

IOWA WESTERN

A Magazine for Alumni & Friends



in this issue

Spring 2016

Commemorating our first 50 years

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Dear alumni and friends,

Fifty years ago, the Iowa State Board of Education declared March 18, 1966 as the official “birthdate” of Iowa Western Community College. Who could have imagined what we would become when those first classes were held in scattered rooms and buildings? Only a cornfield on the far edge of Council Bluffs held the promise of something greater.

Visionary college and community leaders have supported our progress from the start. Since its humble beginnings in rented facilities, Iowa Western has served the higher education needs of Southwest Iowa (and the world for that matter). Only one person has been directly connected with the college for the entire 50 years of its history — Bob Laubenthal — the college’s legal counsel. Tens of thousands of others have been a part of the college, and we plan to celebrate the contributions from everyone who has led us to the Iowa Western we are today.

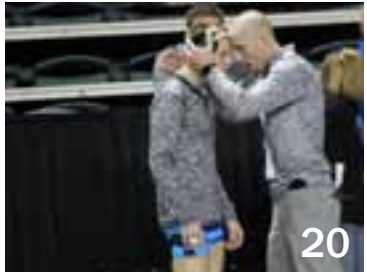
How far can we go in the next half century? With the dedication and expertise of our faculty and staff, the commitment and enthusiasm of our students, and the spirit of partnership and hard work from our community, Iowa Western’s future is boundless and bright.

In this edition of the alumni magazine, and in numerous mailings and emails, the dates and times of various events commemorating our first 50 years are provided. We invite everyone who has been a part of Iowa Western’s history to join us and celebrate the college’s impact on the individuals and communities of Southwest Iowa and beyond.

We hope you will join us at events this year to celebrate this significant milestone in Iowa Western’s history. Come celebrate our past and dream of our future as we launch Iowa Western into the next 50 years.

Dan Kinney

Dr. Dan Kinney
President



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Iowa Western Alumni Magazine

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Full-service mechanics

By Mike Watkins

When Iowa Western's automotive program started in 1967, the campus's current location east of K-Mart on Highway 6 was nothing but open farmlands and gravel roads.

The program was one of the first at Iowa Western and found its home at the current site of Sherbondy's Garden Center at the corner of 16th Avenue and Third Street as all programs were spread throughout Council Bluffs.

Automotive shared the small building that was a former garage with the agricultural program and its large tractors, so there was only enough space for one, sometimes two, cars for the students to work on.

Eventually, the program moved to its current home in Dodge Hall on the Iowa Western campus, and it's been there ever since.

"We originally shared the building with the aviation program, but when they moved out to the Council Bluffs airport, that freed up some space for us," says former Instructor, Program Chair and Dean Otis Elkin. "The building underwent a significant remodel several years ago, and now it's so nice, we call it the Dodge Mahal. It serves us quite well."

Over its storied history, the automotive program has helped shape the lives of hundreds of students, some of whom have gone on to recommend their children join the program as well.

"That's when you know you've been doing this here for a long time, when you hear a name in class and ask the student if they are related to so-and-so, and it turns out he's their dad," says Kirk Anderson, a long time instructor who retired in 2015 after more than 40 years.

"Then, that student goes home and tells his dad, and he'll say, 'I can't believe he's still there.' That's always been a great icebreaker with new students."

Following are capsules of four men — two who have been a part of the automotive program from the beginning, one as an instructor and the other as a member of the first class and later as an instructor — who helped shape it over the years into what it is today.

OTIS ELKIN

When he started as an instructor in 1967, Otis Elkin never imagined he'd spend more than 30 years as an instructor and then later as an administrator at Iowa Western.

After high school, his career ambition involved opening his own car dealership, not teaching automotive classes in makeshift classrooms for a fledgling community college.

Funny how things don't always turn out like you thought — sometimes for the better.

"I remember my first few days reading to the class out of manuals because we didn't have parts or machines to work on," says Elkin, who was barely older than most of his students at 24 when he started teaching. "Eventually, we got some carburetors and other parts from local junkyards, and I was able to show them some hands-on work. But it was day-to-day at best in the early going."

"I know I had to be boring them to death early on. I had no idea what I was doing, but with practice and a little trial and error, I learned what worked."

Elkin says there were two sessions of automotive classes in the first year, one during the day and another in the evening. He switched back and forth between the sessions for the first few quarters.

After a couple years at the garage on 16th Street, the automotive program moved to an empty Dodge dealership on 4th Street (where the current YMCA sits). With a much bigger space, Elkin says they were able to expand the program and the number of cars the students could use.

Within a short time, the program grew to five instructors, and when that happened, he moved into

the associate dean position of what was then called the Space Program — bringing technical programs like automotive classes to high schools in all seven counties in Area 13, Iowa Western's region.

"We started with about 200 students and got up to more than 1,200. We were working with almost all of the school districts," he says.

And then service in the Vietnam War came calling. After serving overseas, Elkin returned to Iowa Western in 1971 just as the Council Bluffs campus was being completed for all programs to relocate to one spot.

"We had everything we needed, and because we had some say in how the shop was laid out, we were able to do many more things with the students in the new location," says Elkin, who returned to college after Vietnam to earn his bachelor's and master's degrees.

"We were still somewhat limited in the number of cars we could have (because they shared the building with aviation and agriculture), but we were able to now work on 12 cars at a time with three in the driveway waiting."

Now that he's been retired for more than 15 years (he retired as Dean of the Applied Science and Technology program in 2000), Elkin says he looks back fondly over his 33 years and can't believe almost 50 have gone by since it all started.

"It was a good ride for me," he says. "Over the last couple of years, I've run into a few students who were part of that first group back in 1967, and it's hard to believe that they are in their mid- to late-60s."

"I had no idea back then that I would work at the college my whole professional life, but I honestly can say I couldn't have been happier while it was happening."

JERRY NISSEN

Jerry Nissen will cap 18 years of teaching and automotive program administration this July when he packs up his toolbox and retires from Iowa Western.

While he's completely enjoyed his time at Iowa Western, Nissen says a career in automotive technology was initially far from his radar.

"I was originally an art major (at Northwest Missouri State), but some kids just aren't ready to go to college right out of high school, and I was one of them," says Nissen, who makes an 80-mile drive to the Iowa Western campus from his home in Southwest Iowa each day.

"I was always tinkering with my dad's car and then my car, so automotive seemed like a nice alternative. I just wanted to get a job and make a living."

Nissen earned his diploma from the auto mechanics program at Southwestern Community College in Creston, Iowa in 1978 and worked in the industry for two dealerships for several years.

In 1985, a teaching opportunity at Southwestern became available, and he got into the profession because he needed a lifestyle change.

"I was the service manager for a dealership in Red Oak, and I kept thinking I could do a better job by teaching others what to do," he says. "I've steadily learned how to teach over the past 30 years, and it's something that keeps evolving every year."

So has the industry, Nissen says. Computers and advanced technology have increased the efficiency of automobiles over the past three decades, and that also has meant the challenges of working with autos have increased.

He and his other instructors regularly attend training to learn new methods and technology so that they are up on the newest advancements for car repair and maintenance.

In addition to hands-on training, Nissen said one of the areas where he's noticed the biggest differences from students in past classes is that current students need more work on developing their soft skills, particularly working with others and with customers.

"For many of these students, this will be their first job after they graduate, so I see it as our job to help them learn everything beyond just the mechanics," says Nissen, who has seen student interest in the program ebb and flow over the years.

"The technology today is so cool that it's easy to get wrapped up in it, but there are other sides to this business that are equally important. At the same time, if we get too involved with teaching them only the high-tech stuff, we lose sight of teaching them the important fundamentals."

During his years at Iowa Western, Nissen said he has always felt the support of the college and administration for the automotive programs.

"They have always been very big on staff development, helping all of us to continue to learn so we can be better teachers," he says. "Just like other programs, we go through regular accreditation measures, and being up on technology and current methods is critical to doing our jobs."

KIRK ANDERSON

Kirk Anderson's introduction to Iowa Western came while giving a job reference for friend and fellow car enthusiast Bob Kullbom in 1973.

Kullbom was interviewing for an instructor position in the college's automotive program, and when Anderson spoke to the recruiter at the time, he

CONTINUED PAGE 16

FAMILY *first*

By Mike Watkins

Emma Jeanne Shipley has seen and experienced some amazing things in her 86 years on Earth.

The Great Depression. The Dust Bowl. Having her appendix removed at age 7 in a time before antibiotics. Living in a house with no running water, electricity or bathroom. Attending and teaching country school in rural Iowa. Those are just a few.

Nothing, however, made her happier and stands out more in her recent memories than seeing all four of her sons honored for their work and community contributions in the same year in 2014.

Oldest son, Tom, was sworn in as a new Iowa state senator; second son, Clifford, a professor of veterinary education at the University of Illinois, was honored with the 2014 Dr. Donald E. Bailey Practitioner of the Year Award by the American Association of Small Ruminant Practitioners; third son, Bill, was appointed to the Iowa Soybean Board; and youngest, Leland, took his seat as the Adams County Supervisor.

“I’m quite the proud mama, as you can imagine,” she says. “I never had any girls, but I’m proud of my four boys, and I’m glad that they are all close enough to help me when I need them. I have some wonderful daughters-in-law instead.”

Emma Jeanne is also a proud Iowa Western graduate. So is Tom, as he actually completed his associate’s degree a decade before his mom. He graduated in 1973 and moved on to get his bachelor’s degree from Iowa State two years later.

Emma Jeanne started classes at the Iowa Western Clarinda Center in 1982 at the age of 52, to study nursing and help her family as they struggled through the Farm Crisis of the 1980s. Tom also attended Iowa Western in Clarinda, but he went right out of high school and earned his degree in general studies.

Together, they form one of the oldest mother-son alumni bonds, only fitting as Iowa Western and the Iowa community college system celebrates 50 years this summer.

“I came to Iowa Western after my children were gone from home, and we needed my job to make extra money, and education was the best way to do that,” says Emma Jeanne, who earned her licensed practical nurse (LPN) certification in 1983.

“My husband Malcolm was disabled during World War II, so when the farm crisis happened and his income was affected, I knew I needed to do something to help out.”

She worked nights at the local nursing home so she could be home during the day with Malcolm.

“It [Iowa Western] was definitely a launching pad for great futures. It gave all of us the chance to get our feet underneath us before we went on to accomplish *some great things*.”

Tom Shipley

When the nursing home offered her the opportunity to take a leave of absence to advance her education, she did just that.

So Malcolm could have access to the car, Emma Jeanne rode into Clarinda every day from her home in Nodaway, leaving at 6 a.m. and returning in the afternoon with a family friend who worked in town.

“I would arrive at school and sit in the classroom and study before class started at 8,” she says. “The second semester, I had clinicals so I had to drive the car. There were such good teachers at Iowa Western that when I took my state boards, there was only one question I didn’t know the answer to.”

“When I first started, it took me a couple of months to get back my study skills. It had been so long since I was in school that I had lost almost all of them. And being an older student, most of the other students could have been my children.”

Nursing was actually not the first chosen profession for Emma Jeanne. During her senior year of high school, she was approached about taking over for the country school teacher at her own school once she finished. A year later, she had taken over the teaching duties and did that until Tom was born.

Tom’s path to his current role as a Republican state senator from Iowa began after he graduated from Iowa State with his bachelor’s degree in agriculture education in 1975.

After his graduation, he taught vocational agriculture for three years at Fremont-Mills High School. From there, he worked as a livestock production specialist for Land O’ Lakes throughout Southwest Iowa until 2002; he was the feed department manager at the United Farmer’s Merc. Co-op until 2008.

His foray into politics started in 2009 with his position as the Director of Issues and Policy Management with the Iowa Cattlemen’s Association. He held that position until 2011, whereupon he returned to Land O’ Lakes/Purina as a beef production specialist. His time there ended in May of last year.

It’s been his love of agriculture and Iowa’s rich agricultural history and contributions that Tom says motivated him to consider running for the state senate seat vacated by retired senator Hubert Houser in 2014.

“I did some lobbyist work at the legislature when I worked for the Iowa Cattlemen’s Association, and that really piqued my interest in politics,” he says. “When the senator in the district retired, I was asked to run, and after thinking about it, I said yes.”

Tom says he remembers his days at Iowa Western’s Clarinda Center with affection.

Many of his classmates from Villisca High School (Class

of ’71) also attended school there so it became a reunion of sorts each day on the campus.

“It was definitely one of the best times of my life; knowing many of the kids from Southwest Iowa and school made it a lot of being back at high school,” says Tom, who served 18 years on his high school’s school board, several terms as president. “We had some great teachers back then, and I remember many of their names – Don Paulsen taught math, Max Johnson — and the funny thing is, I don’t remember as many of my professors’ names from Iowa State. My time there made a great impact on me.”

Tom remembers that while the Clarinda Center was part of the bigger Iowa Western college system, it had its own basketball and baseball teams (separate from Council Bluffs) and recruited kids from all over to play sports there.

“We had a lot of great community support, and we had a lot of students from that time who went on to become engineers, veterinarians, doctors, etc., from that small campus,” says Tom, who has a small farming operation and cow herd in Nodaway.

“It was definitely a launching pad for great futures. It gave all of us the chance to get our feet underneath us before we went on to accomplish some great things.”

Emma Jeanne agrees, and recognizes that without the community college system — the system that put two-year degree programs within driving distance of communities throughout the state where people couldn’t or didn’t want to move but could still gain an education — was key for her at that particular time in her life when education meant so much in many ways.

“I had a home, family, husband; I couldn’t just pick up and move to Ames or Iowa City or somewhere else to go to college,” says Emma Jeanne, whose husband, Malcolm, passed away in 2005. “Without the second income from working at the nursing home, we would have lost our farm, so my education was incredibly important to keeping our family together.”



Left: Tom and his mother, Emma Jeanne. Above: a photograph of Senator Tom Shipley.

Belt Brothers are Alumni Trio

By Kara Schweiss

Doug Belt has lived in Idaho — nearly 1,200 miles away from his native Council Bluffs — for several decades now. Even so, when he comes home to visit family every year or so, he still feels a pull to visit the Iowa Western campus and tries to take in a game or two of whatever sport happens to be in season. And he's not the only one in his family to have a lasting affinity for Iowa Western; three of the four Belt brothers attended Iowa Western after graduating from Thomas Jefferson High School, pursuing different programs beginning with Dennis in 1969 followed by Scott in 1975 and Doug in 1976.

"It was a good facility at the time and I think the growth [since] is outstanding," Doug says. "Each time I visit, there's usually something different. When I went there, I think there were just two major buildings."

Older brother Dennis completed his studies before Scott and Doug were college-age, but the younger brothers' time at Iowa Western overlapped for one year. The athletic pair, both well above six feet tall, were even able to play on the basketball team together for a time.

Doug is still involved with basketball today as a member of the Mountain Home High School (Idaho) coaching staff.

a teacher, and Scott returned to Iowa Western in the early 1980s to earn his second associate degree, this time in computer studies. His original thought had been to shore up his business skills by taking some accounting courses, Scott says, but he instead made what could have been a risky decision to pursue an emerging field.

"That was back when there were Apple IIs and TRS-80s; it was just the inception," he recalls. "We were doing things on an 80-card deck, we were learning languages like COBAL and RPG and Fortran and BASIC."

His foresight proved to be sound, and the early start in learning about computer technology ultimately paid off, Scott says. "That was huge for me in giving me opportunities to advance in the workforce," he explains. "I've been able to use it in all facets in my life."

Through Iowa Western, Scott worked for a time teaching high school students computer classes through a federally-funded program called SPACE (Secondary Programs in Area Career Education). Today, he works in commercial property management for Heartland Properties, and his earlier career background includes 18 years with convenience store company Eddy's and a stint as a business development director for MidStates, a regional bank.

Scott not only chose to stay and raise his family in his hometown, he also committed early on to serve his community through his current position on the Pottawattamie County Board of Supervisors and past service on the Council Bluffs City Council and City Parks and Recreation Board, not to mention the boards of numerous nonprofits including Heartland Family Service, Pottawattamie County Growth Alliance, Pottawattamie County Development

Corporation, and the Metro Area Planning Agency Board. In 2013, the Iowa Western Foundation honored his commitment to community service by naming him Outstanding Alum of the Year.

"It's been an interesting journey," he says.

Doug is a self-described "outdoors man" whose career highlights include building center pivot irrigation systems, working as a wildland firefighter with the Forest Service and a dozen years as an operations manager for a hazard-

ous waste company — as well as time as a stay-at-home dad and grandfather. "I did a little bit of everything," he says. He met his wife, Wintauna, through his Forest Service job and settled in her hometown of Mountain Home, Idaho. But he's near family, too; brothers Ed and Dennis also moved out west and made their homes in Idaho.

Doug is semi-retired today, although he says taking more college classes in the future — even finishing coursework for his bachelor's degree — is not out of the question. Doug says the business basics he learned at Iowa Western have served him well through his multifaceted career, and advises current Iowa Western students to take advantage of the ample opportunities to take classes that cover practical business and life skills such as how to manage money.


"Take some type of economics class so you understand how it all works," he says.

Looking back, both brothers say affordability (especially considering the state of the economy in the mid-1970s) and proximity to family influenced their decisions to attend Iowa Western, and of course the appeal of being able to play basketball was a factor as well. Scott, the only Belt brother still in Iowa, has retained continuous ties to Iowa Western, serving on

the alumni board and as its president. He's also maintained relationships with past and present instructors, administrators, and even coaches and referees.

"There are too many to name," he says, adding that he's enjoyed watching the institution grow steadily over the four decades that have passed since his earliest days as a student. "The amount of opportunity and programs, the physical facilities, the quality of the programs . . . Not to say it wasn't good back then, but it's just gotten better."

In light of their own positive college experiences at Iowa Western, both brothers encouraged their own children to attend college. Doug's two daughters and three of Scott's four sons and daughters pursued post-secondary education, and both brothers marvel at new and better opportunities available to today's college students from online courses to a wider range of programs.

"Community colleges allow individuals to advance their potential and aspire to greater opportunities in life, are very affordable and offer that in a relationship-based environment," Scott says. "Iowa Western is a blessing for Council Bluffs and Southwest Iowa. The opportunities it gives young people are amazing." 



Above: Scott's family poses with him at his Outstanding Alum reception. From left: daughter Erin, father Robert; wife Ann; and daughter Kara. Not pictured: sons Chad and Justin. At right: Doug and his father Robert.



“Community colleges allow individuals to advance their potential and aspire to greater opportunities in life, are very affordable and offer that in a relationship-based environment. **Iowa Western is a blessing for Council Bluffs and Southwest Iowa.** The opportunities it gives young people are amazing.”

Scott Belt, '77 and '82

He earned an associate degree at Iowa Western and transferred to what is now Montana State University in Billings, Montana, where he took additional classes before joining the workforce.

After earning his associate degree at Iowa Western, Scott went onto earn a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Northern Iowa after his wife-to-be, the former Ann Thilges (they met at Iowa Western) transferred. After the couple married, Ann began working as

Through *the* Years

1966 State Legislature approves a community college system in Iowa. Dr. Robert Looft is hired as Superintendent of Iowa Western Community College.

1967 The first new vocational programs in Council Bluffs were Automotive Mechanics and Printing. The programs began at Thomas Jefferson High School with a total of seven students.

1968 Iowa Western held its first commencement ceremony with 160 graduates.

1970 Page-Fremont County Center was established in Shenandoah, Iowa.

1971 The first contribution in the amount of \$400 was received from the Council Bluffs Service League to be used by the Iowa Western Community College Foundation.

1972 The Reiver was adopted in response to a quest for a mascot.

1973 Interscholastic athletics began in Council Bluffs: baseball, men's basketball; and fall track.

1975 Dorms located adjacent to the Iowa Western Council Bluffs campus, were dedicated.

1979 The first golf tournament for scholarships was held. Today, five golf tournaments in Council Bluffs and surrounding communities raise more than \$50,000 for scholarships annually.

1981 The bridge on the Council Bluffs campus was built connecting Clark Hall to Looft Hall.

1984 320 student residential dormitory was built on Council Bluffs campus.

1987 Dr. Looft retires and Dr. Carl Heinrich becomes the second president of Iowa Western Community College.

1991 Iowa Western Alumni office is established in Council Bluffs.

1994 Dr. Heinrich retires and Dr. Dan Kinney becomes the third president of Iowa Western. The Iowa Western Achievement Corporation (Iowa Western Foundation) assets grow to \$338,965.

1996 The clock tower was designed and constructed by students in the Iowa Western Civil Engineering/Architectural program. It was made possible by a gift from Trustee Lyman Bennett and his wife Dorothy. KIWR, the radio station on campus, converted from classical rock and jazz to the nationally-recognized alternative rock station known as 89.7 The River.

1998 A time capsule was buried celebrating Stuart Hall's opening.

1999 The Black Tie Harvest for Scholarships dinner and auction was established and continues to be the college's largest fundraising event. To date it has endowed more than \$1.5 million in scholarships.

2000 Kanesville multi-purpose arena was built.

2001 The Arts Center at Iowa Western opened with an inaugural production of Oklahoma directed by alumnus Hersh Rodasky ('71).

2003 Aviation Technology Center completed at the Council Bluffs Airport.

2005 The Reiver mascot was renamed "Captain Rocky."

2006 Volleyball program won its first national championship – Iowa Western's first-ever national championship in any sport.

2009 Iowa Western celebrated its first year of football on Sept. 5 with special guests Heisman Trophy winners Eric Crouch and Johnny Rodgers.

2010 The Student Center opened housing the cafeteria, culinary arts, cyber library and office space.

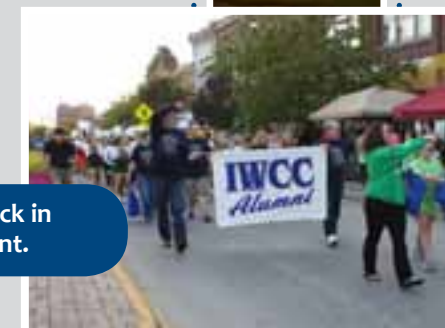
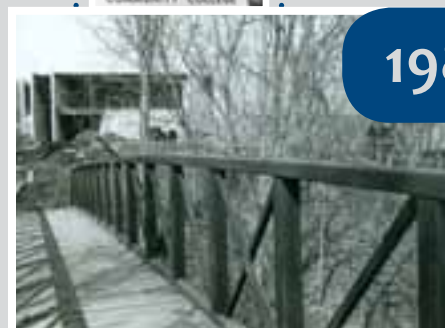
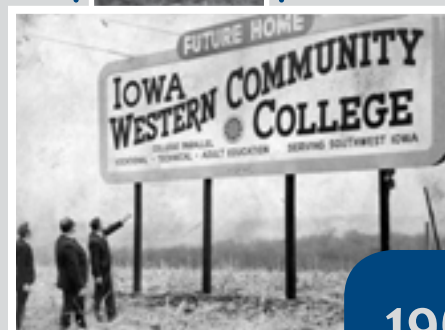
2011 Two state-of-the-art facilities opened – the Enterprise Computing Center and the Center for Advanced Nursing and Allied Health.

2011 Iowa Western received the largest gift in its history – a \$65.2 million in-kind software grant from Siemens PLM Software Group to launch the Design Technology program at the Cass County Center.

2012 A new logo introduced with the tagline "The World is Waiting."

2014 Iowa Western held its first homecoming parade on the Historic 100 Block in downtown Council Bluffs which has become an annual community event.

2015 The Board of Trustees dedicated Kinney Hall Engineering and Technology building to Iowa Western President Dr. Dan Kinney at the July grand opening.





50 years in the making



Iowa Western, along with community colleges across the state, is celebrating 50 years of service in 2016. On June 7, 1965, then Governor Harold Hughes signed into law Senate File 550; landmark legislation that created a new community college system in the state of Iowa. Subsequent legislation identified 15 community college areas or regions. Council Bluffs and Southwest Iowa became Merged Area XIII, and on March 18, 1966, Iowa Western Community College was officially designated by the State Board of Education.

While much has changed since 1966, one constant has been the critical role of sound leadership in the development of Iowa Western as the premier community college in the region. Leadership was a driving force in the college's success story, most notably from the three dedicated presidents who guided Iowa Western through its 50-year history: Dr. Robert Looft (1966-1987), Dr. Carl Heinrich (1987-1994) and Dr. Dan Kinney (1994-present).

"Iowa Western and Southwest Iowa have been blessed to have quality leadership at the helm of this great institution," said Robert Laubenthal, a Council Bluffs attorney who helped draft legal papers for the establishment of Iowa Western in 1966 and who still represents the college as legal counsel. "There is no doubt that the success

of this institution and what it has provided in terms of quality educational services to thousands of students can be directly attributed to the excellent leadership from the three presidents."

Dr. Robert Looft was at the forefront of an important movement nearly a half-century ago when the State of Iowa formed the community college system. A native of Kossuth County, Iowa, Looft earned a BA in science from DePauw University while serving in the Navy V-12 Program. He later earned a doctorate from Iowa State University and in 1966, returned to Clarinda to take on the Merged Area XIII challenge.

His daughter, Diane Machmuller, said education was her father's passion and he relished the opportunity to start a community college from scratch.

"He had several options upon receiving his doctorate, one of which was the Area XIII position," Machmuller said in an Iowa Western alumni magazine story. "Dad loved a challenge, and he wanted the challenge of starting a community college. To a lot of people it seemed like a daunting task, but dad saw it as the challenge of a lifetime."

A small junior college already existed in Page County, Iowa, in the town of Clarinda, but college leaders knew a move was needed to ensure the growth of the new Merged Area

XIII. With the construction of Interstates 80 and 29 and the proximity to a bustling metropolitan Omaha, Neb., student market, the demographics pointed to Council Bluffs as the ideal location for the new community college. Looft's previous experience as the superintendent of schools in Clarinda proved vital as he worked closely with community leaders to garner support for the move and to ensure that Clarinda would maintain a solid presence in the new community college structure.

"Bob Looft worked with the area folks, including my father, to ensure a campus in Clarinda was a priority," said Fred Lisle, president of Lisle Corporation and IWCC board of trustee. "Over the years, Iowa Western has never lost focus of its mission of helping students of all ages across Southwest Iowa. I am honored to be a part of Iowa Western and enjoy working with the board and the administration. The family believes that many Clarinda area students have lived fuller and richer lives as a result of their education at the Clarinda campus. Some of these area students wouldn't have had an opportunity to go on to college if the local college wasn't available."

After solidifying regional support for the move, Looft joined community leaders in Council Bluffs in identifying the site for Iowa Western's future expansion, ultimately settling

on a sprawling, 250-acre tract in the Loess Hills. Located at the junction of Highway 6 and Interstate 80, Iowa Western would become the crown jewel on the eastern edge of a growing community. "Bob and others believed it was an ideal piece of land," Laubenthal said. "Bob believed it was a big enough piece of property for Iowa Western to grow. He knew the campus would change, and boy has it."

It was a busy first couple of years for Looft, who expanded operations in Clarinda with student housing and a new library (The Edith Lisle Library), hired architects for master facility planning in Council Bluffs, hired new staff to accommodate the growing Merged Area XIII district, and began the process of instituting new educational programs. The first new vocational programs in Council Bluffs were automotive mechanics and printing, both of which started in 1967 with a total of seven students. In June 1969, a groundbreaking ceremony was held for the new campus in Council Bluffs for a construction project totaling 94,000 square feet.

During the next 18 years, Looft moved forward with several key projects that opened the door for more students to attend Iowa Western. Looft and his administration took advantage of the Federal Housing and Urban Development Program, designed to provide low-cost financing for colleges and universities to build apartments and a dormitory in Council



1972



1984



1996



2008



2016

Bluffs. In September 1979, after years of negotiations at the federal, state and local level, the College Board authorized the hiring of officials to start a college radio station, and in November 1981, KIWR-FM radio turned on its microphones for the first time. In 1982, Looft cut the ribbon on a new Continuing Education Center. Located on the main campus (today's Looft Hall), the center served more than 9,000 people through a variety of seminars, workshops, short courses and conferences in its first year of operation.

With the challenge of opening a community college clearly behind him, Looft was ready to pass the torch to another generation of leadership. Dr. Carl Heinrich, who served 13 years at Butler County (Kansas) Community College as vice president and president, became the second president of Iowa Western in 1987. Prior to his tenure at Butler, Heinrich was professor of education at Emporia State (Kansas) University, where he helped train up-and-coming educators interested in pursuing leadership roles at the community college level. Those skills helped prepare the new IWCC president for changes needed during his tenure in Council Bluffs.

With state funding dwindling but enrollments on the rise, Heinrich hit the ground running with an aggressive plan of getting Iowa Western's financial picture in focus while continuing to build trust throughout Merged Area XIII in the mission of the college. "If I had one strength to bring to Iowa Western it was in bringing the right people in to make it work," Heinrich said. "We sat down together and determined what the financial and strategic goals were going to be, and then we got to work."

His staff faced challenges in addressing budgetary burdens from campus building projects, which were financed through the college's maintenance levy, and from a limited cash flow. Heinrich and the board decided to address the growing financial crisis with large-scale personnel cuts, a move that eventually put Iowa Western back on solid footing. "Coming in as a new president and eliminating people was not easy," Heinrich said. "But to be honest, I had to reduce staff for not only financial reasons but for efficiency reasons."

During the rebuilding process, Heinrich maintained a close relationship with community leaders throughout Merged Area XIII, a sprawling district that was much different than his one-county service area in Kansas. Heinrich conducted town hall meetings in the 33 different school districts that composed Merged Area XIII and made numerous visits to civic groups and community organizations to explain the mission of Iowa Western. "I felt I had a responsibility to be out among the communities that we serve. I was involved in many, many organizations, and I could do that because I knew I had good people in place on our campus and in our centers."

Heinrich also made his mark at the state level, becoming president of the Iowa Association of Community College Presidents and establishing a liaison network to the governor's office and Department of Education. With community support on the rise in Area XIII, Heinrich began to focus his attention on generating interest in the college's foundation and jump-started a much-needed capital campaign to raise scholarship funds for students. That drive resulted in an influx of more than \$250,000 into the foundation prior to his retirement in August 1994.

The Iowa Western Board of Trustees again looked to Kansas for its next leader, hiring Dr. Dan Kinney, president of Coffeyville (Kansas) Community College, in September 1994. Kinney, a native of Hastings, Neb., earned a BA in business administration and an MA in educational administration from Kearney State College. He earned his Ph.D in philosophy (Adult and Continuing Education) from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 1980. He served as president of Coffeyville for nine years. Kinney also brought key leadership experience from his service in the U.S. Army National Guard, from which he retired in 2001 as a colonel.

The next two decades in Iowa Western's storied history brought unprecedented growth in academic programs, student enrollment and facility expansion throughout Merged Area XIII. In the last two decades under Kinney's leadership, the college has witnessed more than \$120 million in facility expansion and renovation at its main campus in Council Bluffs and at centers in Clarinda, Shenandoah, Atlantic and Harlan. Facility upgrades helped trigger record student engagement, as the college saw its enrollment surpass 7,000 in headcount (7,323 in FY2013) while credit-hour production soared to 159,338 in 2012.

"Dan Kinney was clearly the leader we needed to take Iowa Western to the next level," said Laubenthal, the college's legal counsel. "His vast experience in academics, along with his military leadership expertise, helped shape Iowa Western from a strategic planning standpoint, and that helped position the college as the premier institution in the region."

Kinney hit the ground running, initiating the college's first strategic planning committee and its first institutional advancement office on the main campus in Council Bluffs. The research and discussion culminating from those groups later enabled the college to pursue a plan of action for offering a variety of exciting new programs, including veterinary technology, choral and instrumental music, media studies and theatre production.

A key step in the strategic planning process was building support throughout the district for the college. "I really felt there was a need to improve the image of Iowa Western, so we worked hard at gaining the trust of our constituents in Region XIII," Kinney said. "We communicated our plan for the college and where we wanted to go, and I believe that was a key factor in our growth."

In 1996, Iowa Western passed its first bond referendum, which provided an influx of \$3 million that led to construction of Stuart Hall, a modern classroom facility that helped alleviate burgeoning enrollment. The funds also enabled the college to move the music program out of a cramped basement room in the dormitory tower to new classroom space. The move, however, was short-lived as community leaders began discussions with college officials about the need for a new facility in Council Bluffs. As a result, nearly \$9 million in private funds was raised to build the Southwest Iowa Arts Center, which opened on the Iowa Western Council Bluffs campus in March 2001.

The voters of Southwest Iowa gave resounding approval to three more bond referendums that would dramatically change the landscape of the entire Iowa Western system. The three successful referendums (December 2003, 78 % approval; December 2007, 85 %; December 2012, 76 %) produced landmark facilities on the Council Bluffs campus such as the new student center, cyber library, culinary arts lab, the Center for Advanced Nursing and Allied Health and the Kinney Hall



Dr. Robert Looft, Dr. Carl Heinrich and Dr. Dan Kinney

"Dan Kinney was clearly the leader we needed to take Iowa Western to the next level. His vast experience in academics, along with his military leadership expertise, helped shape Iowa Western from a strategic planning standpoint, and that helped position the college as the premier institution in the region."

Bob Laubenthal
Iowa Western Legal Counsel

Engineering and Technology building which opened in Fall 2015. Bond proceeds also helped rejuvenate area communities with the construction of new buildings in Harlan (College Park), Atlantic and Shenandoah, along with renovations in Clarinda.

The completion of Reiver Suites Phase I in 2006 added new housing on the Council Bluffs campus and paved the way for more students to enjoy a "four-year college atmosphere" that the board of trustees wanted to create. Seven more phases of Reiver Suites would follow, providing more than 1,350 beds on a growing campus.

Adding to the campus experience was Iowa Western's growing stature in athletics. Traditionally competitive as the Clarinda Junior College, the move to Council Bluffs enabled Iowa Western to garner regional and national attention as a member of the National Junior




Dorothy and Bob Laubenthal have been connected with Iowa Western for fifty years. Bob serves as the college's legal counsel and Dorothy has volunteered with the Black Tie Harvest for Scholarships since its inception in 1999.

College Athletic Association (NJCAA). Today, the college boasts 21 Division I sports programs and seven national championships, along with the 2014 Leerfield Trophy awarded to the top junior college athletic program in the country.

"I believe the introduction of more athletic programs helped provide a positive campus culture at Iowa Western," Kinney said. "The community, our students and our employees have really embraced the student-athletes that call Iowa Western home."

As the college began to grow in size and stature, community members began to recognize the importance of supporting the institution financially through donations and gifts. Fundraising has been a major focus of the college's strategic planning process under Kinney's tenure at Iowa Western. Since 1994, the college's foundation assets have grown from \$250,000 to nearly \$22 million today thanks in part to large donations for scholarships and a major gifts campaign. The Black Tie Harvest for Scholarships dinner, held each fall, is a signature fundraising event coordinated by a growing number of community volunteers that has raised nearly \$2 million for the scholarship fund. Kinney also established a presidential scholarship program that rewards area students who excel academically and as leaders in the community. The program, which was the first of its kind for community colleges in Iowa, now boasts 30 students, all of whom take on leadership roles as ambassadors both on and off the campus.

2016 is a time of celebration for the college. Over the last 50 years, Iowa Western has changed the landscape of Southwest Iowa through strong leadership, sustained growth and educational excellence. As the college moves forward and embraces new challenges, it is exciting to consider where the next 50 years will lead Iowa Western and its surrounding communities.

This article includes excerpts from the book, *Iowa's Community Colleges: A Collective History of Fifty Year of Accomplishment*. 

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

asked Anderson if he might be interested in teaching at IWCC should another opening become available in the future.

A technician at the Ford dealership in his hometown of Oakland, Iowa, at the time, Anderson says he initially discounted the idea of teaching as a profession. But when an opportunity opened up two years later, he applied, interviewed, and the rest, as they say, has been history.

Anderson worked full-time as an instructor from 1975 until retiring in 2005 and then returned on a part-time basis for 10 more years until leaving for good in 2015.

"I wasn't an automotive student at Clarinda Junior College (which later became Iowa Western's Clarinda Center); I graduated from the mechanical technology program in 1967 and worked as a liaison between the designers and manufacturing side of the business," he says.

"But I knew several people teaching in Iowa Western's automotive program, and the idea of passing along what I knew was appealing to me."

Anderson says despite having no official education in automotive technology, his background in mechanical technology came in very handy — using what he learned in electrical and electronics with autos.

What he did know about automobile maintenance and repair came from working with his family, as uncles on both sides were mechanics.

"I was drawn to it; I would help them both out whenever I could, as early as sixth or seventh grade," he says. "My uncle would call my mom and ask if I could come down and help him. I also spent a lot of time with them during the summer. I definitely learned on the job."

Once he started teaching at Iowa Western, Anderson says he had to consistently stay up to date with the constant changes happening in the industry in order to pass on current knowledge and practices to students.

Other changes he's noticed over the years have come on campus, which has grown beyond all expectations he had when he first took the gravel road from Highway 6 into the campus.

"It's been amazing to see the change that's happened over the past 40 years — the original dorms, apartments, suites, new student center — and those are just a few," Anderson says. "As the college evolved, so did the auto program."

"We've gone from huge, heavy, expensive diag-



From left: Jerry Nissen (center) and students during class; a student works on a vehicle.



nostic machines to a plug-in, hand-held scanner that weighs hardly anything and costs very little — plus it's more accurate. And that's just one example."

After retiring (again) in December, Anderson says he came back to campus in early February to substitute when Jerry (Nissen) had to miss a few days when his wife had rotator cuff surgery.

He says he plans to make the occasional trips back as long as people he knows are still there as he says he knows he will always feel a connection to the school.

"It was a good place to work with some really good people; I really enjoyed it, and I miss it," says Anderson, whose mother and grandfather were teachers and his daughter is currently a teacher in Oregon. "It was good being back in February and catching up with everyone."

BOB CHRISTENSEN

As one of the members of the first automotive classes at Iowa Western in 1967 — and then as one of its longtime instructors — Bob Christensen has had the pleasure of seeing the impact the program's had on its many students from both sides over the years.

He's also had the pleasure of watching the campus, once made up of one central building which then expanded to four by the early 1970s, grow to become the vocational and educational center it is today in Southwest Iowa.

"We had about 8 or 9 students graduate from that first class I was in, but we started with about 19 or 20," he says. "The campus (as it is now) hadn't even broken ground on the first building when I started, so we had class in the building that is now Sherbondy's."

"We were in the brick building (the greenhouses were added later) and had class there. We didn't have much room because the large tractors for the agriculture program were also in the building, but we made due, and we all got along and learned a lot."

Christensen says it was somewhere around eighth or ninth grade when he decided automotive work was in his future. By the age of

16, he was running his own lawnmower business from his home garage, doing tune-ups and engine overhauls.


After graduating from the Iowa Western automotive program in 1969, he served in Cambodia during the Vietnam War for more than a year. When he returned, he worked for Rosen-Novak Chevrolet for several years until he was asked to come on board as an instructor at Iowa Western in 1979.

For the next 21 years (he retired in 2000), he coordinated the high school program where he both taught classes to high school students at Iowa Western and also at the Tucker Center in Council Bluffs.

"I always have loved when I'd see the light go on in a student's eyes, when they understood something that maybe they were struggling with," he says.

The fact that he stayed and taught at IWCC for as long as he did was not only a surprise to Christensen, but it became a hallmark to how much he enjoyed and was committed to teaching — something he never knew he had in him.

"When I left IWCC (as a student), being an instructor was the last thing on my mind," says Christensen, who also taught to dealership techs at General Motors in the 1980s as part of a program through Iowa Western. "My plan was to open my own shop, and I did run one part-time out of my garage for a while."

"Then, one day I bumped into Otis (Elkin) and he mentioned something to me about teaching. Over time, it became very enjoyable for me, and I made a lot of great relationships at the college and in the community. I'm proud to have watched the college and program grow into what they are today and know that I was a part of it." 



Greetings alumni and friends.

Spring is one of my favorite times of the year at Iowa Western. The warmer weather and upcoming commencement create an exciting campus atmosphere filled with anticipation. This spring is even more special at Iowa Western, as it marks the college's 50th Anniversary.

Throughout the year, the college will be celebrating this exciting milestone through events and activities that bring together alumni, students, employees and community members. Many of these are listed in this magazine and information on others is still yet to come. I encourage each of you to attend at least one of these exciting events. They are a fun chance to reconnect with Iowa Western, and you may even run into a few former classmates!

Much has changed at the college over the years, but one thing always stays the same- Iowa Western students, employees and alumni are filled with Reiver pride!

John J. Cool

John Cool, '81
Alumni Board President



Left to right: Dodge Hall (built in 1972) currently is used as an athletics facility; a photograph of the 1982-85 undefeated softball faculty team; the tool and die program circa 1970; and the capping at nursing graduation circa 1970.



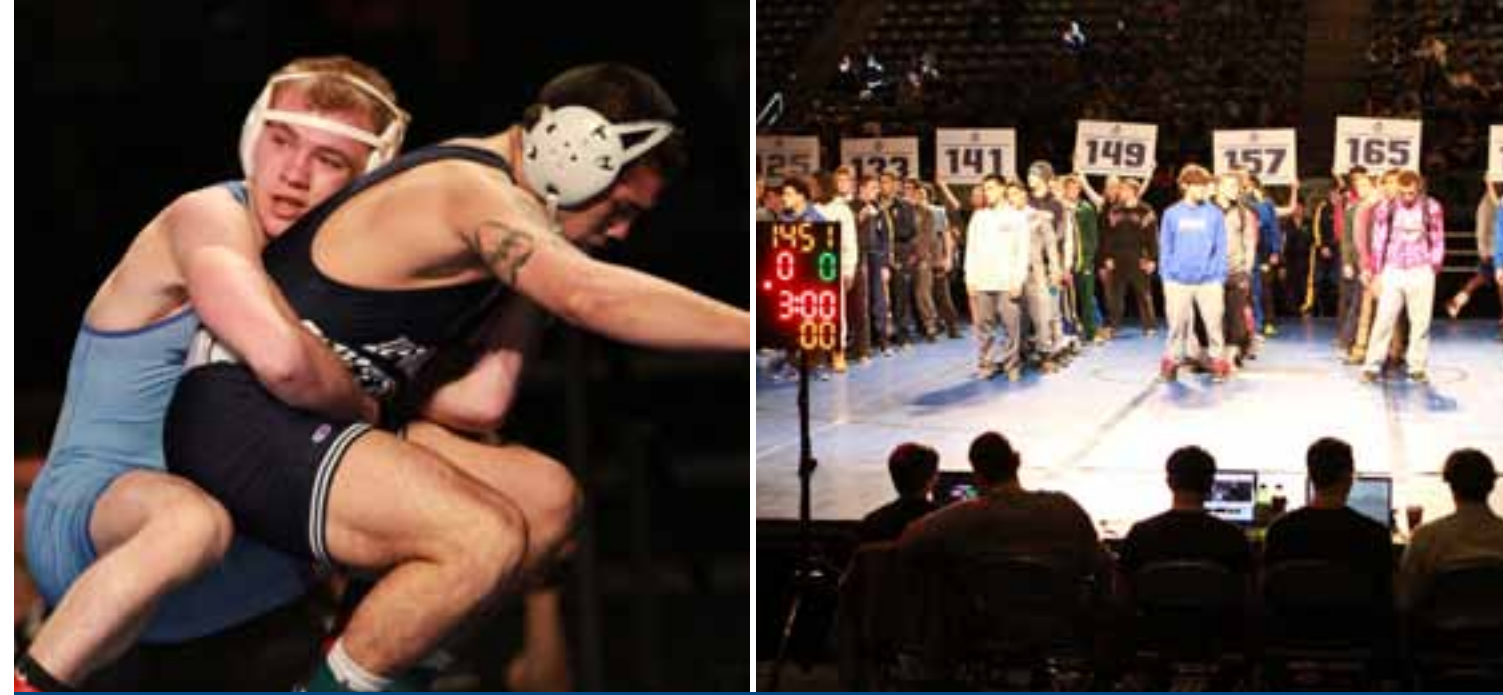
Left to right: The Iowa Western ground sign located northeast of Clark Hall constructed by the civil engineering technology students in 1994; construction technology students build a gazebo as a class project; students work on an aircraft for the aviation maintenance program; students in the agriculture program in the 1970s; and a 1977 college board meeting.

ALUMNI BOARD

- John Cool (President), '81**
Iowa School for the Deaf
- Pam Beall-Hill (Vice President), '88**
Community Volunteer
- Joyce Bartels (Secretary/Treasurer), '86**
First National Bank of Omaha
- Stacy Shockley (Alumni Director), '98**
Iowa Western Community College
- Scott Belt, '77 & '82**
Heartland Properties
- Kolay Carver, '07**
Iowa Western Community College
- Dan Feller, '84**
Owner, Varsity Freight
- Brandon Green, '07**
Iowa Western Community College
- Brandon Juon, '00**
Owner, Glory Days
- Shawna Klindt, '01**
Butterbaugh Insurance
- Diane Osbahr, '90**
Iowa Western Community College
- Jill Schurman, '03**
Community Volunteer

CLASS NOTES

- 1973**
Jeanette Leinen retired in 2000 after 27 years as a registered nurse.
- 1983**
Barbara Nice celebrated 40 years of employment at Mercy Hospital in Council Bluffs in June of 2015.
- 1984**
Lisa Juhl works at Woodmen Life.
- 1993**
Larry Britton works at American PCS Inc. as a sales manager.
- 1997**
Brad Johnson and wife Kandra recently opened their own catering business Five J Catering in Sidney, Iowa.
- 2010**
Shay Shine resides in Ft. Myers, Florida and is employed with Sports Club of Naples as a counselor.
- Jeff Allgood** works at TD Ameritrade.
- Jimmy Williams** works at Boys Town as a family teacher and is married to Brooke Williams.
- K.C. Rodenburg** works at Under Armour as a data analyst.
- 2015**
Nick Hulsing attends the University of Nebraska at Omaha and will major in Finance.
- Jacquelyn DeWitt** attends Iowa State University.
- Timothy Arrey Eno-Tambe** attends Bellevue University and married to Beltha Bate.
- Jesus Arroyo** works at Google.
- Kamryn Djahanbani** is completing her LDS Mission in Romania.
- Alexys Rose** works at West Central Community Action as an assistant teacher.
- Elizabeth Kuck** is self-employed as a childcare provider and is married to Austin Kucks. Elizabeth and Austin have two children.
- Kathleen Shea** works at Iowa Western Community College as ECC network administrator.
- Tyrisha Mason** works at the Med Center in Texas in the ICU department as a registered nurse.
- Sierra Hughes** works at Alzheimer's & Dementia Society in Utah as a program development coordinator. Sierra attends Dixie State University and is studying human communication.



Left: Iowa Western Head Coach Josh Watts gives encouragement to Clay Stine. This page from left to right: photograph of second place finisher Colton Adams (left) who lost to Jason Alfau of Iowa Central; and Parade of Champions during the closing ceremony.

Iowa Western hosts 2016 National Junior College Athletic Association Wrestling Championships

IOWA WESTERN ALL AMERICANS

133 lbs	Clay Stine	5th
141 lbs	Colton Adams	2nd
149 lbs	Oscar Ramirez	7th
157 lbs	Chase Lemons	8th
174 lbs	Preston Lauterbach	4th

FINAL TEAM STANDINGS

1. Northeastern Oklahoma A&M	152.5
2. Iowa Central	128
3. Ellsworth (IA)	98
4. Iowa Western	90.5
4. North Iowa Area	90.5
6. Clackamas (OR)	77.5
7. Iowa Lakes	72.5
8. Nassau (NY)	60.5
9. Northwest (WY)	52.5
10. Niagara (NY)	47.5



More than 300 athletes representing 48 schools from around the country converged on Council Bluffs in February for the 2016 National Junior College Athletic Association Wrestling Championships. Iowa Western Community College served as host school for the event, which will make its return to the Mid America Center in 2017 and 2018 under a contract with the NJCAA. “I have heard from many of my coaching colleagues that this was by far the best wrestling championship,” said Iowa Western Coach Josh Watts, who pulled double duty during the week as coach and tournament director. “The MAC was a perfect venue for our championship with its location to a large airport and other amenities. All of the volunteers that helped plan and run this event really are the ones that deserve the credit for this amazing championship event.”


Dozens of community volunteers were needed to pull off this monumental event, as eight mats covered the floor of the expansive Mid America Center. Community leaders also chipped in with sponsorships and receptions for coaches and athletes. “It was a win, win for our community with the hundreds of athletes and visitors coming to our city,” said Mark Eckman, executive director

of the Council Bluffs Convention and Visitors Bureau. The CVB played a key role in generating state tourism grant funds for support of the NJCAA Championships and with marketing the event on a local and regional basis. “We are looking forward to making the event a success again next year,” Eckman said.

Inside the MAC, action was fast and physical as the best of the NJCAA showed off their skills on the mats. A talented squad from Northeast Oklahoma A&M scored early and often in its quest for the coveted team title. NEO racked up 152.5 points behind three champions and nine NJCAA All-Americans to claim the team title. Iowa Central was a distant second with 128, while the host Reivers compiled five individual All-Americans and 90.5 points for fourth place. It was the best finish in school history for this young wrestling program, which completed its fifth season under Watts.

“We have really come a long way in a short period of time, and this showing will help us build for the future,” Coach Watts said.

Earning All-American honors for the Reivers were: Clay Stine, 5th, 133 pounds; Colton Adams, 2nd, 141; Oscar Ramirez, 7th, 149; Chase Lemons, 8th, 157; and Preston Lauterbach, 4th, 174.

Adams, a four-time state high school champion from Scottsbluff, Nebraska, had an impressive run to the finals before falling to defending national champion Jason Alfau of Iowa Central, 10-4. Adams had early momentum and a 3-0 lead before the Triton champ turned things around. 

“All of the volunteers that helped plan and run this event really are the ones that **deserve credit for this amazing championship event.**”

Josh Watts
Iowa Western Wrestling Head Coach

ALUMNI EVENTS

The Iowa Western alumni office hosts a variety of events aimed at reconnecting alumni with the college. Upcoming events include reunions for the dental hygiene, dental assisting and nursing programs and homecoming celebrations on October 13 and 15. These are great opportunities to learn about the growth and progress at the college while reuniting with old friends.

Want to reconnect with Iowa Western? Mark your calendars for the exciting slate of spring alumni activities.

Upcoming Alumni Events

April 29	Dental Hygiene and Dental Assisting Alumni Event Council Bluffs
May 21	Soccer Alumni Event Salt Lake City, Utah
June 10	Nursing Alumni Event Council Bluffs
October 13	Homecoming Parade and Pep Rally
October 15	Tailgate and Football Game Council Bluffs

If you are interested in planning or attending an alumni event, contact the alumni office at 712.325.3269. It is always great to have alumni back on campus!

To be included in future reunion mailings, send your updated information to alum@iwcc.edu. Visit us at iwcc.edu or facebook.com/AlumniandFriends.



(From top) Alumni of the men's basketball team gathered at a reunion in October along with Coaches Michael Johnette, James Bankhead and Jim Morris. Former members of the women's basketball team also gathered for the alumni event with Coach Lindsey Vande Hoef.



In search of the next Outstanding Alum

Nominations for the 2016 Iowa Western Outstanding Alum award are being accepted by the Iowa Western Alumni Association.

The Outstanding Alum Award is one of the college's highest honors. The candidate selected will be honored and have his or her photograph permanently displayed in Ashley Hall alongside past recipients. Selection is based upon outstanding achievement by an Iowa Western graduate in professional, academic or personal life, or in service to the college.

If you recognize these qualities in an Iowa Western alum, please consider nominating him or her for the award so they may be recognized by the college. Submit nominations to Stacy Shockey, Alumni Coordinator, via phone: 712.325.3269; email: alum@iwcc.edu; or mail: 2700 College Road, Council Bluffs, Iowa 51503.



A photograph of the 2015-16 National Championship Reiver Cheer Team.



Matt Johnson, '91, was the 2015 Outstanding Alum award recipient. Above, Johnson accepts his distinguished award from Alumni Board president John Cool, '81, at his Outstanding Alum reception in October. He is also pictured with his family — wife Jill and children Ruby and Beckett.



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