



A member of Local IBEW-494 carries an American flag during the Labor Day parade in Milwaukee. The parade was put on by labor unions and union members of the Milwaukee Area Labor Council, AFL-CIO.

MIKE DE SISTI / MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL

# Why we mark Labor Day, plus travel tips

**Victoria Reyna-Rodriguez**

Des Moines Register  
USA TODAY NETWORK

Labor Day is quickly approaching and you may be thinking of ways to get away and celebrate the three-day weekend. But why do we celebrate Labor Day at all?

Here's all you should know about the holiday, plus some traveling tips.

## When is Labor Day?

Celebrated each year on the first Monday of September, the national holiday takes place on Sept. 2 this year.

## Why is Labor Day celebrated?

Labor Day is celebrated to recognize the achievements of the United States labor movement in the late 19th century, when American workers began to form labor unions and advocate for better working conditions, reasonable hours and fair wages, according to USA TODAY.

The first Labor Day was observed on Sept. 5, 1882, in New York City, organized by the Central Labor Union. In 1887, Oregon became the first state to pass a law recognizing Labor Day, followed by four more states that year — Colorado, Massachusetts, New Jersey and New York.

By the time President Grover Cleveland signed it into law as a federal holiday in 1894, 23 states had adopted the holiday.

## What are the worst times to drive for Labor Day weekend?

The roads will be most congested during the afternoons of Thursday and Friday, and early evening and morning of Saturday. Returning home from the long weekend, drivers can expect the worst traffic Sunday, Monday and Tuesday morning.

"Drivers should expect the most severe traffic jams before the holiday weekend as commuters mix with travelers," Bob Pishue, transportation analyst at INRIX, said in a prepared statement. "Monitoring traffic apps, local news stations, and 511 traveler information services may help drivers navigate around congestion and reduce driver frustration this Labor Day."

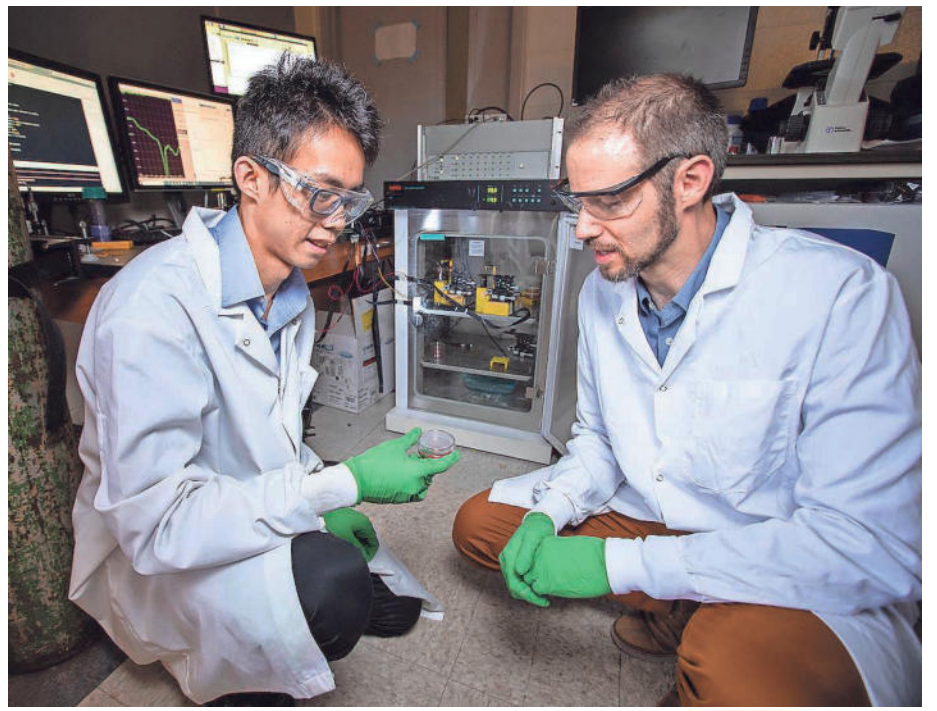
## What are the best times to drive for Labor Day weekend 2024?

If you're hoping to avoid traffic jams, plan to hit the road at night or the early morning. The best times to drive for Labor Day weekend are before 11 a.m. on Thursday, before noon or after 7 p.m. on Friday, and after noon on Saturday.

For returning home, depart before noon on Sunday, before 10 a.m. on Monday, or after 1 p.m. on Tuesday.

*The Austin American-Statesman and Rochester Democrat and Chronicle contributed to this report.*

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Yee Chan, left, and Nigel Reuel are developing small, low-cost, contact-free, electromagnetic biosensors to monitor the growth of therapeutic cells.

PROVIDED BY CHRISTOPHER GANNON

# Iowa State has some standout degrees

**Celia Brocker**

Ames Tribune  
USA TODAY NETWORK

Iowa State University offers some of the most unique fields of study, including a minor in artificial intelligence, innovative medical technology programs, and an upcoming sports journalism major.

With the new academic year beginning Monday, Aug. 26, here is a closer look at some of Iowa State's most interesting degrees:

## Artificial intelligence

Iowa State was the first in Iowa to offer a master's degree in artificial intelligence in 2021. The university also has an undergraduate minor that allows students to apply AI to a variety of fields.

Iowa State's data science and artificial intelligence programs include:

- An Introduction to Applied AI course, which can apply to any major on campus.
- Research workshops and programs for undergraduate and graduate

students that demonstrate how AI skills can be applied to different domains. The programs also cover AI ethics and responsible development of machine learning models.

- An AI jumpstart program for high school teachers

## Biomedical engineering

Iowa State's biomedical engineering bachelor's degree launched in the fall of 2023 with 53 students and has grown to 109 students this fall.

Students in this degree will learn to design medical devices that interact with biology. They will also create software programs to test new drug therapies.

Biomedical engineering was the most requested degree by incoming students for several years, associate professor of chemical and biological engineering Ian Schneider said. Data also indicated Iowa State was losing about 90 students each year because the degree wasn't offered.

See DEGREES, Page 6A

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BRIAN REIMERS, BOONE COUNTY SUPERVISOR

MARGARET LISTON, IOWA SENATE D24

PENNY VOSSLER, IOWA HOUSE D48

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