



# CHUCK GRASSLEY

Q&A: National Whistleblower Day With U.S. Senator Chuck Grassley  
Q: What's your most recent work to strengthen whistleblower protections?

A: Estimates show federal contractors outnumber roughly two million civilian employees in the federal workforce. In July I introduced bipartisan legislation to address gaps in existing federal law that leave millions of people who work as federal contractors vulnerable to reprisal if they report waste, fraud and abuse in federal agencies. As a longtime champion for whistleblowers, I'm pushing to close this loophole with Sen. Gary Peters of Michigan. Our Expanding Whistleblower Protections for Contractors Act is another step we can take to empower the millions of contractors who work for federal agencies to be the eyes and ears on behalf of the taxpayer. Whistleblowers provide a crucial layer of protection for the American public to ferret out fraud and mismanagement, from tax evasion, to securities law violations and patient safety. As a co-founder and co-chair of the Senate Whistleblower Protection Caucus, I'm constantly on the lookout for ways to support and encourage people to come forward with credible information to root out wrongdoing and help ensure the government works on behalf of the American people, not the other way around. Whistleblowers put their jobs and reputations on the line to tell the truth.

Earlier this year, I introduced bipartisan legislation to ensure whistleblower protections keep pace with the fast-growing Artificial Intelligence (AI) industry. The rapid growth in AI would benefit from disclosures of wrongdoing brought forward by whistleblowers to hold the industry accountable and protect national security, public health, privacy and public safety. Employees

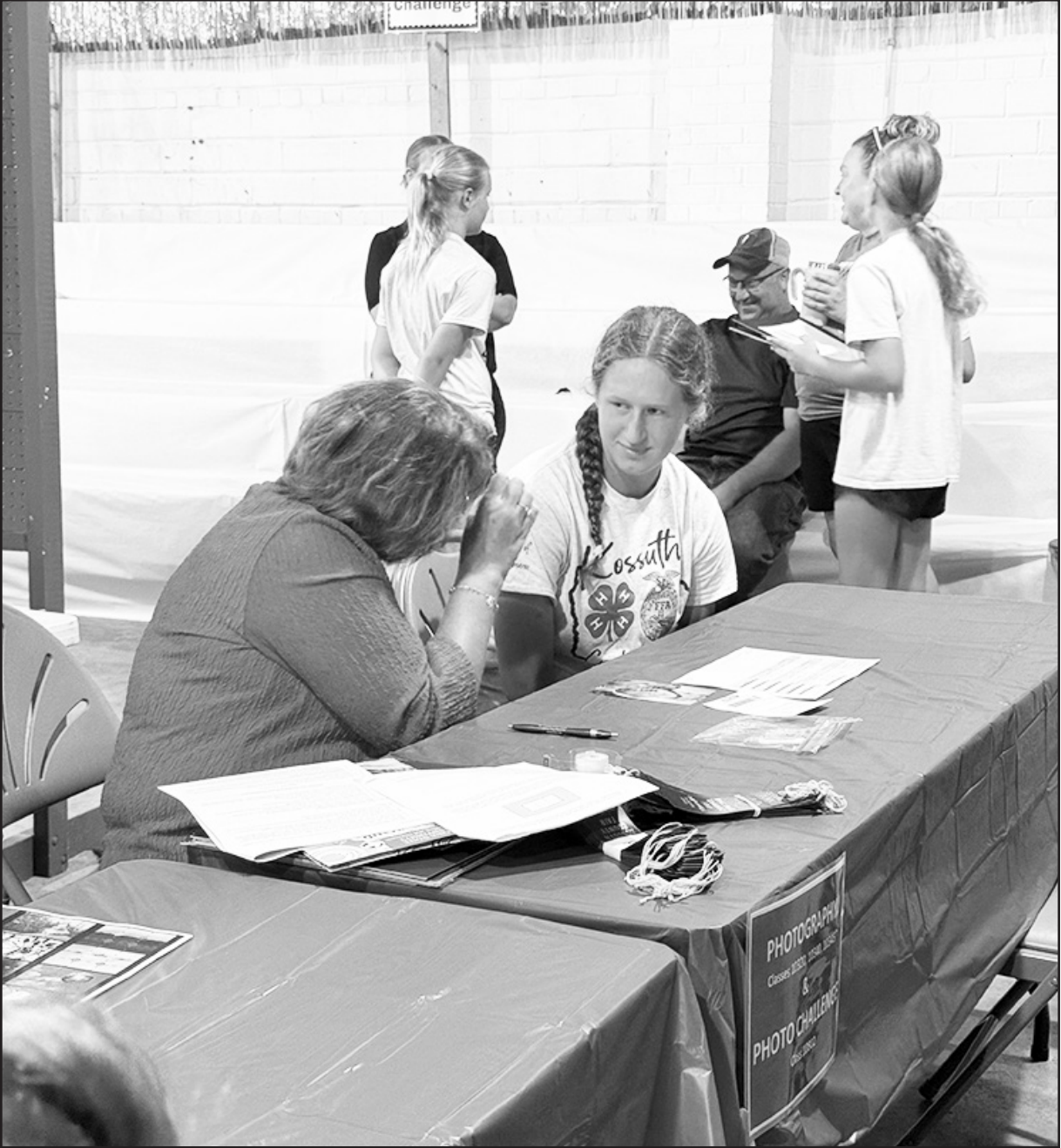
working within the AI sector deserve whistleblower protections that would empower those helping to develop this new frontier of technology to report wrongdoing. AI has the potential to reshape daily life, our economy and the geopolitical landscape. My Artificial Intelligence Whistleblower Protection Act would provide explicit whistleblower protections for those developing and deploying AI across the economy. To date AI companies have fostered a chilling effect on current and former employees looking to make whistleblower disclosures to the federal government, including Congress. My bipartisan legislation strengthens federal laws to shield the communications of current and former employees who make disclosures. It also would provide relief for AI whistleblowers who suffer retaliation, including reinstatement, back pay and compensation for damages.

Q: How did your advocacy for whistleblowers get started?

A: For nearly five decades, I've led efforts on Capitol Hill to protect those who come forward to tell the truth. My oversight work digging under the hood of the Pentagon's financial mess was prompted by civilian employees who blew the whistle on defense contractor fraud. That includes a staff analyst at the Department of Defense named Chuck Spinney who graced the cover of Time magazine in 1983 for blowing the whistle on billions of dollars of wasteful spending at the Pentagon and the practice of keeping two sets of books. He exposed the \$750 billion dollar mismatch between the Pentagon's Five Year Defense Program (FYDP) and budget. The bureaucrats were trying to squeeze ten pounds of manure into a five pound bag and got caught. I've been doggedly working to tighten the Pentagon's fiscal leash ever since. Whistleblowers from

across the federal bureaucracy who step forward to "commit the truth" – like Chuck Spinney and Ernie Fitzgerald – help hold government accountable to the American people. Since my first term in the Senate, my door is open to whistleblowers as part of my congressional oversight work. It also prompted me to write bipartisan landmark amendments in 1986 to beef up the False Claims Act, a tool deployed by President Abraham Lincoln to root out fraudsters during the Civil War. The qui tam amendments are the federal government's #1 anti-fraud tool in its arsenal. To date, it's helped recover more than \$78 billion in fraud and deterred the loss of untold billions more over the last four decades. Last year, I wrote all 74 federal inspectors general to strengthen their whistleblower protections and stop using unlawful non-disclosure policies that stymie employees from reporting wrongdoing. I also recently wrote to President Trump urging that he protect whistleblowers while cutting federal waste, fraud, and abuse. Simply put, the work of whistleblowers is invaluable to American society. They are heroes among us who identify violations of law, gross mismanagement, negligence and threats to public health and safety. Whistleblowers who have the guts to stick their necks out to tell the truth – while putting their livelihoods and careers on the line – merit support and incentives under federal law for their bravery. Every year since the Reagan administration, I've called upon the president to hold a Rose Garden ceremony on Whistleblower Appreciation Day. Our nation owes these patriots a debt of gratitude. It also would send a clear message that retaliation for telling the truth will not be tolerated.

National Whistleblower Day is July 30.



Fenton Forward Taylor Parsons listens to the photography judge during the Kossuth County Fair static judging on Monday, July 28th.



Despite the heat, the Kossuth County Fair held their annual antique tractor pull on Sunday, July 27th. Pulling in the event was Tony Zabka, along with several family members. The pull kicked off a week long activities that will end on Saturday night, August 2 with the truck pull in the grandstands. To find out all the events, please visit kossuthcountyyfair.com.

## Iowa Lakes TRIO Talent Search: Guiding Students to High School Graduation & Postsecondary Enrollment

by Natalie Henriksen

Greetings! I'm Natalie Henriksen, one of the Iowa Lakes Community College TRIO Talent Search program coordinators. I work on the Estherville campus of Iowa Lakes and work with 6th-12th grade students at North Union, Estherville-Lincoln Central, and Spirit Lake.

If you haven't yet heard of Iowa Lakes TRIO Talent Search, what we offer, and how we help students succeed in school and in life, please take a moment to read about not only what we can do to benefit students, but also how students qualify, what topics we cover, and what kinds of school visits and activities we have coming up for the 2025-2026 school year.

TRIO Talent Search is for 6th-12th grade students to explore their future college and career options. Students can qualify for Talent Search the following ways: if neither parent of the student has a four-year degree or if they fit within certain taxable income guidelines.

TRIO Talent Search is funded by a grant from the US Department of Education. All services are FREE to qualified students.

We work with 12 school districts in the northwest Iowa area including Algona Public, Bishop Garrigan, Emmetsburg Catholic, Emmetsburg Public, Estherville-Lincoln Central, North Union, Graettinger-Terril, Ruthven-Ayrshire, Okoboji, Spencer, Spirit Lake, and West Bend-Mallard. Iowa Lakes TRIO Talent Search can serve up to 700 students, and currently has 630+ students enrolled!

All services and activities we offer are completely free to qualified students with meals and transportation provided for events. Talent Search coordinators complete school visits with their target schools each month to ensure students are getting the resources and guidance they need to succeed and grow. We help students with scholarships, financial literacy, assistance with the college application process, campus visits, letters of recommendation, and more.

PAST ACTIVITIES - 2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR

This past year, we offered a variety of events that are both educational and enjoyable for Talent Search students to partake in for the 2024-2025 school year. Students went to the Clay County Fair in the fall for their STEAM event (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics). Students also attended a South Dakota State University visit to tour campus, learn about the programs they offer, and eat lunch in the dining center. We attended Shrek, the Broadway Musical in Sioux Falls at the Washington Pavilion, and also visited Luther College in Decorah to see their campus, learn about their programs, eat lunch at the dining center, and explore Dunnings Springs waterfalls.

In the winter, students visited Iowa Central Community College in Fort Dodge and attended a glass ornament making class at Studio Fusion. Students were able to take their festive creations home with them. In the New Year, the yearly Jam the Gym event at the Estherville campus of Iowa Lakes was a hit. Students were able to get a tour of campus, have lunch at the dining center, watch the Laker basketball games, and enter in drawings to win big prizes.

In the spring, students attended a visit to the Cherokee Planetarium and the Le Mars Blue Bunny Ice Cream Parlor. It was an enjoyable day of fun and learning. Later in the spring, students had the opportunity to visit Minnesota State University Mankato as well as U.S. Bank Stadium to tour and get a behind-the-scenes look at what goes on at the stadium.

Toward the end of the 2024-2025 school year, students attended the Build My Future event at the Iowa State Fairgrounds in Des Moines. This event covers a wide span of hands-on career learning, including manufacturing, automotive, construction, public safety, healthcare, technology, and more. We also visited the Iowa State Capitol and the Blank Park Zoo in the spring to learn about the historic building and the zoo animals.

Each year in June, Talent Search also offers STEM Camp to 6th-8th grade students, held at the Estherville campus of Iowa Lakes. Students get the opportunity to stay overnight in the college dorms for two nights to get a feel for what it's like to attend a community college. This event is open to 60 middle school Talent Search students. We do activities such as swimming, roller skating, dancing with a DJ, completing science experiments, dissecting, puzzles, riddles, yoga, tie dye, team building games, scavenger hunts, and more. This past year's theme was Just Move It, where students learned about the power and benefit of physical activity for the mind and body.

Simply getting students (even at a young middle school age) on college campuses to see what the student life is like is a great way to encourage young students to enroll in postsecondary education. STEM Camp may be a child's first opportunity to attend an event away from home, allowing them a chance to learn how to be independent and comfortable making new friends, a skill they will need

their whole life long.

And finally, our additional summer events. Geared especially for incoming 6th graders as well as new Talent Search middle schoolers, we offer a summer event to welcome our new students. This summer, we visited the Omaha Zoo. We've also attended nature centers and gone mini golfing for this event. This is something light and enjoyable for new students to get comfortable in the program and to start getting to know other Talent Search students.

For our final event of the 2024-2025 school year, we attended a Black Hills excursion with 24 high school students for three days in July! We got to see Crazy Horse, Custer State Park, Mount Rushmore, enjoy team-building activities at the hotel, and learn the history of the Black Hills area.

These are all great opportunities for students to socialize and learn how to get comfortable asking questions while on a campus visit, at a museum, or in everyday life. Everywhere a student turns, there is an opportunity to gain skills and perspectives from these new experiences. Talent Search provides these opportunities to students so they can utilize their experience from middle school and high school as a college student, as a young adult, and throughout their whole lives.

ACTIVITIES FOR 2025-2026 SCHOOL YEAR

HIGH SCHOOL 2025-2026 EVENTS

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20  
MN RENAISSANCE FESTIVAL  
20 Students Attending  
Come explore the Minnesota Renaissance festival in Shakopee to learn about the Renaissance period marked with a revival of classical art, literature, and philosophy! Fairies, knights, pirates, peasants, mermaids, and vikings await! Enjoy 16+ stages of entertainment across the realm, a variety of festival flavors, and shop artisan shops of wares and trinkets (students must bring their own cash for desired souvenirs). Students may dress in festival attire if they wish!

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 13  
UNI VISIT  
20 Students Attending  
Come experience college life at the University of Northern Iowa! With 160 majors, minors, and certificates, discover what fits your future at this public university in Cedar Falls, Iowa.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4  
DMACC & TOP GOLF  
20 Students Attending  
Join us for a fun day of exploring what Des Moines Area Community College has to offer in addition to team building at Top Golf with fellow Talent Search members!

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 7  
JAM THE GYM  
15 Talent Search & 10 Upward Bound High School Students Attending  
Students will have the opportunity to meet with admissions, tour campus, win prizes, and attend the Iowa Lakes basketball games on the Estherville campus.

SATURDAY, MARCH 28  
SOUTH CENTRAL COLLEGE & KATO ESCAPE ROOM  
20 Students Attending  
Go for a visit to South Central College in Mankato, MN to learn about their programs and explore their campus! Then have some fun cracking codes and solving mysteries at Kato Escape Room.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15  
BUILD MY FUTURE  
20 Students Attending  
A hands-on career event unlike any other! Meet employers and try specific skills in careers like manufacturing, construction, restaurant, culinary & hospitality, automotive/ mechanic, law enforcement, emergency services, military, healthcare, IT, trucking logistics, energy, and more

MIDDLE SCHOOL 2025-2026 EVENTS

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18  
BACK TO THE FUTURE, SIOUX FALLS

40 Students Attending  
Come see the Broadway musical production of Back to the Future at the Washington Pavilion in Sioux Falls, SD with us! When character Marty McFly finds himself transported back to 1955 in a time machine built by the eccentric scientist Doc Brown, he accidentally changes the course of history. Now he's in a race against time to fix the present, escape the past, and send himself...back to the future.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 22  
RED ROCK CENTER ART CLASS & ICE SKATING  
40 Students Attending

Go for a little trip up north to Fairmont, MN, to ice skate at the indoor rink and attend a private art class at the Red Rock Center, where you will create a project you can take home and enjoy!

SATURDAY, MARCH 7  
ENTREPRENEUR FOR THE DAY AT IOWA LAKES  
40 Middle School Attendees

## Iowa Lakes Board of Trustees Focuses on Allied Health Program Growth at July Meeting



Algona, Iowa — The Iowa Lakes Community College Board of Trustees met in regular session Tuesday, July 15, at the Algona Campus. The meeting featured an in-depth presentation on the College's rapidly growing Allied Health programs, led by Chantel Teeter, Director of Allied Health Workforce Education.

Chantel Teeter, an Iowa Lakes graduate and long-time faculty member, was introduced by Vice President of Academic Affairs Kyle Norris.

"Chantel is a native of our service area and a proud Iowa Lakes alum, having completed both the LPN and Associate Degree Nursing programs," said Norris. "Her nursing experience spans hospital, long-term care, and home care settings. Since 2013, she has been teaching in Allied Health and High School Partnerships, and she moved into the Director role earlier this year. Her experience and passion for helping future healthcare professionals build a strong foundation make her an outstanding leader for this area."

During her presentation, Teeter provided an overview of current offerings in Allied Health, which include Certified Nurse Aide (CNA), Certified Medication Aide (CMA), Medication Manager, Emergency Medical Responder (EMR), Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), and the newly added Medical Coding program. She emphasized the fast-paced, career-ready nature of these programs, designed to get students into the workforce in weeks or months.



Bancroft Mayor Tom Johnson takes a photo with RAGBRAI rider Harlan Jackson of Cupertino, CA. As Harlan rode the route, he stopped and asked each of the mayors a question which is videoed. At the end of the ride, his plan is too put all videos together and place on YouTube.

Come to Iowa Lakes Community College for a hands-on career learning day! Learn all about steps and procedures to starting your own business and becoming an entrepreneur.

SATURDAY, APRIL 25  
ELLSWORTH COMMUNITY COLLEGE

40 Middle School Attendees  
Visit Ellsworth Community College in Iowa Falls to learn about their programs, including Equine Management and Science programs! Then explore the Ellsworth Equestrian Center to meet the horses.

JUNE 2-4, 2026  
STEM CAMP  
60 Middle School Attendees

Get ready for a summer adventure focusing on STEM events – you'll have fun while learning! Enjoy staying overnight in the Iowa Lakes Community College dorms to get a feel for what it's like to live on a college campus. We do activities such

as swimming, roller skating, dancing with a DJ, doing science experiments, tie dye, and more! Learn about the college and make new friends on this summer excursion! Meals provided. Parents/guardians responsible for transportation to the Estherville campus of Iowa Lakes Community College.

It's a great chance to see more of the world, get to know new people, and think about one's interests and college options early on.

HOW CAN A STUDENT APPLY FOR TALENT SEARCH?

Students in 6th-12th grades who attend our target schools or are homeschooled may apply for TRIO Talent Search at the link below. Feel free to contact Natalie Henriksen at 712-260-5720 with questions about our program. We look forward to seeing you in the fall!

<https://iowalakes.edu/student-services/trio/trio-talent-search/>