



*Marshall County
Communications Center*

*2021
Annual Report*

Rhonda Braudis, 911 Communications Director
Marshall County Communications Center
909 S 2nd Street, Marshalltown, IA 50158
641-754-4750 ~ rbraudis@marshalltown-ia.gov



Mission Statement

The Marshall County Communications Center is committed to serving with integrity, compassion and care for the welfare and safety of our citizens and personnel. We support expedient, quality services through the industries best practices. Our standard is excellence and the road to success is through our teamwork. We serve as the critical link between the citizens and, visitors of Marshall County, and the public safety Agencies that serve them.

Safety is our First Priority
Integrity is our Commitment

These Values We Believe

Harmony ~ We trust, respect, and care for each other and treat everyone as a valued member of our team

Service ~ Safety is our first priority – citizens are the focus of everything we do

Integrity ~ We are committed to the highest level of professional and ethical conduct

Teamwork ~ Cohesively working together to achieve a common goal for the betterment of the individuals we serve and the future of our center

Fun ~ Every day we will give our best effort and have fun along the way

Vision Statement

To provide Service in a manner that fosters trust, respect, confidence and appreciation as a trusted and valued member of the Marshall County Communications Center

Agency Profile

The Marshall County Communications Center will be entering its fourth year under the Marshall County Communications Commission. The Communications Center provides dispatching and E911 services for all of Marshall County. The center is staffed with civilian personnel working together as 911 Communications Specialists in law enforcement and Fire/EMS dispatching, CTO's (Communications Training Officer), Supervisor, Leads, and the Director.

The Marshall County Communications Center is responsible for answering both emergency and non-emergency calls for service on a regular basis. The Comm Center monitors up to eleven (11) radio channels, and has the capability to monitor an additional fourteen (14) channels if necessary. It also is responsible for three (3) E911 phone lines and an additional ten (10) emergency and non-emergency lines. In FY20, the Marshall County Communications Center handled a total of 81,897 phone calls including emergency and non-emergency. In 2017 text-to-911 was implemented – a Next Generation 911 capability that allows citizens to text their emergency if unable to speak; a service that is not yet nationally mandated.

The Marshall County Communications Center has been recognized for professionalism, commitment to public safety, leadership, and innovation. Performance and training is measured against the standards provided by the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials (APCO). The MCCC's authorized strength is fifteen (15) full-time employees to include eleven (11) 911 Communications Specialists, two (2) 911 Lead Communications Specialists, one (1) 911 Communications Supervisor, and one (1) 911 Communications Director.

The Marshall County Communications Center operates three (3) twelve-hour shifts and one (1) four-hour shift on Fridays for a total of forty (40) hours per week. We have four (4) Communications Training Officers (CTO) certified in through APCO to meet national standards.

Marshall County Communications Center Staff

Rhonda Braudis, CPE, RPL, NREMT ~ 911 Communications Director
Tiffany Eibs, CTO, Tactical Dispatch Coordinator ~ 911 Communications Supervisor
Shane Andrews ~ CTO, 911 Lead Communications Specialist
Tammy Bowman ~ 911 Communications Specialist
Shannon Wegner, CTO, Tactical Dispatcher ~ 911 Communications Specialist
Zac Mann, 911 Communications Specialist
Caitlan Reineke ~ CTO, 911 Communications Specialist
Kayla Ball ~ 911 Communications Specialist
Maxwell Chapman ~ 911 Communications Specialist
Peyton Peters ~ 911 Communications Specialist
Alyssa Feldmann ~ 911 Communications Specialist
Mary Beth Frese ~ 911 Communication Specialist
VACANT ~ 911 Communications Specialist
VACANT ~ 911 Communications Specialist
VACANT ~ 911 Communications Specialist
Melinda Ruopp, Tactical Dispatcher ~ PRN 911 Communications Specialist
Allie Erickson ~ PRN 911 Communications Specialist
Hayley Paige, Tactical Dispatcher ~ PRN 911 Communications Specialist

Collectively, the years of dispatch service, talent, and experience at the Marshall County Communications Center amounts to decades of experience – clearly indicating the drive, passion, and dedication to public service projected from a team of true professionals.

Training and Quality Assurance

The Marshall County Communications Center implemented a full standardized training program in 2020 following the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials (APCO) standards. Proper training is extremely important to the MCCC, as public safety agencies are held legally accountable for the actions of their personnel. Procedures included in the Communications training program provide a standardized and systematic approach to training. The training is designed specifically for the purpose of training and career development of all employees.

The Communications Training Officer (CTO) program continues to be redesigned beginning in 2020 to focus on essential elements and components of a one-on-one standardized training program, specifically through the use of Daily Observation Report's (DOR). Standardized training provides similar training to all new employees. Each employee is exposed to the same training experience, and each is provided the same opportunity for success. As we continue implementing changes within the training program following APCO and national standards through the San Jose model the program continues to grow in strength and validity.

The core of any training program is the trainer – the person who conducts the training and helps the student build skills, knowledge, and abilities. While the Director, and the Supervisor/Training Coordinator can have a positive effect on the overall program, the CTO is the key entity that delivers the training. CTO's make sure that citizens and internal customers continue to receive a high quality of service while transforming new hires into effective employees. The Marshall County Communications Center CTOs are all certified through the APCO Communications Training Officer Course as instructed by APCO or the Director/APCO Adjunct Instructor.

Abiding by Iowa Code 501-13.3(1) (80B) requirements, all 911 Communication Specialists are required to take the 40-hour Basic Communications course within the first year of employment. In accordance with ILEA training exception all 911 Communication Specialists continue to receive the APCO Public Safety Telecommunicator 40-hour basic course. The APCO Public Safety Telecommunicator (PST1) Course, is a level up from the State basic course and can be customized to Marshall County specifics for training purposes. The Marshall County Communication Center also requires that Supervisors, be certified through the APCO Communications Center Supervisor Course. Supervisor Eibs continues to be trained in the delivery of the Public Safety Telecommunicators course.

Training is a constant mission in the Marshall County Communications Center. Not only are 911 personnel required to take their initial certification classes, they must also participate in Continuing Dispatch Education (CDE) training sessions for annual training minimums. These training sessions may be in the form of quizzes, dispatch related articles, protocol-driven exercises, in-service classes, or anything else deemed an appropriate learning related activity. In an ever-changing profession it is essential to continue dispatch education. There is always something new to learn in an industry that is constant in change.

Several forms of training were received throughout the year to include online learning, virtual live online learning, as well as in person classes. In August a training grant was applied for through the 911 Communications Council and received for the course, "Bullying and Negativity in the Communications Center". Staff was signed up for this with a few outside agencies. An instructor was brought in to teach this course October 20, 2021.

In an effort to continue training all 911 Communications Specialists within the Communications Center, talented members of our team are taking the necessary steps to become agency instructors for the following disciplines. CTO Caitlan Reineke, Emergency Medical Dispatch Instructor; and Zachary Mann, Fire Service Communications Instructor.

Emergency Medical Dispatch ~ Instructor – in process



Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) is a systematic program of handling medical calls for assistance. Trained telecommunicators, using locally-approved EMD Guidecards, can quickly and properly determine the nature and priority of the call, dispatch the appropriate response and then give the caller instructions to help treat the patient until the responding EMS unit arrives. Topics Include: Roles, Responsibilities and Resource Allocation, Legal & Liability Issues (National & State Standards), Call Taking & APCO EMD Guidecard Information, Chief Complaint Types Review, Anatomy & Physiology, Quality Assurance and Recertification, Stress Management. The classroom setting provides practical exercises to help the new EMD become familiar with the theories and practices of EMD and students will practice with either their agency's Guidecards or the APCO Institute Training EMD Guidecards in simulated EMD calls.

Fire Service Communications ~ Instructor

Fire Dispatch requires effective communications, and is a critical component of fire service operations. It provides the vital link between citizens and responders. APCO Institute's Fire Service Communications Course continues to advance fire communications training, improving service to the caller and increasing safety of the responders. This dynamic course covers the terms, techniques and protocols required for excellence in fire service call taking and dispatch. Topics Include: Introduction to the Fire Service, Fire Service Apparatus & Terminology, Fire Service Communications Overview, Fire Service Call Processing, Fire Dispatch Procedures, Fire Service Incidents, NIMS & ICS, Hazardous Materials Incidents, and Terrorism Incidents.



Organizational Integrity

The Marshall County Communications Center has adopted the Telecommunicator Code of Ethics published by the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials – International (APCO). Members of the Marshall County Communications Center are required to abide by the Code of Ethics, especially when situations arise which are not directly addressed by other policies. The Code of Ethics is located within their personnel files. All personnel are required to read, acknowledge receipt of, and abide by the Code of Ethics.

Personnel Accomplishments

ACTION	2021
EMD Training	11
Agency Instructors	3
Public Safety Telecommunicator	5
Bullying and Negativity	88
Various Training /CDE Courses	26
Total	46 / Continuous Training

Personnel Actions

ACTION	2021
Verbal Warning / Training	Continuous Training
Counseling	3
Written Reprimand	1
Suspension	1
Termination	0
Fit for Duty / Retirement	1
Total	6 + Continuous Training

911 Dispatch Statistics

ACTION	2021
911	16,037
Administrative	60,524
Crime Stopper	400
Ring Down	4343
Total	81,304

National standards 3.1 as published in the NENA Call Answering Standard/Model Recommendation 56-005.1 (revised 2017). Ninety percent (90%) of all 9-1-1 calls arriving at the Public Safety answering Point (PSAP) shall be answered within ten (10) seconds during the busy hour (the hour each day with the greatest call volume, as defined in the NENA Master Glossary). Ninety-five (95%) of all 9-1-1 calls should be answered within twenty (20) seconds. The Marshall County Communications Center greatly exceeds this standard with an average ring time of three (3) seconds (see appendix).

Call for Service Statistics

Fire Related Incidents	2020 / 2021
Marshalltown Fire Department	2,938 / 3,209
Albion Volunteer Fire Department	63 / 78
Clemons Volunteer Fire Department	30 / 26
Ferguson Volunteer Fire Department	4 / 4
Gilman Volunteer Fire Department	47 / 43
Green Mountain Volunteer Fire Department	50 / 45
Haverhill Volunteer Fire Department	41 / 46
Laurel Volunteer Fire Department	27 / 25
Legrand Volunteer Fire Department	59 / 54
Liscomb Volunteer Fire Department	35 / 44
Melbourne Fire Department	47 / 57
Rhodes Volunteer Fire Department	42 / 56
State Center Volunteer Fire Department	85 / 89
.... TOTAL	3,468 / 3,776

Medical Related Incidents	2020 / 2021
Unity Point Hospital	4,492 / 4,619
Albion First Responder	139 / 172
Gilman First Responder	106 / 136
Green Mountain First Responder	78 / 94
Haverhill First Responder	24 / 5
Laurel First Responder	21 / 2
Legrand First Responder	161 / 162
Liscomb First Responder	133 / 171
Melbourne First Responder	138 / 139
Rhodes First Responder	133 / 139
State Center First Responder	165 / 195
.... TOTAL	5,590 / 5,834

Law Enforcement Related Incidents	2020 / 2021
Marshalltown Police Department	29,341 / 28,120
Marshall County Sheriff's Office	23,191 / 20,512
Melbourne/Rhodes Department	110 / 63
State Center Police Department	1865 / 1,346
Outside County / Drug Task Force	12/27
.... TOTAL	54,519 / 50,068

Call Handling Procedures

The Marshall County Communications Center continues refining policies, procedures, and guidelines for handling all types of calls for service. Communications personnel receiving phone calls judge the characteristics of the call to determine whether it is an emergency or non-emergency. The Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system is programmed to assign a given priority to each type of incident based on the call type chosen; however, the dispatchers have the option to notify field personnel and assign additional responders to higher priority calls when appropriate. As EMD IntelliComm continues to evolve, its purpose is to process priority and special response calls; and provide instructions when needed for Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD). Implementation had been ongoing and rollout was November 1st 2021.

Relevant information for each request for service is obtained and recorded to include control number, date and time of request, complainant information, incident type and location, units dispatched, time, arrival and return of service for each unit, as well as record of the final disposition or status of the incident. Misdirected calls are appropriately handled and rerouted, including correcting database errors.

Marshall County Communications Center personnel have received specialized training to include but not limited to: 9 Ways to Improve PSAP Staff Performance, A Victim's Plea-Meeting Expectations, Building 911 Life Bridges, Bullying & Negativity in the Communications Center, Communications Training Officer 5th Edition, Communications Center Supervisor 5th Edition, Crisis Communication Skills, Emergency Medical Dispatcher 5th Edition, Excited Delirium, Fundamentals of Tactical Dispatch, How to Excel on Suicide Calls with More Confidence and Less Anxiety, Implicit Bias, Mental Health First Aid, Onstar, Public Safety Communications Staffing & Employee Retention, Relay Iowa ~ Real-Time Text, Suicide Intervention, Verbal Judo, as well as attending the Iowa State APCO/NENA Virtual Conference, APCO National Conference, webinars, as well as other courses for CDE credit. These courses and like efforts contribute to trailblazing efforts with the objective and priority of providing Marshall County's emergency responders with a standard of care that corresponds with the mission, vision and values of its core team / 911 Communications Specialists.

Processing emergency/non-emergency calls can be inherently taxing, as callers are often dealing with traumatic events. Telecommunicators are trained to ask key questions, pertinent to each unique scenario, and obtain the nature and extent of the incident. Once this is ascertained they then determine what resources are needed to respond and dispatch the appropriate units. Due to the demands of this job and the need to get the right resources to the correct location the training program has been revamped; there is a thorough eighteen (18) week, training program as well as continued training requirements for all personnel in the center. Training includes weekly and monthly required trainings in police/fire related topics, as well as online training and in person seminars and scenario training.

Communications Center Accomplishments - 2021

Commission Directives ~ Through what is best described as another tumultuously unpredictable year after 2020, mixed with disaster and the COVID-19 pandemic, all directives set forth by the Commission have been at the forefront while still navigating the events of 2021. We have stopped questioning the status quo and began establishing "what's next" preparing for what is around the corner. Quality assurance is being performed randomly on calls taken to ensure standards are being met and succeeded.

Staffing ~ Currently we have 3 open positions, hiring processes have been started with a projected hire dates to ensure no more than three trainees are in the process at any given time, this is in efforts to fill the three vacant spots.

Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) ~ A specialized team was assembled. The team reviewed guidecards for selection of our EMD IntelliComm Program. IntelliComm's cloud-based infrastructure offers the Marshall County Communications Center the benefits of speed, reliability, portability, security and unobstructed dispatches while delivering unique cloud analytics. IntelliComm's data and analytics gives early access to real-time actionable information where behaviors of call-handling are understood in a brand-new way. IntelliComm is inclusive of EMD, fire and law enforcement guidecards. All guidecards have been customized to meet the needs of the Marshall County Communications Center. Going forward all future employees will be required to have CPR certification prior to employment. IntelliComm was provided through a grant was providing the electronic version of EMD on all computers in the center.

Tactical Dispatching Program ~ The specialized position of Tactical Dispatcher continues to be a success. Currently there are three Tactical Dispatchers: Melinda Ruopp (PRN dispatcher), Shannon Wegner and Hayley Paige. Supervisor Tiffany Eibs serves as Tactical Dispatch Coordinator over the program. Training for the Tactical Dispatchers while be ongoing to ensure readiness. Training coordination with the SWAT Team and Task Force continue to strengthen the program.

Grants ~ A total of two grants were received in 2021 while continuing to finish up four grants crossing over from 2020 to Include: Coronavirus Employer Innovation Fund, IDPH-Unity Point, Coronavirus Earn to Learn Grant, and the Byrne-Justice Assistance Grant JAG. Grants received in 2021 are listed below:

- **2021 Employer Innovation Fund ~ \$50,000.00**
The Marshall County Communications Commission – 911 Center has been selected as 1 of 13 recipients of the Employer Innovation Fund Grant. This program is centered around a grassroots effort to solve local workforce challenges while helping Iowans find economic opportunity in their communities. The Employer Innovation Fund supports the incredible efforts of Iowa employers who are strengthening their own talent pipeline by helping Iowans work toward a life changing career path. This program is part of the Future Ready Iowa initiative that is changing the way we look at workforce as we provide even greater opportunity for Iowans.
- **911 Communications Council / Training Grant ~ \$2,400.08**
This course examines how bullying occurs and how to combat the issue. The eight-hour course explores the nature of the problem, its impact on people and organizations, corrective actions that can be taken, and steps to foster and maintain civility in the communications center. This course aims to help students develop the skills needed to effectively practice civil behavior, as well as demonstrate different ways organizations can systematically combat bullying and cultivate civility in the workplace. Topics included but not limited to: Behaviors associated with bullying, Impact on individuals, Impact on communications center operations, Communications center management's responsibility to act, Civility and incivility in the workplace, Overcoming incivility in the workplace and cultivating civility, Conflict resolution, and Writing and implementing a civility policy. This course was held October 20, 2021.

New Hire Testing ~ Marshall County Communications Center in 2019 made the switch from the Zone test, which was determined invalid and unreliable at its core, to the now implemented Ergometrics testing software. In review the new testing system is the ErgoMetrics ECOMM National Computer-Based Simulation Testing. Ergometrics & Applied Personnel Research, Inc. is a human resource management firm specializing in personnel selection. Established in 1981, Ergometrics has designed the most comprehensive, award-winning video testing and job simulation testing programs in the nation. They have provided personnel testing services for thousands of agencies throughout the United States and Canada. Ergometric's video simulations have been administered to over two million candidates. The new testing software has proven effective and reliable, grants received have afforded future testing of approximately 60 applicants.

Communications Center Goals - 2022

Emergency Medical Dispatching ~ In 2022 a monumental task of continuous guidecard and system review for accuracy and best practices will be continuous for the EMD maintenance team. This team consists of our Medical Director D. Blaine Westemeyer, 911 Communications Director Rhonda Braudis, and Communications Center Supervisor Tiffany Eibs. Implementation of the electronic version of guidecards IntelliComm is complete and review and monitoring with quality assurance is in effect. Fundamental practice of guidecards usage continues to remain the same however efficiency and ability to filter information directly into the CAD system without shifting back and forth improves immensely the workload of the 911 Communications Specialist allowing more focus to be placed on the caller and responders in the field.

Training / Continuing Dispatch Education ~ Training is essential within this profession, at the conclusion of 2022 the goal of the Communications Center is to have all personnel, and new hires trained in Public Safety Telecommunications (REQUIRED Basic-40hr), Emergency Medical Dispatch (REQUIRED, EMD), Fire Service Communications, Bullying and Negativity in the Communications Center. Further training will be sought out to enhance areas for continuous improvement within the Communications Center.

911 Education Program ~ COVID continues to remain an obstacle in this area. In October, 2019 a state grant was sought after and obtained for 911 public education funds. Approval was granted for a total of \$12,000. Educational items are in the finalization of being purchased and formal education will begin in the schools as well as community functions throughout the year. As we move through the current pandemic I expect to deliver education to area schools and throughout the community.

Policy and Procedure ~ This has been a top priority not only for the Commission but the 911 Communications Director since arrival in 2019. In 2019/2020 fifty-five (55) policies have been created ranging from Liability to Call taking and everything in between such as smoking in the workplace. Policy and procedure is a set of documents that are reviewed annually for accuracy. A new hire handbook is in production with Commission Members Evan Folk, and Madaleine Welton (volunteered) for the sub-committee to approve and recommend to the Commission once completed.

911 Christmas Blessings Box ~ The Marshall County 911 Communications Center launched the second annual Christmas Blessing Box Project. This was kicked off to those families in need of a hot dinner for the holiday. Marshalltown and Marshall County has been

through a lot of tragic events over the last couple of years. Those events range from the Tornado, Derecho Storm and the COVID-19 Pandemic. Marshall County Dispatchers decided to put this event on to simply be able to give back and help out.

Summary

It is the vision of the Marshall County Communications Center to achieve the highest degree of public confidence. Our personnel are recognized for their professionalism, integrity, exemplary customer service, commitment to public safety, leadership and innovation. Marshall County Communications Center personnel are committed to saving lives, protecting property, assisting the public in their time of need, and ensuring the safety of our first responders through prompt, accurate, impartial, and professional call taking, dispatch and support services.

As 911 communications professionals, we strive to earn the public's trust and are challenged daily to maintain that trust. Every telephone call, every radio transmission and every service we provide demands our utmost attention and effective response. We effectively manage our resources, with fiscal prudence, in order to ensure an effective public safety response and a financially secure and well-maintained 911 Communications Center and communications infrastructure.

As trailblazers in the field of emergency communications, we embrace a future course of change, improvement, and challenge focused on accomplishing our strategic goals, including keeping pace with advances in technology that improve interoperability and accessibility to our services; efforts to control escalating operating costs; replacement of aging or inadequate communications infrastructure; and the all-important sharing of resources.

The Marshall County Communications personnel continue to form integral partnerships with our customers, all levels of city and county government, neighboring jurisdictions, State and Federal agencies, and our collaborative partners, and will work together in accomplishing the strategic goals of Marshall County as a whole.

**** IN CASE YOU MISSED IT ****

March 11, 2021

Media contact - communications@iwd.iowa.gov(link sends e-mail)

Gov. Reynolds Announces Future Ready Iowa Employer Innovation Fund Awardees

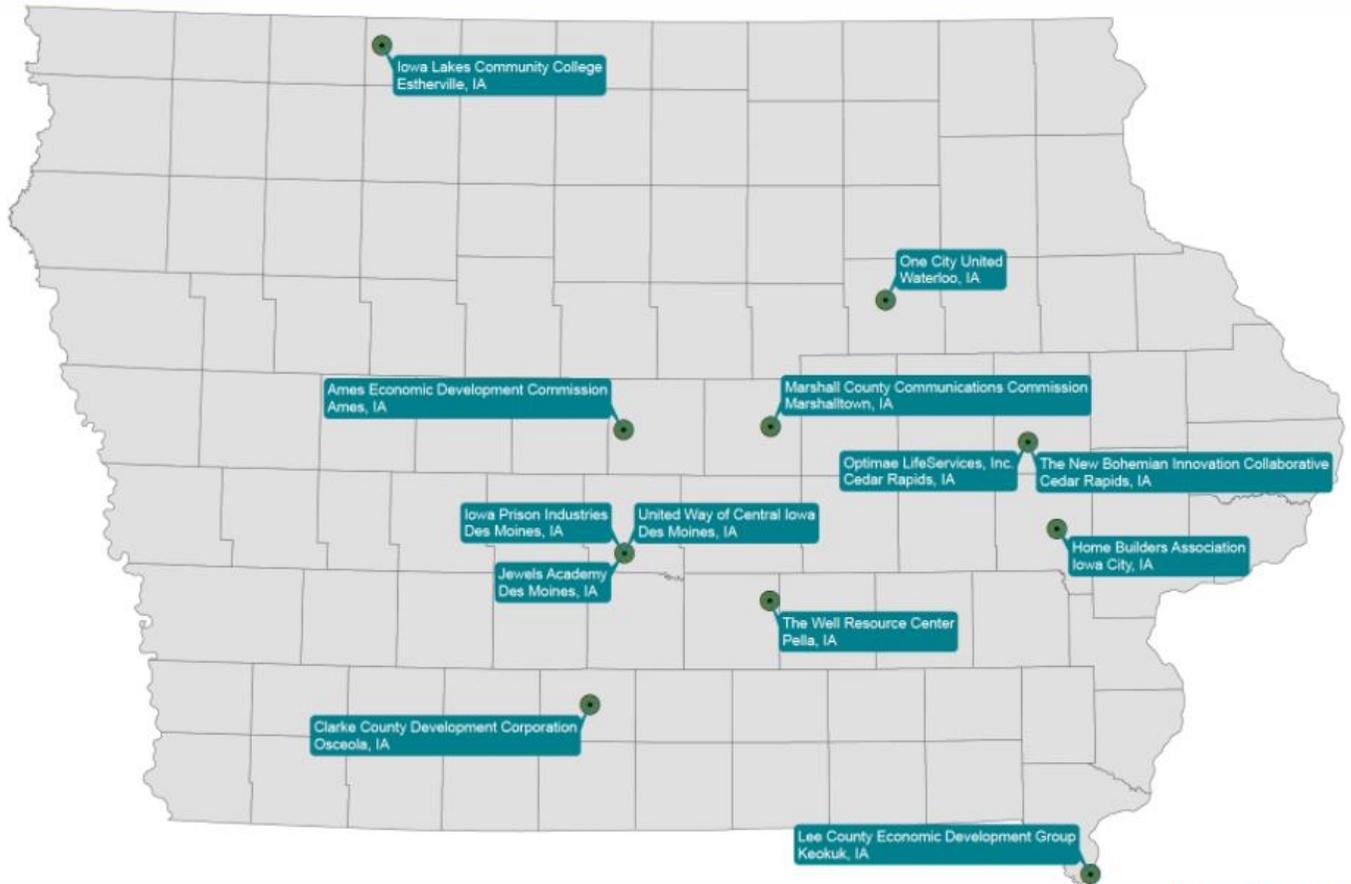
DES MOINES – Today, Governor Kim Reynolds announced 13 awardees of the [Future Ready Iowa Employer Innovation Fund](#)(link is external), a matching grant designed to help employers carry out solutions to help their employees achieve postsecondary training and education. A total of \$385,516 in funds were awarded to employers, nonprofits, and employer consortiums across the state. It is estimated that the grants will serve 2,665 lowans. The purpose of the grant is to provide opportunities for lowans to earn non-credit and for-credit postsecondary credentials leading to high-demand jobs. “As we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, it’s critical that we help lowans receive the necessary training for high-demand jobs available today,” said Gov. Reynolds. “The Employer Innovation Fund supports the incredible efforts of Iowa employers who are strengthening their own talent pipeline by helping lowans work toward a life-changing career path. This program as part of the Future Ready Iowa Initiative is changing the way we look at workforce as we provide even greater opportunity for lowans.”

The grants can be used to cover the cost of training and supplies as well as provide much needed wrap around support that addresses the other barriers some lowans face when trying to obtain skilled training. Award amounts range from \$1,000 to \$50,000. Support services can be used to cover expenses related to childcare, transportation and provide stipends to meet basic necessities while in training.

“This year marks the second Employer Innovation Fund opportunity and Iowa’s businesses, nonprofits and educational institutions make effective programs happen when they work together to address local workforce challenges,” said Director Beth Townsend, Iowa Workforce Development. “Creative business solutions are more important than ever and this grant empowers employers to invest in programs and resources that help working lowans achieve necessary job skills training.”

The Future Ready Iowa goal is to have 70 percent of lowans in the workforce with education and training beyond high school by 2025. Approximately 60 percent of Iowa’s current workforce meets this education and training criteria. For more information about the Future Ready Iowa, visit www.FutureReadyIowa.gov(link is external).

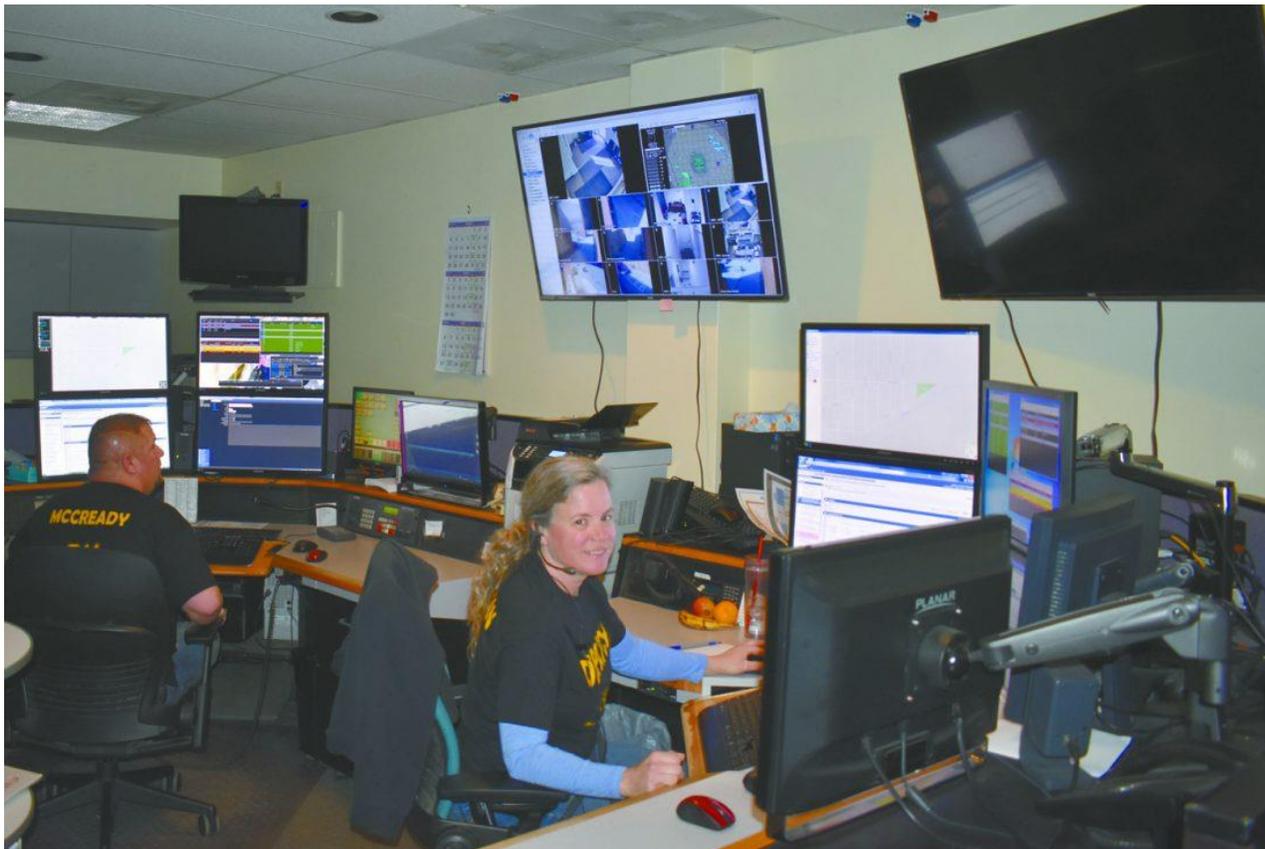
2021 Future Ready Iowa Employer Innovation Fund Grant



Updated March 10, 2021

911 Commission to put people through training

MAR 20, 2021



T-R FILE PHOTO A grant issued through the state will allow the Marshall County Communications Commission the opportunity to put 20 people through 911 training. Afterward, those 20 people will be eligible to work in any 911 center in the state.

An Employer Innovation Fund Grant will give the Marshall County Communications Commission the opportunity to put 20 Iowans through training.

911 Communications Director Rhonda Braudis said she was very excited to learn her agency was a recipient of the \$100,000 grant. Through that money, a series of eight virtual one-week online courses will be offered. Applicants from all geographic regions of the state can be accepted. Funds will provide wrap-around support such as internet reimbursement, childcare costs and other items needed to assist participants in completion

of training. This will provide 20 Iowans with certification upon completion for the 40-hour basic course required by all 911 agencies in the state of Iowa.

“This is something really powerful for this agency and the county to do,” Braudis said.

Through the process, she hopes to get some potential employees in line or future openings.

“I will put people on an eligibility list and if I have an opening, hire from that list,” she said. *“But Marshall County would not be the only place people could apply at after they finish.”*

Completion of the course will make participants eligible to work at any emergency communication center in the state.

Braudis will be able to start signing people up for the course shortly, she said. Interested people can contact her at Marshall County Communications Commission at 641-754-4750 or rbraudis@marshalltown-ia.gov.

By completing the course, Braudis hopes people will get a better understanding of what a 911 center job is like, and will be able to make a more informed decision as to whether or not they would be happy in such a position. People not realizing exactly what they would encounter is something the agency has struggled with in the past.

“This is not an easy job,” Braudis said. *“You take calls from people who are having the worst days of their lives and you need to be able to handle it. You need to go into crisis mode. Objectively handling those calls takes a toll. Sometimes they are very difficult, and we are open 24 hours a day. You will not have every weekend or holiday off. You will miss your kids’ soccer games and dance recitals.”*

To help with the work/life balance impact, she said being employed at the Marshall County Communications Commission comes with good pay and benefits, but even greater is the feeling of helping someone.

“No matter what, every day you help somebody,” Braudis said. *“Whether they are asking what temperature to bake a turkey at or helping their loved one who is having a heart attack or been in an accident.”*

Yes, the center has gotten calls that were not life-saving. Braudis did say those are illegal, but 911 communicators first explain why those types of calls are illegal. If that person calls again and there is maliciousness, then charges will be filed.

“I have amazing staff who take time and do all of that with people who call,” Braudis said. “And I am looking for people who might be interested in doing this. Maybe they have not done it before. Maybe they had young children at home, but I am looking for people who can be trusted and want to see what we’re about.”

—

Contact Lana Bradstream at 641-753-6611 or lbradstream@timesrepublican.com.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Modern Woodmen of America Youth Service Club and Adult Chapter 385 honor MPD and MFD

On Sept. 8 the Modern Woodmen of America Youth Service Club and Adult Chapter 385 honored the Marshalltown Police and Fire Departments and Dispatch with thank you cards and gift cards to local restaurants. Stephen Blom, a member of Modern Woodmen, presented the gift bags to each department.

Gov. Reynolds announces appointments to Iowa's boards & commissions

Fri, 12/10/2021

Today, Gov. Kim Reynolds announced appointments to Iowa's boards and commissions.

The following appointments are subject to Senate confirmation:

Iowa Statewide Interoperable Communications System Board

Bridget Edson, Chickasaw

Rhonda Braudis, Marshall

Melinda Ruopp

**Marshall County Communications Center
Part-Time/Tactical Dispatcher**

**Marshall County Sheriff's Office Reserve
Deputy featured on ESPN K9 Dog Challenge**

I am the national secretary for the United States Police Canine Association (USPCA). The USPCA, in joint effort with the American Kennel Club (AKC), worked together to produce a television show called K9 Detection Dog Challenge, shown on ESPN2.

The show featured 10 narcotic detection dogs and 10 explosive detection dogs, who were pitted against each other in a couple different search environments. They were scored and timed to see who the winner was.

I was honored to have been featured by ESPN and AKC as an expert announcer, and worked alongside Ms. Carolyn Manno, to give insight into the inner workings of a police detection dog. The event was filmed on 11-15-2021 at PNC arena in North Carolina and has been shown at least a couple times on ESPN2.



