



Iowa Quality Newsletter



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Demystifying Baldrige: Lessons learned by the Cedar Rapids Community School District on its journey to performance excellence

J. Jay Marino and Dave Markward

Cedar Rapids Community School District (CRCS) superintendent Dave Markward recalls the first time he encountered the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence about 10 years ago at an educational conference in Chicago. After listening to the presenter, he claims "I was ready to run from those criteria as fast as I possibly could". There was difficulty connecting Baldrige to the educational setting because of the initial overwhelming complexity and detail of the criteria at first glance. Baldrige was essentially and primarily designed for businesses, and there were few examples of educational organizations embracing and using the framework as an improvement system.

Implementing the Baldrige framework as a comprehensive improvement model in an urban school district has its challenges. The CRCS is a Pre-Kindergarten through grade 12 system embracing a wide range of diversity including multiple religions, ethnicities, socioeconomic status and languages. Nearly 120,000 people reside within the 121 square mile boundaries of the CRCS. With 34 schools, more than 2800 employees, and nearly 18,000 students, the district is the second largest in the State of Iowa. Thirty-eight percent of the students receive waivers for free or reduced priced meals. The student enrollment includes 2% Asian, 3% Hispanic, 1% Native American, and 13% African American. English is not the first language of many students, with over 40 different languages spoken in their homes.

The key organizational challenge in the early stages of the Baldrige journey is ensuring that all senior leaders believe in, understand, and utilize the important principles of continuous improvement. There was appreciable understanding of the use of action research (referred to as

the Plan Do Study Act cycle) and involvement of data teams in decision making before introducing Baldrige to the district over two years ago. Honoring the past and building upon previous work provide a solid basis for implementing the concepts of Baldrige into the organizational culture.

To optimize results, a consistent application across all departments and schools is essential. In years past, many schools had strong ties to site based management principles and enjoyed a great deal of autonomy. To transition to a more systemic and standardized way of operation is a task needing constant attention. Recently, a veteran elementary school principal commented "I really appreciate the vision, direction and knowing where we are heading." Comments such as this have been common among staff. As with the implementation of most major paradigm shifts, progress is slow but evident. Each day, a few more people find and board the continuous improvement bus.

To learn more about the criteria, administrators participate as examiners in the Iowa Performance for Recognition for Excellence (IRPE) Awards program. Participation not only supports the State of Iowa's version of the Baldrige Award program, but helps evaluators become local experts with great knowledge of the criteria and the important linkages between them. Examiners have opportunities to observe effective processes implemented by organizations as they review applications and conduct site visits to qualifying groups both in and out of the educational setting.

District employees and stakeholders benefit from district initiatives and innovations like the standardization of school improvement processes; strategic plans on a page for the school, department, task force and classroom; and meaningful data on walls of all facilities including the Board of Education meeting room.

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ASQ Section 1303 - State University of Iowa

“Serving Quality Professionals Since 1944” - Meet us on the web at “www.quality.org/asq1303.htm”

SECTION MEETING, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2007

The Journey Toward Excellence in Rock Island Schools

Speaker: Mike Oberhouse
Assoc. Superintendent of Operations & Quality

Rock Island School District is on a journey toward excellence. To facilitate achievement of its goals, quality processes and tools are utilized throughout the organization. The Baldrige Criteria is the overarching framework for improvement. Mr. Michael Oberhaus, Associate Superintendent of Quality and Operations, Mr. Michael Russell, Director of the Rock Island Academy, and Ms. Cindy Arkebauer, Quality Facilitator and Elementary Teacher, will provide a presentation sharing the journey taken to date. Information will be presented on the strategic planning process, quality tools, staff development programs, students taking responsibility for their learning, and deployment to achieve alignment throughout the District.

Presentation and Dinner Location

Quad City Botanical Center
2525 4th Avenue
Rock Island, IL 61201
(309) 794-0991

5:15-6:00 Self-Guided Tour of Quad City Botanical Center (www.qcggardens.com)
6:00-6:45 Dinner

6:30-7:00 Presentation: Quad City Botanical Center – Jessica Armentrout, Educational Coordinator
7:15-8:00 Presentation: Rock Island School District – Mike Oberhouse
8:00-8:15 Final announcements / door prizes
8:15 Adjourn

Dinner - Quad City Botanical Center Bridges Catering Buffet

Roast Top Sirloin of Beef, Roast Loin of Pork, Fresh Fruit Medley, Cole Slaw, Mixed Greens with Dressings, Three Bean Salad, House Garlic Salad, Asian Blend Vegetables, Au Gratin Potatoes, Beverages, Dinner Rolls and Butter

Event Cost

ASQ Section Member: \$20.00
ASQ Section Member and Spouse: \$40.00
Non-Section Member: \$24.00
Full Time Student: \$14.00

RSVP

Contact Jeff Christiaansen by noon on Friday, Feb. 9.
E-mail preferred: jeff.christiaansen@amana.com
Phone: (319) 622-2651

The Section 1303 Executive Committee meeting will be at the Clarion on Saturday, February 17 at 8:00 a.m. Section members are welcome to attend.

WELCOME - WELCOME

It is our pleasure to welcome the following new members to section 1303:

Mr. Michael E. Alt, Cedar Rapids, IA
Mr. Tyler J. Burlin, Middletown, IA
Mr. Robert M. Cook, Muscatine, IA
Mr. Bradley D. Iverson, Waterloo, IA
Ms. Kara L. Martin, Irving, TX

Mr. Dale Quam, Davenport, IA
Mr. Gary W. Seffrin, Moline, IL
Mr. Mark R. Taylor, Ottumwa, IA
Mr. Dave Young, Marion, IA

Iowa Quality Center February Learning Network Dates

Jones County Quality Learning	Feb. 6	Lean Six Sigma	Feb. 14
Quality Systems/ISO	Feb. 8	Quad Cities Quality Learning	Feb. 21
Cedar Valley Perf. Excellence	Feb. 15	Sustaining Performance Excellence	Feb. 15
Iowa City Quality Learning	Feb. 27	Systems Thinking	Feb. 28

Sign up today for IQC's upcoming March classes: "The Power of Innovation" and "How to Write a Baldrige or IRPE Application." Visit our Calendar of Events at www.iowaqc.org/calendar to see all of our scheduled classes.

ASQ Central Iowa Section 1308

Section 1308 Meeting Notice for February

There has been a conflict with the program that was scheduled for February. Please watch your email for a later announcement.

Congratulations to the following Section 1308 members who obtained their certification in the December exams:

Certified Quality Auditor

Scot L. Peil, Des Moines, IA
Gary A. DeLong, Johnston, IA
Jesse A. Uhl, Pleasant Hill, IA

Certified Quality Engineer

Richard S. Moore, Johnston, IA
Jill M. Moline, Ellsworth, IA
Steve Labernik, Spencer, IA

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

We would like to welcome the following new members to Section 1308. We thank you for being part of this growing section and we look forward to being of service to you and your participation in the section activities.

Mr. Mark. Z. Bruns, George, IA
Mr. Chad R. Clark, Waterloo, IA
Mr. Steven P. Murphy, Urbandale, IA
Mr. Shay O'Neal, Des Moines, IA
Dr. Michael L. Putnam, Ft. Dodge, IA
Mr. Donald Francis Riibe, Waukee, IA
Ms. Cynthia J. Uecker, Cedar Falls, IA
Mrs. Lynda M. Wilson, Des Moines, IA

Iowa Quality Center Implements Black Belt Certification Process

Jeff Judisch, United Equipment Accessories, Inc. (UEA) is presented the Six Sigma Certified Black Belt certificate by Steve Wilson (Facilitator), Mark Hanawalt (UEA President) and Gary Nesteby (Director IQC) following his project presentation. Jeff's project was the culmination of his black belt project which began during the six sigma class. The project included a DMAIC focus on a situation with one of the assembly units produced by UEA. The assembly unit was consuming excess space and days of production which limited delivery times to the customer. Jeff's project saved an estimated \$20 per unit and reduced production days by 68%. Jeff indicates that the toughest part of the project was the team building and communication aspects that are necessary to ensure that the project is successful.



The newly developed six sigma certification process is designed to formally certify graduates of IQC's Six Sigma Black Belt training that wish to complete the process. Candidates are asked to present their completed project to the facilitator, the organizational sponsor and a representative of the Iowa Quality Center. The project must show the use of the DMAIC process and the tools as they relate to the project. Questions are presented to the candidate to ensure that the competencies expected from the training are understood and applied. For further information regarding certified training from the Iowa Quality Center visit the web site or contact the IQC at 319-398-7101.

2007 Student TEAMS Training is Scheduled — Get Your Organization Involved!

Your organization can become a full participant in this year's Student Team Training provided by Langford International and the Iowa Quality Center. This year the two-day training will be held on Thursday and Friday April 5 & 6, 2007. Teams of students will be in the sponsoring organization for three days the following week.

To learn more about this opportunity contact the Scott Nicol of the Iowa Quality Center at scott@iowaqc.org.



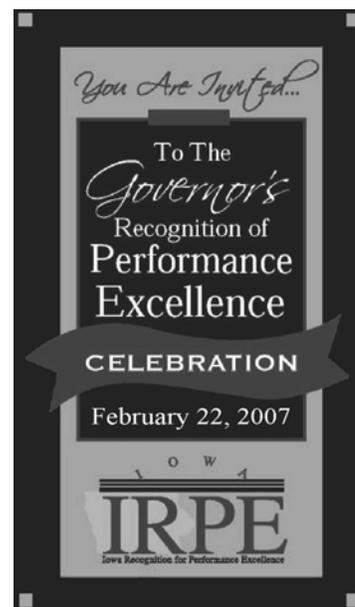
*Providing Leadership for Performance Excellence by
Connecting Individuals, Organizations and Communities*

Governor's Recognition of Performance Excellence Celebration

Date: Thursday, February 22, 2007
5 - 9 p.m.

Location: HyVee Conference Center
West Des Moines

Join the Iowa Quality Center, the Iowa Recognition for Performance Excellence (IRPE) Executive Council, IRPE Examiners, IRPE Judges and Governor-elect Chet Culver (invited) as we recognize the 10 Iowa Recognition for Performance Excellence applicant organizations for 2006. These organizations represent the best of Iowa in the areas of Healthcare, Education, Service, and Manufacturing.



In addition to celebrating Iowa companies, you will have the privilege of hearing a keynote address by **Sister Mary Jean Ryan**, President and CEO of SSM Healthcare, a 2002 National Baldrige recipient. Sr. Mary Jean Ryan, FSM, leads SSM Health Care, one of the largest Catholic health care systems in the U.S., with 23,500 employees and 5000 affiliated physicians serving in 20 hospitals and 3 nursing homes. In 2002 SSM Health Care was the first health care organization to receive the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award. The experiences shared by Sr. Ryan offer lessons to all organizations.

Get inspired as you celebrate and network with over 200 people from top organizations across Iowa.

Cost:* \$125 per person (Govt - \$100 per person)
\$1000 per table of 10

For more information and to **register**, visit www.iowaqc.org

**Proceeds from this event support the IRPE program*



*Providing Leadership for Performance Excellence by
Connecting Individuals, Organizations and Communities*

Vilsack, Pederson Recognize Iowa Companies for Performance Excellence

DES MOINES - Governor Tom Vilsack and Lt. Governor Sally Pederson, together with the Executive Council of the Iowa Recognition for Performance Excellence (IRPE) and the Iowa Quality Center, announced December 6 the recipients of the 2006 IRPE Awards.

The prestigious Iowa Recognition for Performance Excellence awards were established seven years ago to recognize those businesses and organizations in the state who have completed a strenuous review and evaluation of their leadership, strategic planning, customer focus, measurement, analysis, and knowledge management, human resource focus, process management and results.

The Criteria for Performance Excellence are used for the assessment. The process is also aligned with the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award.

John Deere Credit, Johnston; **The HON Company – Oak Steel Plant**, Muscatine; **Facilities Planning and Management, Iowa State University**, Ames; **Great River Medical Center**, West Burlington, IA; **St Luke's Hospital**, Cedar Rapids; **Cedar Rapids Community School District**; **Eaton Corporation**, Shenandoah; and **Hearth & Home Technologies**, Mt Pleasant have received Iowa Recognition for Performance Excellence awards for 2006.

"This process is a proven method for organizations to achieve their highest potential and become more competitive in the global marketplace," said Governor Vilsack.

Governor-elect Chet Culver has been invited to present the awards at the annual Governor's Recognition of Performance Excellence Celebration at the Hy-Vee Conference Center in West Des Moines Thursday, February 22, 2007 at 6:00 p.m.

John Deere Credit will be recognized at the Gold Achievement level; **Facilities Planning and Management at Iowa State University**; **Great River Medical Center**; **The HON Company - Oak Steel Plant**; and **St Luke's Hospital** will be recognized at the Silver Achievement level and **Cedar Rapids Community School District**; **Eaton Corporation**; and **Hearth & Home Technologies** will be recognized at the Bronze Achievement level. In the past seven years, there have been 53 applications for the performance excellence awards, and 25 have been recognized for their achievement, one at the gold level, nine at the silver level and 15 at the bronze level.

While there is no monetary award, companies completing the application process indicate it helps them identify strengths and opportunities for improvement within their companies, provides training for continuous improvement and leadership development, and assures customer focus and efficiency within their operations.

Other organizations that completed various levels of the Iowa performance recognition process include **Mississippi Valley Regional Blood Center**, Davenport; and **The National Weather Service – Weather Forecast Office**, Davenport. These organizations will also be recognized for their commitment to performance excellence.

The IRPE process, awards and examiner training are coordinated by the Iowa Quality Center, based in Marion, Iowa. Applications to begin the process are open to organizations involved in business and manufacturing, education, government, human services, non-profit or health care.

For more information about the IRPE process and the February 22nd celebration, contact Gary Nesteby at the Iowa Quality Center, (319) 398-7101 or visit www.iowaqc.org.

Continued from page 1....

A school board member recently commented "I have a much better understanding of what we are trying to accomplish. Publicly sharing direction and measures of progress are great ways to demonstrate accountability to the public."

Positive feedback (both formal and informal) from internal and external stakeholders indicates high satisfaction with the continuous improvement route. At a recent professional development workshop, a middle school teacher shared, "Continuous improvement just makes sense! The impact that this approach has on the climate and culture of the classroom is amazing. I have noticed a greater sense of accountability, responsibility and ownership from my students than I've ever seen before." Additionally, the use of quality processes and tools by stakeholders and the visual enhancement of student achievement help reaffirm commitment to the continuous improvement journey.

To build internal capacity and support for continuous quality improvement and to sustain progress, a variety of structures have been created. Stakeholders and employees participate in a variety of continuous improvement groups such as Building Leadership Teams, Department Leadership Teams, Action Research Deployment Teams and the Quality Liaison Network. To provide precise direction for continuous improvement, the "4 Quality Levels" further define outcomes. This document is a blueprint that serves as the "standards and benchmarks" for quality. It is especially valuable in communicating system-wide expectations for the use and implementation of continuous improvement principles.

As with any change initiative, it is critical that stakeholders not only understand the goals of the strategic plan, but also have ownership in their development. Ownership leads to accountability which, in essence, facilitates "buy-in" from staff. Helping employees understand the change process, sharing how continuous quality improvement is research-based, and involving them directly in the initiative helps reduce resistance and develop critically needed support.

On the continuous improvement journey, refuge and support have been found in the Iowa Quality Center, the sponsoring organization of the Iowa Recognition for Performance Excellence Award (IRPE) program. This program recognizes organizations achieving positive results through the implementation of the Baldrige Criteria. Application to the state quality award program helps keep the continuous improvement efforts a priority and available to be assessed by external evaluators.

In 2005, the district made its first application for IRPE recognition at a 'Tier 2' level. 'Tier 2' evaluation is designed to demonstrate an organizations' dedication to, and progress toward, the Baldrige Criteria. The application addressed the Categories and Items of the Baldrige Criteria in a 20-page written document. In 2006, the district applied at a 'Tier 3' level in which a 50-page application allowed the district to demonstrate progress in building sound and reliable processes as measured against the Baldrige Criteria.

Based on the application submitted, in October of 2006 the district was notified that it had qualified for a site visit in which a team of trained examiners verify and clarify areas that aren't clear in the application. Following the site visit (in which evaluators determine the appropriate award recognition level), IRPE announced that the district had scored high enough to be the first school district in Iowa recognized in the state's Quality Award program. Recognition at the "Bronze" level provides further external validation of progress and reinforces the continuous quality improvement journey for both internal and external district stakeholders.

Although formal recognition is appreciated, the detailed, written feedback report provided by the examiners as part of the recognition process is most influential and helpful. The report delineates strengths and opportunities for improvement (OFI) in the district and provides focus to areas in need of further development. Next steps in the district's quality journey are to systematically review and address the opportunities for improvement identified in the feedback report, strengthen performance relative to each area of the Baldrige criteria, and apply next year for recognition at the 'Tier 3' Silver level of the state quality award program. Over time, the district will strive for the highest level of state recognition, eventually applying for the national Baldrige Quality Award.

Continuous quality improvement has a tremendous impact on organizational results as demonstrated in several recognized school districts around the country. The power of systemic alignment is realized when each employee, stakeholder, and student understands how his/her work contributes to the primary district focus... improving student learning. School districts are encouraged to explore the possibilities of organizing their improvement efforts using the Malcolm Baldrige Criteria for Educational Excellence. It is a powerful framework for implementing continuous quality improvement.

Visit the Cedar Rapids Community School District *continuous improvement* website (<http://quality.cr.k12.ia.us/>) and the Quality in Education blog hosted by the American Society for Quality and authored by Jay Marino (<http://www.asq.org/blog/>) to find specific information referenced in this article.

Dr. Dave Markward is in his third year as the Superintendent of the CRCSD and be reached at dmarkward@cr.k12.ia.us

J. Jay Marino is in his second year as the Associate Superintendent for Organizational Effectiveness and Accountability and can be reached at <http://www.jmarino.ws>

Faces of Quality



Jim Hummer
Pearson Educational Measurement

Job Title: Vice President,
Organizational Quality

Primary Industry: Education
(previously 20 years in Aero-space)

How does your use of quality tools and processes make an impact in your organization? We are maturing our quality culture by (1) increasing our process management focuses; (2) integrating both traditional assurance activities and continuous improvement activities in the operational departments; and (3) measuring and making visible, the bottom-line impact of quality and improvement actions.

How does your use of quality tools and processes make an impact in your community and in your world? Our mission is the creation, distribution, administration, scoring, and reporting of educational measurement and assessment products and services. The outcomes of these tests influence major life decisions made by students and their families. Therefore, accuracy and timeliness of scoring and reporting are critical to quality.

How does your use of quality tools and processes make an impact in your personal life? My quality orientation shows up in many ways, in particular when buying homes, cars, and other major purchases – I am a rather demanding customer. I have even “Leaned” my garage.

How has ASQ assisted you in your career? I have found ASQ educational products and services useful, and formal CQM certification has enhanced my résumé and marketability. ASQ certifications are well-regarded in industry.

How or why did you become interested in and involved with quality? I started my career as a software engineer developing real-time embedded applications during the “software crisis” of the 80’s and had minor participation in the original development of the SEI CMM.

What was your first job (inside or outside of quality)? Software Engineer

What did it teach you? Software requirements are elusive, hard to capture, and never stay the same.

What lessons did you learn at that job that you still use today? Software development processes need to recognize and accommodate that fact with flexible process and appropriate controls. The single most valuable thing that quality brings to the table is objective facts. They are the foundation of any quality or improvement systems.

What path did you take to get where you are today? From Software Engineering to Project and Program Management then to Manufacturing Quality Assurance (Wilcox Electric, Inc.) , Information Systems management (CIO of Vermeer Manufacturing), International Quality Director (Thales ATM), and finally to my current position with Pearson.

Mark your calendars - the 2007 Spring Conference is coming your way!

This year’s theme is “Building Global Competitiveness in Iowa”

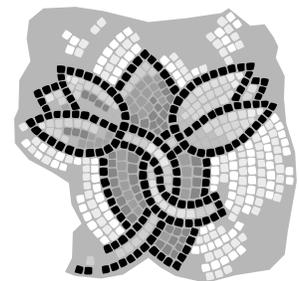
This event, sponsored by the Iowa Quality Center and ASQ Section 1303 will be Thursday, April 12, 2007 at the Kirkwood Training and Outreach Service (KTOS) building located at 3375 Armar Drive, Marion, Iowa.

Keynote Speaker: Clay Jones, Chairman, President and CEO of Rockwell Collins, Inc

Breakout sessions in Leadership Topics, Metrics, Customer Focus and Process Improvement

Register for the early bird special of \$99 until April 1, 2007. After April 1, 2007 - \$125.00. Register at (319) 398-7101 or through email at info@iowaqc.org

Stay tuned! Detailed information will be provided in next month’s newsletter.





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Dick Stump at:

Phone: 319-337-8283, or

E-mail: StumpRB@AOL.com

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