Terry Lively, Senior Safety & Compliance Consultant - Marsh Agency

How to understand and utilize safety services from your Workers’ Compensation carrier and business insurance broker.

BREAKOUT SESSION DETAILS

Tuesday | 12:45 PM | Breakout Session 2

Skinner A : Know the Job, Reduce the Risk: Using Physical Demands Analysis to Improve Workplace Safety

Todd Schemper, PT, DPT; COO; Kinetic Edge Physical Therapy

Without objective data, decisions regarding hiring, accommodations, fitness for duty, and post-injury return to work often rely on assumptions rather than facts. This presentation examines how Physical Demands Analyses (PDAs) provide a defensible foundation for workforce safety. Attendees will learn how job demand data can be applied to reduce risk, improve employee placement, support injury prevention and management programs, and enhance workplace safety outcomes.

Skinner B : Introduction to Arc Flash and Steps Needed to Meet OSHA and Insurance Regulations

Dave Sullivan - Sullivan Training and Consulting

John Waldron, Electrical Engineer, PE - Shive Hattery

This presentation will highlight the important points of 2027 NFPA 70E with regard to electrical safety, boundaries, and steps to achieve regulations for your facility and employees. If you are Arc Flash complaint or have done nothing, this presentation will help you to plan your next steps.

Skinner C : Oops! I Missed That One!

Kirk Dighton, MS, Safety Manager D. C. Taylor Co and Owner / Lead Consultant Imperial Safety Solutions LLC

This training presentation provides employees with the knowledge and tools needed to safely plan and perform non-routine work activities. Participants will learn how to define non-routine work and understand why tasks that are infrequent, unique, or outside normal operations often carry elevated risk due to unfamiliar hazards and changing conditions. The course emphasizes the importance of identifying hazards before work begins through effective hazard recognition techniques and explains how a Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) serves as a structured process for evaluating tasks, identifying potential dangers, and implementing preventive measures.

Salon 2/3 : What a Review of 10,000 Incidents Revealed About Preventing Serious Injuries

Rune Haug, Vice President of Operations - Aspen Risk Management Group

Rebecca Timmins, Co-CEO, Managing Director, Americas - Krause Bell Group

Most organization aren't paying enough attention to failures with serious injury and fatality potential. We will discuss findings from a research study of more 10,000 incidents and 680 high-severity potential incidents and recommendations that applies to a wide range of companies.
This presentation will focus on showing that high potential events are mis-classified as low risk underestimating their true potential severity. We will discuss the importance of accurate SIF classification.

To fix this, organizations need better systems (processes) to spot serious risks. Senior leaders must challenge assumptions about routine tasks and invest in resources to address the biggest threats. The findings and insights will apply to all kinds of organizations including construction companies

BREAKOUT SESSION DETAILS

Tuesday | 02:00 PM | Breakout Session 3

Skinner A : From Observation to Action: Preventing and Responding to Workplace Violence

Luke Longman, Operations Manager for Construction Safety Specialists Inc.

This training is designed to promote or enhance situational awareness at work, to include social cues and responses to aggression and provide a basic framework for deescalation. During the course, discussions will include avenues of response along with documentation responsibilities, and the communication of this information to employees. In addition, if deescalation is unsuccessful, an actionable response regarding a run, hide, fight scenario will be explored. This section of the presentation will discuss what a responsible emergency action plan should include, and how it is documented and implemented in your workplace.

Skinner B : The Struggle is Real: Safety and the Mind

Marie Dinwiddie, ASP, EHS Scientist - Fehr Graham Engineering & Environmental

Workplace safety has a plethora of rules and regulations designed to keep everyone safe during the workday. While these rules and regulations address the most basic of hazards, one hazard that isn't addressed is the role employee mental health plays in ensuring a safe workspace. This session will examine how mental health affects day-to-day decision making in safety not only for employees but also for the EHS professional. This session will also discuss how to approach workplace safety in a more holistic context, beyond the rules and regulations.

Skinner C : AI Shifting Adoption to Affirmation: From Can We? To Should We? In OSH

Dan Tuuri, CISA, CISSP, Cybersecurity Consultant - TrueNorth Companies

Artificial Intelligence has rapidly become a powerful force multiplier for both organizations and individuals, with tools being adopted far faster than earlier technological innovations. As professionals experiment with AI-driven analytics, monitoring, and reporting, many have felt pressure from executives, vendors, and media narratives that warn: "Adopt AI or become obsolete." This has led to widespread deployment of tools - sometimes through formal organizational programs, but just as often through individual, uncoordinated use of AI systems. This session reframes the conversation from unchecked adoption to intentional affirmation. Instead of asking only "Can we use AI for this task?" participants will explore "Should we use AI here, and under what conditions?" Using practical examples from occupational safety contexts, the session will introduce accessible frameworks to evaluate ethical considerations, risk, and impact, helping safety leaders align AI use with organizational values, regulatory expectations, and worker well-being.

Salon 2/3 : Iowa Workers' Comp: What's Changing, What's Trending, & What You Need to Know

Jason Wiltfang, Attorney/Owner - Corridorlaw Group Iowa

What's happening in Iowa workers' compensation right now? This session will take a practical look at current developments, emerging trends, and issues receiving attention in Iowa workers' compensation. Topics will include recent case law trends and other developments that may affect how workers' compensation matters are handled in the workplace. Attendees will come away with a better understanding of the issues to watch and how current developments may impact their day-to-day responsibilities.

BREAKOUT SESSION DETAILS

Tuesday | 03:05 PM | Breakout Session 4

Skinner A : Building a Strong Safety Culture: Leadership, Engagement and Accountability.

Jose Gongora, MBA, Associate Director of EHS&S

Establishing a strong safety culture in manufacturing requires visible leadership commitment, employee engagement, and consistent accountability at all levels of the organization. Safety expectations should be clearly defined, effectively communicated, and integrated into daily operations and decision-making. Employees should be empowered to identify and report hazards, participate in safety initiatives, and stop work when unsafe conditions are present. Through continuous training, proactive hazard prevention, open communication, and ongoing evaluation of safety performance, organizations can foster a culture in which safety is viewed as a shared responsibility and an essential component of operational excellence.

Skinner B : Prediction Power: Leading Indicators to Combat Strains, Heat, and Forklift Risk Using Wearables

Tom West, SPHR, SHRM-SCP, COSS, VP & Global Practice Leader - MakuSafe Wearable Tech

What if your safety program could predict and prevent the most common injuries before they occur? This breakout session presents a forward-thinking but grounded approach to preventing MSDs, heat illness, and forklift incidents through wearable technology. By tracking motion, environmental conditions, and worker exposure data—without collecting PII—organizations are gaining insight into hidden risks. We'll share how leading companies are turning this data into action, reducing claims, and shaping safer, smarter workplaces with tech that's as practical as it is powerful.

Skinner C : EHS Management Systems 101 – Fundamentals and How they Drive Organizational EHS Performance

Dylan Gaudineer, CSP, Team Lead EHS Services Crop Protection & Seed Operations - BASF Agricultural Solutions

EHS Management Systems 101 – Fundamentals and How they Drive Organizational EHS Performance will provide an overview of management systems used to drive continuous improvement within organizations. These systems include OSHA's Voluntary Protection Program, ISO 14001/45001, and ACC Responsible Care. The presentation will explain how the Plan-Do-Check-Act model is utilized across these standards as a mechanism for EHS performance within organizations.

Salon 2/3 : Ahead of the Threat: Building a Layered Security Strategy

Steve Flann, MS, CSP, Sr. Director EHSS - Vermeer Corporation
Nathan Wolff , Security & Emergency Preparedness Manager - Vermeer Corporation
Billy Fox, CPP, Sr. Security & Emergency Preparedness Manager - Vermeer Corporation

As security risks continue to evolve, organizations must balance foundational physical security controls with emerging technologies that improve threat awareness, prevention, and response. This presentation explores a comprehensive security strategy built on layered protection, proactive risk mitigation, and operational readiness. Participants will learn how baseline security countermeasures, local and global implementation efforts, and strategic technology investments work together to strengthen organizational resilience. The session will also examine lessons learned from evaluating new security technologies, including open-source intelligence monitoring, weapons detection, gunshot detection, travel risk management, drones, robotics, and advanced situational awareness platforms, while emphasizing the importance of aligning investments with site-specific risks and business objectives.

BREAKOUT SESSION DETAILS

Wednesday, October 28 | Bishop Ballroom

9:15 AM | Keynote: Building an environment of Ownership

Bob Edwards - Professional Speaker

The power of asking meaningful questions as a leader. Great leaders, make great decisions, if they have great information. Too many times, it's a data input problem.

9:35 AM | Breakout Session 5

Skinner A : Learning Is Doing Something

Bob Edwards - Professional Speaker

Taking time to do deep operational learning, whether it is because an unwanted event occurred or not, will lead to better decisions and changes even if they aren't remarkable. Remember, small changes are not insignificant if they are changing the direction of the organization.

Skinner B : Fall Protection: A B C's D's and E's

Chris Murray, Safety and Solutions Trainer - Werner

We will first discuss the 'Hierarchy of Controls' when approaching a fall protection application in the field. A brief discussion of passive fall protection specifications along with common methods utilized in the field. The majority of the time will be spent on active fall protection planning and mitigating the workers' ability to 'misuse' equipment. The discussion will include: Anchors: proper installation and load angles. Body Harness: proper inspection, selection, and fit. Connecting Device: lanyards vs. SRL's, Class 1 vs. Class 2, swing fall and fall clearance. Descent/Rescue: preventing suspension trauma and proper rescue planning.

Skinner C : Best Practices in Conveyor Risk Assessment

Robert Ridpath Jr., CSP CMSE®, CFEI, Safety Specialist - Wandling Engineering

This session presents the findings of a qualitative research study examining best practices for conveyor risk assessments in industrial settings. Drawing on interviews with Certified Safety Professionals (CSPs) from diverse industries, the presentation explores effective approaches to identifying conveyor hazards, conducting risk assessments, training internal auditors, utilizing cross-functional safety teams, and applying industry standards. Attendees will gain practical insights into improving conveyor safeguarding, evaluating non-routine tasks such as maintenance and troubleshooting, and developing proactive safety management systems that reduce risk and enhance workplace safety.

Salon 2/3 : OSHA case study-C6 Zero: Explosion Investigation

Dr. Charles D Mooney MD MPH Director of Occupational Medicine - Iowa Specialty Hospitals & Clinics

The presentation discusses the process of determining causation of a possible work related injury or illness. Risk factor identification and estimation of probability of a work related condition.

BREAKOUT SESSION DETAILS

Wednesday | 10:50 AM | Breakout Session 6

Skinner A : Don’t be afraid to be a good employer: When work rules are important.

Peggy S. Peterson, Bureau Chief - Iowa OSHA Consultation and Education

Good employers set clear expectations. Regarding safety and health, the work rules may need a bit more communication than just the written format. All to often we hear accounts of serious injuries resulting from horseplay. It’s not just innocent fun in the workplace. Established consequences need to be clearly communicated.

Skinner B : Machine Guarding for Risk Reduction Measures

Shawn Mantel, BAS in Automated Manufacturing, Owner / Applications Engineer, PowerSafe Automation

Join us for this informative and actionable presentation where we dive into how effective machine guarding can significantly reduce workplace risks and enhance safety compliance. Discover real-world examples, best practices, and step-by-step strategies for prioritizing and implementing guarding solutions across your facility.

Whether you're a Safety Manager, Engineer, or Plant Leader, this session will give you the tools to move from reactive fixes to a proactive safety-first approach.

Skinner C : You Are Not the Boss of Me! – Addressing difficult safety issues for the non-manager.

Marie Dinwiddie, ASP, EHS Scientist - Fehr Graham Engineering & Environmental

In the context of Behavior Based Safety, managers and employees alike must share feedback with others to affect change. While it’s easier for those with managerial titles and authority to create behavioral change, it is not as easy for those not in a supervisory position. At times, the task becomes difficult if next to impossible, especially if the person is perceived as not having any authority at all. In this session we will discuss those types of conversations and how employees at all levels can have difficult discussions and be leaders of safety without the official title. Attendees will learn how to identify the different personality types present on the shop floor and learn strategies to diffuse the most problematic situations leading to increased confidence and cooperation.

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MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIPS

Since 1977, the Iowa Governor's Safety & Health Conference has awarded more than **$237,350** in scholarships to students in occupational safety at five Iowa colleges. We are proud to announce that in 2026 we are awarding **$22,000** in scholarships to Iowa students.

These scholarships will be presented during lunch on Tuesday, October 27. Please join us in supporting the educational efforts of these deserving recipients.

Jack Beno Scholarship

Suzie Bryant
University of Iowa

Bill Dickinson Scholarship

Gift Udoh
University of Iowa

ASSP Hawkeye Chapter

Anna Stracciolini
University of Iowa

Iowa Occupational Safety & Health Advisory Council Scholarship

Cody Volkmann - *Iowa State University*

Jennifer Addae - *University of Iowa*

Malanie Ewoldt - *Upper Iowa University*

Nathaniel Pontefract - *University of Iowa*

Mackenzie Pattridge - *University of Iowa*

2025 Scholarship Award Winners

The 2025 scholarship award winners were Cindy Rico Chavez, Mathew Saylor, Ernesto Mendez, Elijah Bowman, Anthony Romero, Paul Wendzel and Jack O'Brien.
Not present for photo: Caroline Powell, Anna Stracciolini and Molly Rhodes.

PAST SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

2025

Caroline Powell, *U of I*
Matthew Saylor, *U of I*
Anna Stracciolini, *U of I*
Ernesto Mendez, *U of I*
Elijah Bowman, *ISU*
Molly Rhodes, *U of I*
Cyndi Rico Chavez, *U of I*
Anthony Romero, *ISU*
Jack O'Brien, *ISU*
Paul Wendzel *ISU*

2024

Sierra Virden *U of I*
Jared Jimenez *U of I*
Tyler Guzowski *U of I*
Anna Proctor *U of I*
Jack Wachowski *U of I*

2023

Emily Huber, *U of I*
Holly Rowland, *U of I*
Elijah Bowman, *ISU*
Ernesto Mendez, *U of I*
Elizabeth Foster, *ISU*
Anna Proctor, *U of I*
Zachary Wiggins, *ISU*
Sierra Virden, *U of I*
Alexander Barnett, *U of I*

2022

Valery Boksa, *U of I*
Spencer Baker, *U of I*
Mallory Leazer, *ISU*
Lauren Barlow, *U of I*
Tavion Yrjo, *ISU*

2021

Alessandra Pratt *U of I*
Kelsey Strandberg, *U of I*
Liam Gleason *ISU*
Spencer Baker *U of I*
Anna Proctor *U of I*
Mallory Leazer *ISU*
Abby Espinosa-Gonzales *ISU*

2020

Nastaran Moradi *U of I*
Lindsay Heck *U of I*
Christian Feye *ISU*

2019

Priyanka Vakkalanka *U of I*
Allison Persing *U of I*
Daniel Chapman *ISU*

2018

Shelby Clark *U of I*
Misha Griffis *U of I*
Johnathan Hughes *ISU*

2017

Darrin Thompson *U of I*
Shaunae Alex *U of I*
Ria Gasaway *ISU*

2016

Laura Hallett *U of I*
Sai Ramaswamy *ISU*
Mahmoud Metwali *U of I*

2015

Kayla Faust *U of I*
Sarah Ischer *U of I*
Ayrton Williams *ISU*

2014

Levi Mines *U of I*
Maya Ramaswamy *U of I*
Maria Melendez *ISU*

2013

Mark Schall *U of I*
Kelsey Smithart *U of I*
Derek Boshold *ISU*

2012

Kelsey Smithart *U of I*
Jessica Mills *U of I*
Mitchel Steffes *ISU*

2011

Nirmalla Barros *U of I*
Nathan Brayman *ISU*
Adrianne Horne *U of I*

2010

Lauren Gant *U of I*
Mitchell Kange *U of I*
Abby Harper Maples *U of I*

2009

Brian Pavilonis U of I
Jamie Brown U of I
Donna Holzer-Vosbugh *U of I*

2008

Lorenza Cena U of I
Mallory Johnson U of I
Javier Santella Elias U of I

2007

Robert Ian Poole U of I
Alysha Meyers U of I

2006

Adam Riss *U of I*
William Downs *ISU*
James Lindgren *UNI*
Lindsay Parker *U of I*

2005

Kira Campos-Anderson *ISU*
Troy Mills *ISU*
Matthew Murphy *U of I*
Matthew Nonnenmann *U of I*

2004

Nathan Fethke *U of I*
Patrick Murphy *ISU*
Vijay Gola *U of I*
Jeffrey Miller *U of I*
Andrew McNaught *ISU*

2003

Jon Judge *ISU*
Jessica Ferrie *U of I*
Joung Ae Lee *U of I*
Joshua Jacobsen *ISU*
Timothy Powers *ISU*
Ryan Hoenicke *ISU*

Jack Beno Scholarship Foundation

When **Jack Beno**, age 60, lost a long battle with cancer in 1997, the safety world lost a truly inspirational leader. His ideas, guidance and tenacity contributed greatly to the many successes of the Iowa Governor's Safety & Health Conference and to workplace safety and health throughout Iowa.

Jack was appointed to the Iowa Occupational Safety and Health Advisory Council in 1979 after accepting a position at Iowa State University. Jack's former students continually speak of the profound impact he had on their education and life experiences, and will never forget him or the lessons they learned.

The Jack Beno Scholarship Foundation was established in 1998 to provide scholarships for safety-related education in Iowa colleges. In honor of his memory, many former colleagues, friends, and students have made a contribution to support this cause.

Bill Dickinson Scholarship

Bill Dickinson served the State of Iowa through his work with the Iowa-Illinois Safety Council, American Society of Safety Engineers, and Nationwide Insurance. His work with the council often overlapped with the Iowa Governor's Safety & Health Conference, as he spoke and provided expert speakers on many topics.

Bill Dickinson and Bruce McCann were instrumental in the establishment of the ASSE golf outing that has funded much of the Jack Beno Scholarship fund. More importantly, Bill was constantly mentoring safety professionals throughout the state, encouraging them to excel in their work. Bill and Jack met on a number of occasions to discuss many safety issues affecting the state and the nation.

Gary Higbee captured the spirit and thoughts of many other EHS professionals and colleagues best, stating, "Both men (Jack Beno and Bill Dickinson) were men of honor and stature; I was fortunate to be their friend."

GARY HAWK SAFETY AWARD WINNER

Kirk Dighton
Safety Manager
D.C. Taylor Co.

Kirk Dighton has served as the Safety Manager for D. C. Taylor Co. since February 2017. He holds a Master of Science in Occupational Health and Safety from Columbia Southern University and is a retired Iowa paramedic. His extensive safety background spans emergency medical services, construction, general industry, agriculture, and the wind energy sector.

Kirk is a Fall Protection Competent Person Instructor and an authorized OSHA Outreach Trainer for both 10- and 30-hour courses in General Industry and Construction. He also serves as an adjunct safety instructor for Kirkwood Community College, a contracted safety instructor for Northeast Iowa Community College (NICC), and an Authorized Trainer for the OSHA Training Institute.

Under Kirk's leadership, D. C. Taylor Co. achieved a significant milestone in September 2025 by earning the Iowa OSHA Consultation's VPP Star Mobile Worksite designation, becoming the first and only company in Iowa to receive this recognition. His team has also been honored with multiple President's Safety Awards from the Iowa-Illinois Safety Council and was recognized by EHS Magazine as one of the Top Ten Safest Companies in America in 2024.

In addition to his role at D. C. Taylor Co., Kirk is the owner and lead consultant of Imperial Safety Solutions, LLC. Through both organizations, he has built a reputation for developing highly effective safety programs and fostering a culture of safety excellence. He is frequently asked to present at safety conference to share his expertise. His professional philosophy is reflected in the simple motto that guides his work every day: "Do the right thing."

PAST GARY HAWK WINNERS

2025
Margret Meade

2024
Nir Keren

2023
Ron Demery

21/22	Dan Deike
2019	Douglas Martin
2018	Jim Withers
2017	Gary Higbee
2016	Cindy Baldwin
2015	Mary Bryant
2014	Marlys Nelson
2013	Dan Broghammer
2012	Dr. Steven Freeman
2011	Rod Swager
2010	Dennis Reichardt
2009	John Izzolena
2008	Ron Snyder
2007	Dr. Denis Zeimet
2006	Jim Hawthorne

2005	Byron Orton
2004	Chet Fuller
2003	Mary Daniel
2002	Emery Sobottka
2001	Don Sullivan
2000	Pat Payton
1999	Ray Forsythe
1998	Phil Mercuris
1997	Chris Constantine
1996	Al Meier
1995	Lora Summerwill
1994	Norm Popenhagen
1993	Marge Connors
1992	Jack Mickle
1991	Melvin Sanders

1990	Kenneth Moore
1989	Ted Wire
1988	Mel Smith
1988	Dr. John Thomas
1988	Virgil Deering
1987	Al Victor
1986	Al Sherrick
1985	Dale Hull
1984	Dr. John Robb
1983	Joe Klinsky
1982	Bob Skinner
1981	Harlan Von Seggern
1980	Jerry Addy

About the Gary Hawk Award

In 1996, the annual Iowa Governor's Safety & Health Conference safety award was renamed to the "Gary Hawk Safety Award" in honor of long-time OSH Advisory Council member Gary Hawk, who passed away after a long battle with cancer.

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

Matthews: Use "Solution-Based Thinking" to navigate those frustrating moments when people just don't get it .

Matthews Lead with more curiosity, creativity, and resilience—even on the toughest days .

Matthews: Sustain resilience and hope in a profession that demands both, so you can keep showing up with energy and excellence .

Oberender: Describe the key hazard areas targeted by OSHA's Warehousing and Distribution Center NEP and how they translate into day-to-day operational priorities for employers.

Oberender: Identify practical strategies, beyond minimum compliance, that employers can use to engage leaders and employees and reduce injuries and claims in warehouse and distribution operations.

Tuecke: Identify most common areas of incompleteness or potential error in OSHA 300/300A recordkeeping forms.

Tuecke: Identify behaviors, conditions, and other barriers that could be dissuading the reporting of injuries and incidents.

Prospero/Lively: Participants will be able to describe the core loss-control/safety services typically offered by Workers' Compensation carriers and business insurance brokers

Prospero/Lively: Participants will be able to build a simple action plan that aligns carrier/broker safety services to their organization's top loss drivers and leading indicators, including how to set goals, track impact (injury rates, claim frequency/ severity, experience mod), and communicate results internally.

Shemper: Describe how a defensible physical demands analysis identifies the true physical requirements of a job and serves as the foundation for safer hiring, return-to-work, and accommodation decisions.

Sullivan/Waldron: Understand NFPA 70E from your insurance and OSHA views.

Sullivan/Waldron: Know what steps to take to get your facility complaint.

Dighton: By the end of this session participants will be able to define non-routine tasks that present an increased risk for injury.

Dighton: Explain the purpose of a job hazard analysis for an effective completion of a non-routine project.

Haug/Timmins: Understand the importance of risk classification on SIF prevention.

Haug/Timmins: Improve risk classification in their organization.

Haug/Timmins: Address how familiarity can hide danger.

Haug/Timmins: Identify practical steps to make impactful changes.

Longman: Recognize potential threats of workplace violence and provide deescalation techniques. Create and communicate an workplace specific plan for employees on various work sites and environments.

Longman: Create or reinforce response procedures and improve team readiness regarding safety and security.

Dinwiddie: Attendees will learn to identify signs of potential mental health issues and how a mental health climate assessment can help.

Dinwiddie: Attendees will also learn how to foster a culture of psychological safety.

Tuuri: Evaluate AI tools and decisions using clear criteria and frameworks that incorporate ethical considerations, risk, and impact within occupational safety contexts.

Tuuri: Refine prompts, validate outputs, and assess appropriate use cases for AI applications to support, rather than undermine, safety decision-making and worker trust.

Wiltfang: Identify significant recent developments, case law trends, and emerging issues in Iowa workers' compensation over the past year that can impact employers and claims professionals.

Wiltfang: Apply current Iowa workers' compensation requirements to common workplace and claims-related issues to assist attendees in managing their claims effectively.

Gongora: Describe effective methods for communicating safety expectations and engaging employees in developing a strong safety culture.

Gongora: Identify leadership, accountability, and hazard prevention practices that support continuous improvement in workplace safety performance.

West::Understand how to operationalize leading indicators using real-time data from wearable technology to identify and address the root causes of musculoskeletal injuries, heat stress, and forklift-pedestrian interactions.

West: Learn practical strategies and case-based examples of how safety teams are using motion, environmental, and exposure data—without tracking individuals—to drive timely interventions and reduce costly claims.

Gaudineer: Provide audience with a fundamental understanding of different types of EHS management system standards and how the plan-do-check-act model is utilized to drive organizational EHS performance

Flann/Wolff/Fox: Explain how layered protection and the five D's, deter, detect, delay, deny, and defend, contribute to an effective security strategy.

JACK BENO MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

Be a leader in safety and health and help guide the profession forward. Donate to the Jack Beno Memorial Foundation because safety matters to you.

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:
Jack Beno Memorial Foundation

MAIL TO:
IOSHAC
6200 Park Ave., Suite 100
Des Moines, IA 50321

ASSP Beno Golf Fundraiser

Late summer 2027/ Location TBD

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

Flann/Wolff/Fox: Describe how program costs, identified vulnerabilities, emerging technologies, and site-level risk assessments influence future security investments.

Edwards: How to move beyond "holding people accountable" to building an "environment of ownership

Edwards: How to better learn how work is actually getting done so that improvements can be made to help the worker not fail and when they do fail, help the situation not get worse.

Murray: Increase understanding of how to approach fall protection applications encountered on a daily basis in the field.

Murray: Increase understanding of how products are designed and tested to be used while concentrating on the 'why' so attendees are able to apply to unique applications in the field

Ridpath: Identify key conveyor hazards and risk factors associated with routine, maintenance, and non-routine operations in industrial environments.

Ridpath: Apply best practices for conducting conveyor risk assessments, including the use of trained internal auditors, cross-functional assessment teams, and relevant industry safety standards.

Ridpath: Explain the connection between happy employees and positive safety outcomes," or, "Summarize the process of electricity mapping and its associated hazards.

Mooney: Become familiar with the required process of evaluation for disease and injury causation in workers compensation claims

Mooney: Identify personal and occupational risk factors associated with injury claims and their influence on injury outcomes

Mooney: Become familiar with the necessary employer provided information that can expedite the causation analysis

Peterson: Explain the possible consequences of horseplay in the workplace.

Peterson: Clear, concise safety work rules with established consequences will help the employer communicate expectations with their employees.

Mantel: Develop a step-by-step proactive strategy to transition a facility's safety culture from reactive fixes to an engineered, safety-first risk reduction approach.

Mantel: Identify and prioritize legacy machinery within a facility to implement risk reduction guarding solutions based on real-world best practices.

Dinwiddie: Attendees will learn how to recognize specific personality types and strategies for dealing with those different personality types to affect change.

The Meadows Events and Conference Center

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THE MEADOWS
Events and Conference Center

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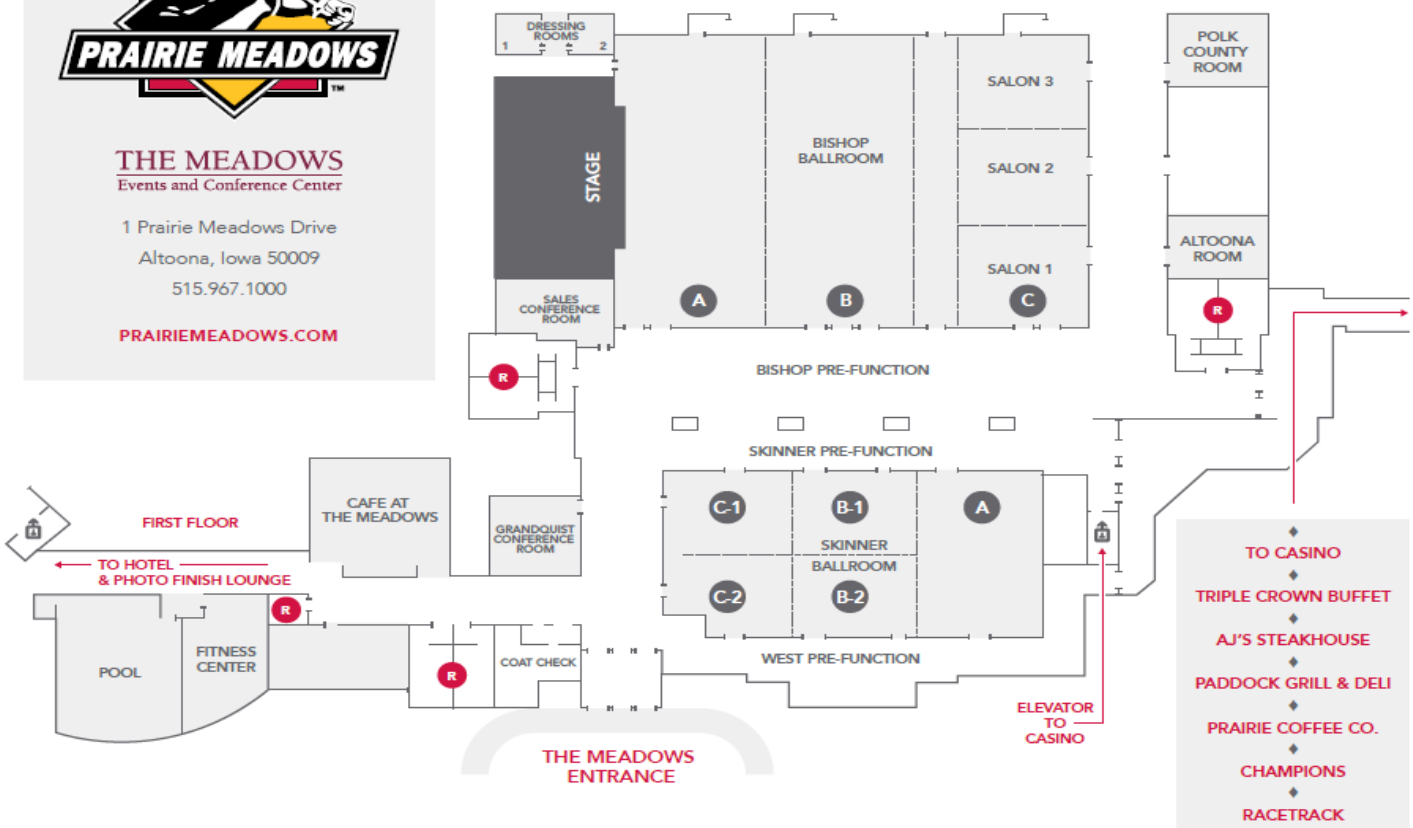
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