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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION  
**COMMERCE NEWS**  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE — WASHINGTON, D.C. 20230

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**U.S. Department of Commerce Invests \$1.8 Million to Help Establish New STEM  
Education Training Facility in Woodbine, Iowa**

WASHINGTON – Today, U.S. Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo announced that the Department’s Economic Development Administration (EDA) is awarding a \$1.8 million grant to IGNITE Pathways, Woodbine, Iowa, to provide equipment for a state-of-the-art STEM career and technical educational training facility.

This EDA project supports the launch of IGNITE Pathways Technical School, which will serve as a hub for innovation and skills training for careers in STEM fields for students and community members across southwest Iowa. This EDA grant will be matched with \$1.4 million in local funds and is expected to create 125 jobs, according to grantee estimates.

“President Biden is committed to providing communities with the resources they need to build a better America,” **said Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo**. “This EDA investment will create a highly trained workforce to diversify and grow southwest Iowa’s economy.”

“The Economic Development Administration is dedicated to working with communities to support their locally-driven strategies to expand their economies,” **said Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development Alejandra Y. Castillo**. “This EDA investment will provide new opportunities to upskill workers in this rural region, leading to higher-wage jobs.”

“I’m glad to see this investment is being made to bolster STEM education for students in southwest Iowa,” **said Senator Chuck Grassley**. “It’s critical for Iowa students to remain competitive and prepared for the jobs of the future. Expanding innovation and skills training for careers in STEM fields will provide students with a variety of options – allowing them to choose what best fits their interests and ensuring Iowa’s economy will continue to thrive for years to come.”



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“As a member of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, I am excited to see the EDA invest in critical STEM initiatives in Iowa’s 4th District,” **said Congressman Randy Feenstra (IA-04)**. “This grant will not only immediately create good-paying jobs, but also prepare our future workforce with the tools and skills they need to champion technological advancements and strengthen our economic security for decades to come.”

This project was made possible by the regional planning efforts led by the Southwest Iowa Planning Council (SWIPCO). EDA funds SWIPCO to bring together the public and private sectors to create an economic development roadmap to strengthen the regional economy, support private capital investment and create jobs.

**About the U.S. Economic Development Administration ([www.eda.gov](http://www.eda.gov))**

The mission of the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) is to lead the federal economic development agenda by promoting competitiveness and preparing the nation’s regions for growth and success in the worldwide economy. An agency within the U.S. Department of Commerce, EDA invests in communities and supports regional collaboration in order to create jobs for U.S. workers, promote American innovation, and accelerate long-term sustainable economic growth.