

UCDA

The Roundhouse

collaborate.

concentrate.

converse.

connect.

coffee.

cowork.

301



Community
Development

On Target FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT 2024 Annual Report

From the President

As we close another successful year, I am filled with gratitude for the collective efforts that have driven our mission forward. Serving as President of the Union County Development Association has been an honor, and I greatly appreciate the support and dedication from each of you.

Our accomplishments in 2024 have been remarkable. Among the highlights are the significant progress in housing development at 1001 W Jefferson, securing the Comprehensive Neighborhood Revitalization Grant, and our successful collaboration to establish a City of Creston destination brand.

As my term comes to an end and I pass the gavel to Chad Rieck, I have taken time to reflect on the past three years. During my tenure as President, we have become a leader and model for other communities across Iowa. We have increased housing developments, provided local professional development and leadership opportunities, and are advocates for the great things Union County has to offer.

I would like to take a moment to thank Mindy for her countless hours to the success of UCDA and welcome Olivia to the team. Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your President. I look forward to supporting the board in new ways and watching the continued growth and success of Union County.

To view the full Board of Trustees, visit:
UnionCountyIowa.com



Executive Board

Kevin Stewart
President
Iowa State Savings Bank

Devon Tyler-Leith
Vice President
Tyler Insurance Services

Chad Rieck
Vice President
KSIB Radio

Matt McCutchan
Co-Treasurer
Greater Regional Health

Dan Waigand
Co-Treasurer
Northwest Bank

Francine Ide
Secretary
Ide Farms

Paul Fuller
Past President
PCSB Bank

Grow UC

SMALL BUSINESS GRANTS

The Latest Edition Bookstore was the first recipient of the Small Business Grant that UCDA and the Creston Chamber of Commerce partnered together for to provide a \$1,000 grant to start up businesses that meet the required criteria. Congratulations to Elizabeth Fioretto with The Latest Edition Bookstore, located in Uptown Creston for receiving this grant. If you started a business within the last 3 months or plan to start a business, head to the Chamber or UCDA website for more details.



The just start workshops are a great precursor for establishing a solid business plan for a new business. Classes are scheduled twice a year and feature all of the information that you need to determine your next steps to start a business. Email marketing@UnionCountyIowa.com to get on a waiting list for the next workshop.

Business + Professional Development



The Roundhouse hosted a total of four workshops in 2024 including two hosted by Michelle Wilson; Just Start: Introduction to Entrepreneurship and Releasing Stress & Fatigue. Two workshops were managed alongside business expert Jamie David, including Future Proof Your Business and Search Engine Optimization.

If you have a topic in mind for a workshop that you would like to attend or host, email marketing@UnionCountyIowa.com

2024



Below are some highlights and statistics of services provided through The Roundhouse and Bldg 301.

The entrepreneurship “bug” is strong at The Roundhouse! So much so that our very own employee took a leap of faith and is pursuing her photography business full time. UCDA brought on Olivia Cheers in July and has been a great asset to UCDA. We can’t wait to welcome Chloe back to lead a workshop for us.

We hosted one just start: Introduction to Entrepreneurship workshop this year. We also hosted our Intern It UP program where we had interns from Greater Regional Health, BUNN, and UCDA.

If you know of someone that may want to try out the coworking space – send them our way for 1 free week trial.

just start graduates: **3**

Scheduling conflicts prevented a second just start workshop.

Coworking Members: **10**

Apartments: **100%**
Occupancy.

When a local business welcomed new talent to the area, they needed a place to stay while they sold their home out of state and purchased a new home here.

These are the types of scenarios that we enjoy being able to provide housing for!

Interns: **5**

There were 5 interns from local industries that participated in the Intern It UP program this summer.

Conference Room Reservations:

Often booked weekly by our members and outside sources as well.

Most Recently, The Large Conference Room was booked so various groups could meet with the Marketing Firm and IEDA to plan and present a Destination Brand for the city of Creston.

Workshops: **4**

Future Proof Your Business (Succession Planning)

Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

Releasing Stress + Fatigue

Lead UC Adult Session

At Home UC

HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Increasing appropriate housing for all of Union County continues to be a priority for UCDA. Creston was awarded a Thriving Communities Designation Extension in 2024 from the Iowa Economic Development Authority. This continues to be a tool that can attract additional developers to the area to spur housing development. There continues to be a shortage in homes ranging from multi-residential to single family homes. The housing committee will continue to work with community partners to explore all housing rehabilitation and new development options.

FROM THIS....



In fall of 2024, Demolition began at 1001 W. Jefferson. C&J Conservation coordinated with the Historical Society to preserve any historical components that they can display. Former students gathered for the time capsule opening and to share stories of camaraderie and memories from the former Lincoln School. This building was construction in 1931 and has been vacant since 2006. The photo to the right is a rendering of the 34 one and two bedroom apartments that will be constructed in 2025 on the north part of the property.

.... TO THIS (coming soon)



OPPORTUNITIES ON THE HORIZON

In October, UCDA purchased a vacant property at 617 North Pine Street in Creston. The home was demolished and a non-operating well was filled in. This site is now ready for a developer to create additional housing options in an established area of the community. UCDA continues to look for infill housing solutions for all communities in Union County.



Work UC

INTERN IT UP

This summer, UCDA continued the Intern IT UP program with five interns participating from BUNN, Greater Regional Health and UCDA. The interns participated in a number of networking events, starting with a young professionals and intern social hour. They also participated in the Headshots to Hired two-part series where they attended a LinkedIn & Resume Building workshop and received head shots by Chloe Thompson Photography. The five interns finished the program with a farewell scavenger hunt and social hour at Willy's Bar and Grill.



Emma Pantini, Jadie Bowlsby, Tyler Kaczmariski, Angelo Ducato, Aleah Calvin

STUDENT OF SERVICE

Each semester, Creston Community High School has students provide a service for a business or organization in the Creston area. This year, Ady Morrison chose here SOS hours to be spent with UCDA. Ady is a Senior at Creston High School. Ady is involved in Basketball, Volleyball as well as FBLA. Outside of school, you can see her spending time with her friends and family. Ady plans on attending college after graduating in May.



SUMMER INTERN

Emma Pantini joined the UCDA staff this summer as she helped with various office tasks and organizational projects. Emma helped prepare materials for the upcoming Lead UC and Lead UC Youth. UCDA would like to continue to encourage and assist businesses in setting up Intern Programs to help entice young professionals to Choose UC as they explore employment opportunities.



LEAD UC & LEAD UC YOUTH

in the 2023-24 leadership year, there were 12 adults and 15 youth graduates from their respective leadership programs. The adult participants work and/or live in Union County, while the youth participants attend either East Union or Creston High School.

The Lead UC and Lead UC Youth work together every year on a legacy project as well as partner with SWCC to facilitate a Meals for the Heartland event. In April, 100,000 meals were packaged, setting a new goal for the years to come.

In December, this leadership program was chosen to receive a proactive grant from South Central Iowa Community Foundation.

For more information and to see graduates from the program, visit UnionCountyIowa.com.



Union County Young Professionals

UCYP hosts monthly social and networking events in the community. They have partnered with organizations such as the Creston Elks Lodge as well as many other local businesses to host their events. UCYP is open to those 21-40, and they are always looking for more members.



2024 Events:

January UC Watch Party

February Puzzles & Pints

May Music + 'Moor: Live Music at Crestmoor, Fridays After Five begins

June Fridays After Five

July Fridays After 5

August Fridays After 5

September Balloon Days Cornhole Tournament, Fridays After 5 ends

October Young Professionals Happy Hour

November Pumpkin Palooza

December Cookies + Cocoa: Cookie Decorating with Amorcito Baked Goods & Sweet Treats



Fridays After Five

In late August, the Union County Young Professionals wrapped up their weekly summer events. Fridays after Five has taken place every Friday for the past 15 weeks, supported by over 15 local businesses in Union County. This year the Young Professionals raised just over \$7,000 in total with all proceeds going to 15 local non-profits throughout the county.

Stay up to date!



Website & Social Media

Website Visitors

7,233

34% new visitors

Top 5 Page Visits in 2024

Homepage
The Roundhouse
Meet The Team
The Union County Connection
About

Traffic Sources by Sessions

41% Google

Facebook Followers

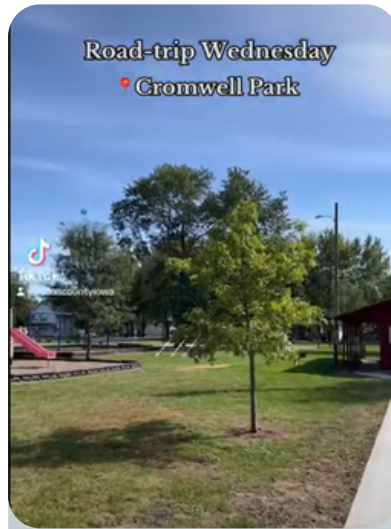
1,928

Social Media Presence

- Facebook Pages - Union County Development Association & Union County Young Professionals
- Facebook groups: Lead UC Alumni & The Round About
- LinkedIn - Union County Development Association
- Instagram - @UnionCountyIowa
- TikTok - @UnionCountyIowa

Discover UC

UCDA continues to promote community clean up opportunities and beautification projects. This year, local businesses hosted Uptown Clean Up days on the first Thursday of each month. As well as uptown beautification, Discover UC is continuing it's efforts to urge individuals to get out and explore what Union County has to offer through stories and videos highlighting UC businesses and amenities.



UC 7

This fall, the UC 7 committee brainstormed ways to connect all seven communities throughout Union County. As a result, Fall in Love with UC was born. Fall in Love with UC was an activity book that highlighted all four fall festivals happening as well as local businesses to shop, outdoor amenities and local eateries. The goal of this booklet was to urge individuals to get out and visit their local area resources, further supporting small towns and their families.

Those who participated in the fall festivals as well as the other activities were able to turn in their packets to be entered into a drawing for a prize.



Union County 2024 Events

There are so many reasons to gather in Union County and its communities throughout the year! Each community brings unique ideas and events to life with their volunteers that truly love where they live! UCDA continues to support the community members that celebrate *Choosing UC!*

May

- **Market on Maple** May 11th

June

- **Creston Farmers' Market** June 3rd - August 26th every Monday at McKinley Park
- **Tuesday Nights in the Park** June 4th - August 13th every Tuesday at Afton Square
- **Kansas Street Boogie** June 29th - Afton Square
- **Afton Pre 4th Celebration** June 30th
- **Greater 8 and 5K** June 29th

July

- **10,000 Crestonians 4th of July Parade & Firework Show** July 4th
- **Union County Fair** July 18th - 24th

August

- **Library Legacy Committee Wine Walk & More** August 3rd
- **Fiesta on Maple** August 31st



September

- **Cromwell Harvest Fest** September 14th- 15th
- **Lorimor Lions 60th Year Watermelon Day** September 14th
- **45th Annual Creston Balloon Days** September 19th - 22nd
- **Afton Autumn Days** September 28th

December

- **Creston Lighted Christmas Parade & Community Tree Lighting** December 5th
- **Merry Marketplace & Holly + Ivy Home Tour** December 7th
- **Afton Extravaganza & Holiday in the Park** December 7th

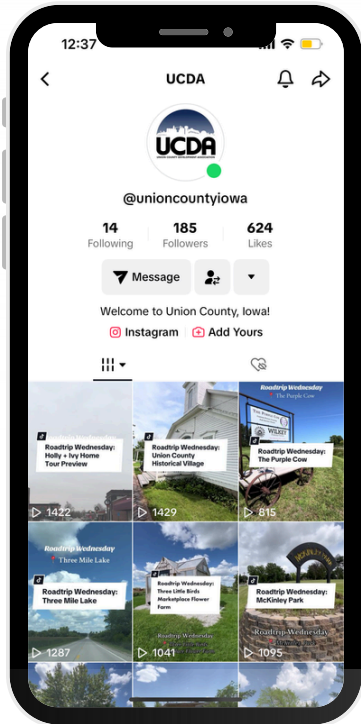
2024 Area Business Coffees



UCDA organized 48 Area Business Coffees in 2024 in both Afton and Creston and plan to do the same in the upcoming years. These coffees are a great way to engage with fellow community members and share information about any upcoming events. When a business hosts a coffee, you have the opportunity to welcome new people into your doors, share important milestones and updates regarding your business and receive a feature post on UCDA's social media. Anyone can sign up to host a coffee by contacting Olivia at: marketing@UnionCountyIowa.com.

Community Outreach

Roadtrip Wednesdays



Follow @UnionCountyIowa on TikTok to see tours of the following destinations featured in Roadtrip Wednesdays:

- Community Football Fields
- The Legacy Venue
- Afton Community Center
- The Roost
- Three Little Birds
- Afton Splash Pad
- Sweet Afton Creamery
- Backroads Junk
- Cromwell Park
- Hanson Nutrition
- Halloween Trunk or Treat Locations
- Small Business Saturday Series
- Lakeshore Golf & Country Club
- Gibson Memorial Library

The Union County Connection

The Union County Connection is a quarterly newsletter published by UCDA that keeps the community connected with professional development opportunities, community updates & events, career opportunities, spotlights featuring families, businesses & industries, investors, coworkers and young professionals, and more. See spotlights from past 2024 newsletters below: Young Professional, Brielle Baker with Tyler Insurance Services as well as Coworker Julie Weisshaar with Energy Association of Iowa Schools.

Current
Subscribers:

154





Update Uptown



The making of a destination...

In October, branding strategist Ben Muldrow began working with the Update Uptown committee on the process of creating a City of Creston logo, motto and design standards. After spending some time exploring the Creston area, Ben created a design that encompasses the beauty and history as well as the potential of Creston, Iowa. To view the launch video go to UnionCountyIowa.com



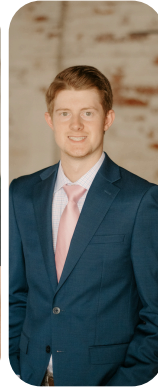
Comprehensive Neighborhood Revitalization Grant (CRNG)

In July, the City of Creston received the CDBG Comprehensive Neighborhood Revitalization Grant. The City of Creston and the Update Uptown committee met with the team from the Iowa Economic Development Authority to review the guidelines and details of the grant, and encouraged the committee to stick with the original location and plan for the Uptown Plaza.

Projects & People

throughout the past three years





2022-2024 Investors

Benefactor

Northwest Bank - Greater Regional Health - Iowa State Savings Bank - PCSB Bank - Tyler Insurance Services

Presidential Investors

Alliant Energy - Cornerstone Financial Group

Platinum

Creston Publishing Company - J & A Flooring, Inc. - RE Lewis Refrigeration

Gold

Agrivision Equipment Group - Carroll Family Chiropractic - James Law Office - KSIB Radio - Wurster Farms, Inc. - Precision Optical Group - Orr Heating & Air Conditioning - Weaver Meats

Silver

Dr. Michael D. Buck, D.D.S. - First Interstate Bank - Garden & Associates - Viterra - ITC Midwest - Powers Funeral Home - Stalker Auto Group

Bronze

Echo Group, Inc. - De Hamer Accounting Services, LLP. - Hometown Insurance & Realty - Pearson Family Funeral Services & Cremation Center - Creston Automotive - Akin Building Center - Southwest Iowa REC - State Savings Bank - Warner Plumbing - Premier Commerical Services - Community 1st Credit Union - Dr. Daniel M Coen, DDS. - American Homes by Grant Long - American Family Insurance - Vanmark Equipment - Willets, Baird & Co PLC - SWCC Business + Community Development - Lenz Heating & Cooling - Reflections & Top Notch Fireworks

Leadership

Edward Jones - Justin R. Cole - Callahan Real Estate - Stewart Realty - Create Creston - Green Accounting & Tax - Sonntag Development LLC - Precast Concrete Company, LLC. - Athletico Physical Therapy - Kelly's Flowers & Greene Landscaping - Iowa Tool & manufacturing, Inc. - OmniTell Communications - Hull Monument - OurTown Realty - Chris Lane Agency - Three Little Birds Marketplace - JL Rentals - B Rooted - The Real Estate Store

Community Partner

Creston Chamber of Commerce

Public Partners

The City of Creston

The Union County Board Of Supervisors

Afton, Arispe, Cromwell, Lorimor, Shannon City and Thayer

