



AND SMALL BUSINESSES THROUGH LIBRARIES

Serving Communities Across Iowa and the Nation

As technology further shifts the economic landscape, libraries prepare American jobseekers to enter the workforce, to reskill to meet new requirements, and to succeed as business owners.

Public libraries in Iowa and nearly 17,000 strong across the country:

- (1) help people secure employment through job search, resume writing, and interview training,
- (2) provide internet access and digital skills programs that encourage use of emerging technologies and empower entrepreneurship,
- (3) collaborate with other community stakeholders to identify workforce challenges and build vibrant local economies.

With many communities hard hit by the COVID-19 pandemic and facing economic challenges, libraries are a critical part of the economic safety net, now more than ever.

Job seeking and skills building

The North Side Library in Des Moines is located in a diverse low-income neighborhood, where families move

the library also aids seniors looking for part-time work to earn extra income, and jobseekers with disabilities who may have special requirements such as finding work close to the bus route for transportation. During class time participants search for jobs, work on resumes, and build digital skills.

Librarians offer one-on-one help to support and encourage jobseekers to build digital skills and fulfill their goals. For example, over several class sessions a librarian helped one jobseeker to convert her old paper resume into a new digital one, as well as to cut it down to the most important details relevant to the jobs she was applying for.

The public library system in Des Moines also partners with local agencies to further support jobseekers. These agencies—some of whom offer assistance at branch libraries, include the Iowa Workforce Development Center, the Evelyn K. Davis Center for Working Families, and Goodwill Careers.

Bridging the workforce digital divide

Increasingly, participating in today's port
