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MGA Conducts Survey of Young Midwestern Entrepreneurs

WASHINGTON, D. C. – The Midwestern Governors Association (MGA) released survey results today that examine the region’s entrepreneurial environment. The survey of young Midwestern entrepreneurs was conducted in partnership with the Des Moines Area Community College, Monmouth College, Iowa Economic Development Authority and the Iowa Association of Business and Industry.

The survey is part of Iowa Gov. Terry Branstad’s agenda as the Chair of the MGA. Branstad’s agenda focuses on developing and promoting a positive Midwestern narrative in order to draw attention to the unique qualities of the Midwestern region and all it has to offer – a strong work ethic and climate for business and job growth; high-quality schools and colleges; a stand-out standard of living, including vibrant cities and towns, affordable housing, cultural, recreational and sporting activities; four distinct seasons and breathtaking natural wonders.

As part of promoting this positive narrative, Branstad’s agenda includes ways to enhance the entrepreneurial network across the region to improve connectivity and region-wide networking. This survey provides insight into how entrepreneurs view the region’s business environment – both its successes and opportunities for improvement.

“Midwestern entrepreneurs and small business owners continue to serve as a driving force in the Midwestern economy,” said Branstad. “Midwestern governors are working to continually to create competitive environments so the region’s entrepreneurs can thrive to create jobs and raise family incomes. In addition, we must all recognize the interconnectivity of our regional economy and work to promote the region in the global economy.”

Some survey highlights include:

- 85 percent of businesses in the Midwest are started by people who are native to or who grew-up in the region;
- “Friendly” and “hardworking” are the two words most often used to describe the region as a whole;
- 73 percent of those surveyed reported that their current business endeavor is the first time they started a business;
- Midwestern businesses believe that 83 percent of their employees are prepared for their job responsibilities; and
- 98 percent of businesses plan to expand or stay the same size over the next six months.

“As an organization, we are working with Midwestern leaders to improve the entrepreneurial climate for those looking to start a business, whether it’s their first or their tenth,” said Jesse Heier, executive director of the MGA. “The more entrepreneurial activity we can develop in the region, the stronger the Midwest will be.”

Robert Denson, president of Des Moines Area Community College, said, "The results provide further proof that the Midwestern economy is on the upswing. Entrepreneurs will provide a critical role in maintaining momentum on business development and job creation."

Robin Johnson, director of Midwest Matters at Monmouth College, said, "This survey provides an excellent example of regional collaboration across state lines and among business, government and education to further goals important to the Midwest."

The full survey results can be found at

<http://www.midwesterngovernors.org/Release/EntrepreneurialResults.pdf>.

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The MGA is a nonprofit, bipartisan organization that brings together the governors of Midwestern states to work cooperatively on issues of importance to the region. Current members of the MGA are Gov. Pat Quinn (Ill.), Gov. Mike Pence (Ind.), Gov. Terry Branstad (Iowa), Gov. Sam Brownback (Kansas), Gov. Rick Snyder (Mich.), Gov. Mark Dayton (Minn.), Gov. Jay Nixon (Mo.), Gov. John Kasich (Ohio) and Gov. Scott Walker (Wis.).