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Will Iowa's steel plant offer pay off?

State tax credits will cost \$770K per job

USA TODAY NETWORK

The incentive package for Mesabi Metallica's proposed Lee County steel plant will be one of the priciest efforts at job creation in Iowa history.

If the company hires 1,750 employees as promised, the \$1.36 billion in tax credit rebates Iowa is offering will cost the state



Reynolds

about \$777,000 for each job created, with some estimates ranging higher. The Legislature approved the incentive package in a special session on Oct. 2 and Gov. Kim Reynolds signed it that evening.

That price tag for new jobs is not unprecedented. But it amounts to about 32 times more per full-time job than what state officials

have provided other projects over the last two years through their usual incentive programs. (Mesabi also has projected that about 6,000 construction workers will be employed in building the plant.)

Nate Jensen, a University of Texas economic development professor, said the offer also is much higher than what other states typically offer.

"This is at the absolute high end of what we see in economic development," Jensen said in an email.

In the 50 incentive agreements companies have signed with the Iowa Economic Development Authority through its standard programs since July 2024, the state doled out an average of \$24,000 per new job, an analysis of IEDA agendas and news releases found.

Yet, adjusting for inflation, the offer to Mesabi Metallica is not the largest incentive per job in state history.

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TIM HYNDS, SIOUX CITY JOURNAL

OH MY Espresso Bae owner Parker Upton is using her biochemistry degree, mastering the science behind coffee at the 904 Morningside Ave. shop.

PERKS OF BUSINESS

A chemistry student-turned-espresso maven creating buzz in Morningside

EARL HORLYK

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SIOUX CITY — Parker Upton thought she knew what her future was supposed to look like.

First, she'd earned a bachelor's degree in biochemistry from the University of Missouri-Kansas City, then apply to medical school and eventually add Dr. to her name.

Unfortunately, Upton failed Organic Chemistry.

Instead of retaking the course, Upton traveled to Australia with a friend, spent a week in the Land Down Under, immersing herself in coffee culture.

Before you could say "Crikey, Mate," Upton was no longer quite so certain about her future.

Eventually, she did earn her degree, but she also moved back home with mom and dad.

"I gave my parents a 27-page business plan while opening up a capital account," Upton explained. "I started working as a server in a bar and saved every cent I made waiting tables."

Please see **ESPRESSO**, Page A6

Iowa ag sec candidates debate beef, water quality

CAMI KOONS

Iowa Capital Dispatch

Candidates for Iowa's secretary of agriculture debated over their divergent plans for the role, though the candidates agreed on some issues like growing Iowa's cattle herd and keeping Iowa land in farmers' hands.

Current Secretary of Agriculture Mike Naig is running for reelection as the Republican candidate against water quality researcher and activist Chris Jones who has called his bid for the seat a "referendum" on Iowa water quality.

"I think the condition of our water here is the biggest failure of our state government in the history of the state," Jones said during the debate on "Iowa Press."

Jones has proposed moving away from an ag economy dependent on corn, soybeans and ethanol with taxpayer-funded "off ramps" for farmers. Naig said Jones' ag policy ideas make him an "outlier" on the Nov. 3 election ticket for state races.

"Both candidates, the Republican and the Democratic candidate for governor are talking about the same things that I am, which is to provide incentives to farmers and work with farmers, not the mandates and taxes that my opponent is talking about," Naig said.

Water quality has become a key issue in the state of Iowa, with Jones' candidacy as a self-proclaimed referendum to the issue and Republican gubernatorial candidate Zach Lahn stating it was a key reason he entered the race.



Jones



Naig

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USD Sales Center to train next generation sales workforce

USA TODAY NETWORK

The University of South Dakota has opened a new Sales Center in the Beacom School of Business that campus leaders say will train the next generation and shape the future of sales leadership.

It's the only public university in South Dakota with a Sales Center or sales certificates, dean Klaus Beckmann said. USD announced the Sales Center in December 2025 and cut the ribbon on the space Friday during the university's homecoming festivities.

The Sales Center is "part of our mission to develop future



Beckmann

industry needs and implement a curriculum that makes students the best fit for jobs."

This fall, USD started offering both an undergraduate and graduate certificate in sales that covers the technical expertise

business leaders and meet regional business needs to foster growth in South Dakota and the region," Beckmann said, adding the school is "always looking to stay abreast of

and human skills needed to excel in professional selling, as well as time management, resilience and emotional intelligence, according to USD's website.

Certificate courses also cover sales methodologies, customer relationship management software, business competencies, negotiation, communication and strategic relationship management. The certificates are open to students of all majors as well as non-degree-seeking students looking for career development.

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USA TODAY NETWORK

The University of South Dakota has opened a Sales Center in the Beacom School of Business on its Vermillion campus.

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The Mini

It's election season again. As usual, the party that supports killing over a million babies a year is telling us their opponents want to take away your healthcare.

— David Adkins, Sioux City

Weather

Sunny; breezy
High 84 • Low 51
Forecast • A12

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