NEWS RELEASE

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Advance Southwest Iowa, Community Partners Announce Top-20 Rankings, Launch Marketing Initiative

Council Bluffs, Iowa, Feb. 16, 2021 – Advance Southwest Iowa today announced accelerated regional economic rankings, as well as a tri-county, multi-stakeholder marketing initiative celebrating Southwest Iowa's growth.

Council Bluffs, named by Niche as a top-20 "2020 Suburbs with the Lowest Cost of Living in Iowa," was recently featured for its pro-business climate, downtown renovation and affordable housing in Livablity.

"The uptick we're seeing in recognition of the region comes thanks to many, many partners," said Paula Hazlewood, executive director, Advance Southwest Iowa.

Hazlewood added Mills County, Harrison County, Pottawattamie County, along with the City of Council Bluffs, Iowa West Foundation and others recently collaborated to produce an "Advance Your Career, Business and Quality of Life in Southwest Iowa" content initiative showcasing Southwest Iowa's amenities and opportunities.

Current rankings, such as Council Bluffs / Omaha's recognition as the No. 3 "Best Paying Small & Midsize Metros for Millennial Women," and WalletHub tapping Iowa as the No. 16 "2021 Best States to Retire," illustrate Council Bluff's continued commitment to business, despite challenging circumstances precipitated by a global health crisis.

"Significant accomplishment will occur when you build upon the combined strengths of multiple partners – professional strengths representing diverse areas of expertise is one of the many reasons that Southwest Iowa is experiencing unprecedented growth during uncertain times," said Matt Walsh, mayor, Council Bluffs.

Marco Floreani, executive director, Mills County Economic Development Foundation, agreed. "We are flourishing, and our tri-county advantage means we are well-equipped to address a host of economic development opportunities thanks to abundant resources, solid tech solutions and a highly skilled workforce."

The multi-stakeholder marketing collaborative followed a months-long cooperative task force that culminated in the Iowa Economic Development Authority's sponsorship of "This is Iowa."

“There are no small initiatives in Iowa. Everything we do is part of something larger, something greater. Our current efforts truly illustrate ‘the whole is greater than the sum of its parts,’” Hazlewood said.

About Advance Southwest Iowa

Advance Southwest Iowa partners with the Greater Omaha Chamber, Council Bluffs Area Chamber of Commerce, the City of Council Bluffs, Pottawattamie County, Iowa Economic Development Authority, Iowa West Foundation and Iowa Western Community College to enhance workforce development, economic growth and quality of life in the Greater Council Bluffs / Omaha region and Iowa’s Pottawattamie County.

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