

The Harkin Institute Annual Report FY 2024



Connecting People

Fireside Chat with U.S. Surgeon General, Dr. Vivek Murthy and Columnist Rekha Basu



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About The Harkin Institute

Who We Are

The Harkin Institute for Public Policy & Citizen Engagement at Drake University is dedicated to the study of issues that define our public life and to engaging students and citizens in constructive dialogue regarding these issues. Founded on the premise that good public policy is best achieved when policymakers have access to high-quality information, political processes are open and well-understood, and citizens are informed and active participants, The Harkin Institute seeks to create opportunities for thoughtful policy discourse in a nonpartisan environment.

Mission

The Harkin Institute for Public Policy & Citizen Engagement exists to inform citizens, inspire creative cooperation, and catalyze change on issues of social justice, fairness, and opportunity.

Vision

Our promise is to improve the lives of all Americans by giving policymakers access to high-quality information and engaging citizens as active participants in the formation of public policy.

Cover Photo Captions

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(Top Left) Keynote Speaker U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy shaking hands with columnist and moderator, Rekha Basu.

(Top Right) Retirement Security Advisory Committee member Donna Mueller talks with Retirement Security Symposium Speaker Katie Averill.

(Middle Left) Guests waiting in the Tom and Ruth Harkin Center before meeting U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy.

(Middle Right) Matthew Reed, Senator Tom Harkin, Ruth Harkin, and Tim Shriver outside the Tom and Ruth Harkin Center before the Fall 2023 Sussman Lecture.

(Bottom Left) Keynote speaker Mark Miller (right) speaking at the Harkin Retirement Security Symposium, sitting next to moderator Chris Ferrell (left).

(Bottom Right) View of the full panel for UpLift–The Central Iowa Basic Income Pilot’s Participant Storytelling panel at the Windsor Heights Community Center.



Disability Policy Director Daniel Van Sant at the 2023 SHRM Foundation Tharseo Awards speaking to Rylin Rodgers, Disability Policy Director at Microsoft and Andy Imparato, President of Disability Rights California.

Out Now:
When My Husband Ran for President and Other Short Stories, By Ruth Harkin

[Buy Here!](#)



Note from Our Team

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The last year has been one of growth and change for The Harkin Institute. We held the first (and second!) Harkin Retirement Security Symposia, both of which drew impressive crowds and sparked important discussions surrounding retirement security. The event’s success has cemented it as one of The Harkin Institute’s flagship policy events.

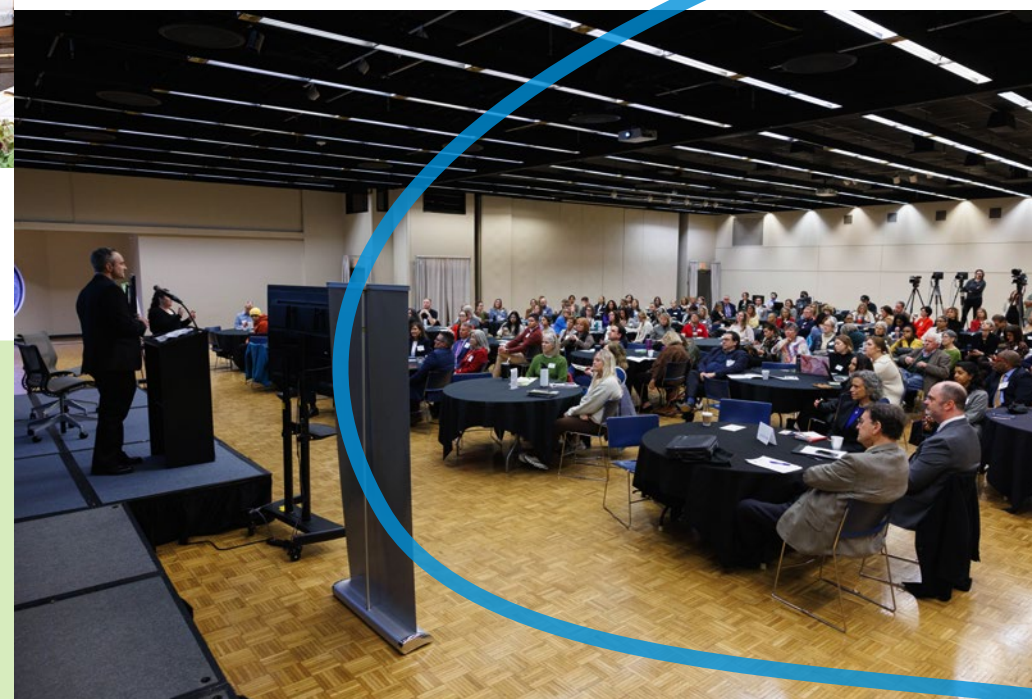
We also launched our new Continuing Education Series, which provide insights into a variety of topics relevant to both professionals and the general public.

And in between the new events, we continued our work to extend the legacy of Senator Tom Harkin by informing citizens, inspiring creative cooperation, and sparking change on issues of social justice, fairness, and opportunity.

All of our success from the past year is due to the hard work and dedication of our staff, the insight and guidance from our National Advisory Council, and the generous support of donors like you.

We are proud of what’s been accomplished and excited by the opportunities ahead. We hope you will continue to support our work in the coming years.

Sincerely,
The Harkin Institute



(Left) Wellness and Nutrition Policy Director, Adam Shriver, addresses crowd at the 2024 Harkin On Wellness Symposium.

(Top Right) UpLift Project Coordinators Michael Berger and Ashley Ezzio.

(Bottom Right) Photo of Executive Director, Matthew Reed, speaking to NAC member, Steve Sukup, during the lunch break at the 2024 Harkin on Wellness Symposium.



13

In-person and virtual events

4.4K

YouTube Views

243

Donors

8

Reports/Papers Published

Events Timeline

September 5 & 12, 2023
UpLift Community Conversation Series: What is Basic Income?

September 13, 2023
D.C. Retirement Security Symposium

September 15, 2023
Naturalization Ceremony

November 3, 2023
Fall Sussman Lecture "Dignity: The Foundation of a New Patriotism" with Tim Shriver

November 29, 2024
An Evening with Charlie Cook

March 6, 2024
Spring Sussman Lecture "Pain and Politics in the Heart of America" with Dr. Jennifer Silva

March 8, 2024
First Continuing Education Session

April 2, 2024
UpLift Community Conversation Series: Investigating Matthew Desmond's Poverty, by America

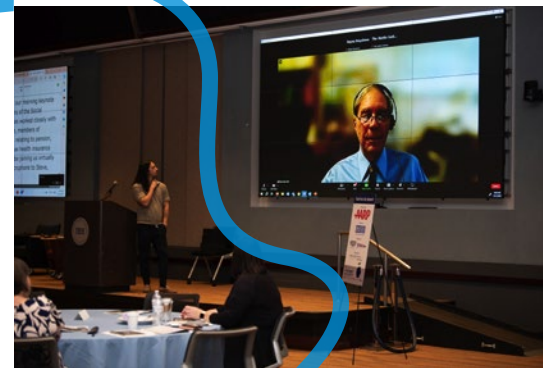
April 3, 2024
Harkin on Wellness Symposium

April 30, 2024
Des Moines Retirement Security Symposium

Inaugural Harkin Retirement Security Symposium

Last fall, we held the first-ever Harkin Retirement Security Symposium in Washington, D.C. The event is meant to address contemporary policy issues and legislative changes surrounding access to and adequacy of retirement savings, inequality in retirement preparedness, and financial literacy and wellness.

For the inaugural Retirement Security Symposium, we wanted to focus on something that is crucial for the retirement security of Americans. We landed on "Preserving and Enhancing Social Security for All" because Social Security is the first tier of retirement income for every American and a primary source of retirement income for lower and middle-class households. It is the only guaranteed pension available to everyone for as long as they live, and the biggest anti-poverty program in the United States. Our keynote speakers for this event included Stephen Goss, Chief Actuary of the Social Security Administration and Congressman John Larson, who has spent decades in Congress working to protect and strengthen Social Security. The event also brought together policy makers and researchers actively working on Social Security reform, research, and legislation to have a comprehensive discussion about the program and how we can make it work for all Americans. We have seen several legislative proposals to Social Security recently, and we need to continue the momentum of these efforts to make sure everyone has access to the lifetime income and disability and life insurance benefits that Social Security provides.



(Above) Keynote Speaker Congressman John Larson giving remarks at the 2023 Retirement Security Symposium.
(Top left) SSA Chief Actuary Stephen Goss speaking virtually at the 2023 Harkin Retirement Security Symposium.
(Middle left) Materials given out to attendees of the 2023 Harkin Retirement Security Symposium.
(Bottom left) Senator Tom Harkin (Retired) and Executive Director Matthew Reed posing with President of Social Security Works Nancy Altman after accepting her 2023 Harkin Retirement Security Symposium Advocacy Award.

Des Moines Harkin Retirement Security Symposium

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The first Retirement Security Symposium was such a success, that we decided to hold the second one here in Des Moines this Spring. Our theme for 2024, Navigating the Journey to Financial Wellness, brought together several organizations that we collaborated with for events, research projects, or outreach initiatives in the past couple of years, as well as a slate of new and valuable connections.

In framing the discussion about financial wellness and its relationship to retirement security, we use a definition of financial wellness developed by the National Endowment for Financial Education. The Personal Finance Ecosystem is a dynamic illustration of the variety of factors that determine financial wellbeing and emphasizes that financial wellness is not a static concept but rather a constantly evolving state. The Personal Finance Ecosystem places an emphasis on the variety of factors that play a role during a lifetime of financial decisions – a person’s environment, financial knowledge and access, and public policies that determine a choice architecture that is constantly evolving.

In this framework, those who are interested in improving financial wellbeing are catalysts for change, who may work on knowledge, policy, behavior, or social supports. The event gathered representatives of the full range of such catalysts for change with the goal to expand access to all resources that their organizations provide in this space and, consequently, to deliver on our promise to connect people with policy. Author and TEDx speaker Adam Carroll shared a lesson in how to have a conversation around money that speaks to the heart of someone’s emotional attachment to it. The Symposium also featured an insightful conversation between Mark Miller, author of Retirement Reboot, and Minnesota Public Radio economics contributor Chris Farrell.

The event was partially funded by the Community Betterment Grant from Prairie Meadows, which also provided money for Spanish and Arabic translations of our post-event report.



(Left) Keynote Speaker Adam Carroll holding up cash as he gives his speech at the 2024 Retirement Security Symposium.

(Top right) Keynote Speaker Mark Miller signing attendees' copies of his book.

(Bottom right) Retirement Security Policy Director Rayna Stoycheva asking a question to speakers.

Harkin On Wellness Symposium 2024

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The annual Harkin On Wellness Symposium was held this Spring, with a theme of Wellbeing in Schools, featuring a special guest: U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy! Dr. Murthy spoke about the youth mental health crisis, how his office is addressing this challenge, and his own experience with mental health.

The prevalence of mental health issues has increased dramatically in recent years, particularly in the wake of massive social disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. This led the nation’s leading child health organizations and the U.S. Surgeon General to declare a national emergency in child and adolescent mental health. As the location where children spend the largest portion of their time outside of the home, the K-12 school system can be a key vehicle for changes that can positively impact children’s wellbeing across the United States.

The symposium brought together policymakers, education leaders, teachers, pediatricians, and practice innovators from around the country to address whole child wellbeing approaches, to review the scientifically supported best practices, and to consider the case for placing health and wellbeing squarely at the heart of our education system’s mission to prepare students for successful lives.



(Top left) A panel of speakers presenting on whole health education in schools.

(Bottom left) HOW designee from Apples to Zucchini Cooking School looking through the 2024 Harkin On Wellness Report that has her photo on the front cover.

(Top right) Keynote Speaker U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy speaking on the youth mental health crisis next to columnist and moderator, Rekha Basu.

(Bottom right) Crowd watching the keynote from U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy with Rekha Basu.



Annual Lectures

Fall Sussman Lecture

“Dignity: The Foundation of a New Patriotism” with Tim Shriver

Back in November, The Harkin Institute hosted Tim Shriver for the Fall Sussman Lecture, “Dignity: The Foundation of a New Patriotism.” The lecture focused on “The Dignity Index”, which was developed by Shriver’s nonprofit UNITE. He also explained how the Dignity Index can be applied to solve the country’s toxic political and cultural divides and why dignity is the key to easing divisions, preventing violence, and solving problems.

Shriver is married, a father of 5, the Chairman of Special Olympics International and co-founder of UNITE - an initiative to promote national unity and solidarity across differences. Tim began his career as an educator and subsequently co-founded and currently chairs the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), the leading school reform organization in the field of social and emotional learning. Shriver earned his undergraduate degree from Yale University, a Master’s degree from Catholic University, and a Doctorate in Education from the University of Connecticut. He has produced 6 films, is the author of the New York Times bestseller Fully Alive – Discovering What Matters Most, and co-editor of The Call to Unite: Voices of Hope and Awakening.



(Above) Guest Lecturer Tim Shriver giving his presentation on “The Dignity Index” in the Tom and Ruth Harkin Center Auditorium.

(Top right) Senator Tom Harkin (retired), Ruth Harkin, and Meisha Robinson sitting in the audience watching the lecture.

(Middle right) The audience gathered during the lecture in the Tom and Ruth Harkin Center Auditorium.

(Bottom right) Senator Tom Harkin (retired) and Guest Lecturer Tim Shriver speaking to guests in the lobby of The Tom and Ruth Harkin Center.



Spring Sussman Lecture

“Pain and Politics in the Heart of America” with Dr. Jennifer Silva

And in March, The Harkin Institute welcomed Dr. Jennifer Silva for the Spring Sussman Lecture, “Pain and Politics in the Heart of America.” Dr. Silva discussed the economic, social, and cultural challenges facing America’s working class and how those challenges have impacted the ability of the working class to achieve the American Dream.

Dr. Silva has written two books surrounding these topics, Coming Up Short: Working-Class Adulthood in an Age of Uncertainty and We’re Still Here: Pain and Politics in the Heart of America. In Coming Up Short, Dr. Silva conducted one hundred interviews with working class residents in two towns-Lowell, Massachusetts, and Richmond, Virginia, and shed light on their experience of heightened economic insecurity, deepening inequality, and uncertainty about marriage and family. In We’re Still Here, Dr. Silva conducted more than a hundred interviews of Black, white, and Latino working-class residents of a declining coal town in Pennsylvania to examine the civic and political disengagement of working-class people.



(Top left) Dr. Jennifer Silva answering audience questions after her presentation.

(Bottom left) Guest Lecturer Dr. Jennifer Silva giving her presentation on “Pain and Politics in the Heart of America” in the Tom and Ruth Harkin Center Auditorium.

(Top right) Student employee Leetal Cohn introducing Dr. Jennifer Silva at the Spring 2024 Sussman Lecture.

(Bottom right) Attendees listening to Dr. Jennifer Silva give her lecture.

The Sussman Lecture Series hosts a notable public policy figure to discuss topical current events with a small audience. The series was established by Richard Sussman, AS’51, and his late wife Lila.

An Evening with Charlie Cook

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Political analyst Charlie Cook's annual lecture series returned to The Harkin Institute in November 2023. Cook discussed the upcoming general election and what we could expect from a rematch between President Joe Biden and former President Donald Trump. A lot has changed since last November. We're eager to hear his insights at his talk in a few months after Americans visit the ballot box and cast their vote for the next President of the United States.

An Evening with Charlie Cook is made possible by a generous gift from friends of The Harkin Institute and Drake University who wish to remain anonymous.



(Top left) Charlie Cook, giving his Annual Lecture "An Evening with Charlie Cook" in Sheslow Auditorium at Drake University.

(Bottom left) Matthew Reed and Charlie Cook standing on stage taking audience questions after Cook's lecture.

(Top right) The audience at Sheslow Auditorium gathered to listen to Charlie Cook speak on the state of American Politics.

(Middle right) Student Employee Morgan Ryan introducing Charlie Cook.

(Bottom Right) Close up of the front row of the audience during the lecture.

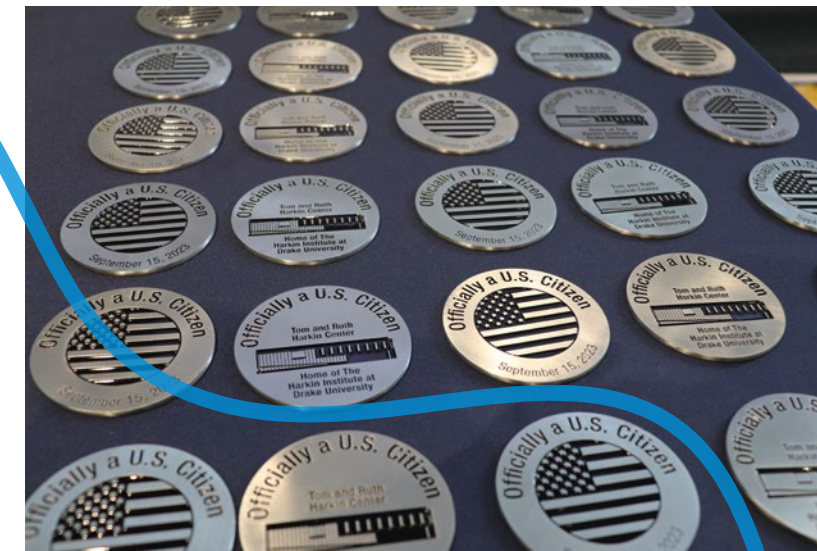


New Events

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Citizenship Ceremony

In September 2023, The Harkin Institute helped welcome 36 new American citizens by hosting a naturalization ceremony at the Tom and Ruth Harkin Institute. Senator Tom Harkin spoke at the event and the ceremony was performed by Judge Robert Pratt. The Harkin Institute is committed to fostering an inclusive society where everyone can pursue their dreams, contribute to their communities, and help build a brighter future together. In honor of that commitment, The Harkin Institute hosted another ceremony in September of 2024 and will likely continue the tradition in the coming years.



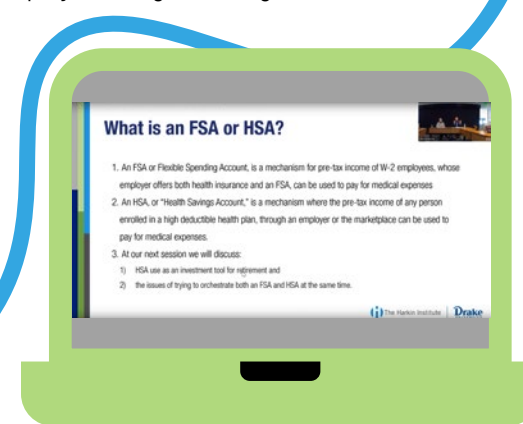
(Top left) Senator Harkin and Judge Robert Pratt congratulating a new U.S. citizen at a naturalization ceremony.

(Top right) Medallions given to each new U.S. citizen that participated in the naturalization ceremony.

Continuing Education Series

This year, The Harkin Institute introduced its new Continuing Education Series. Continuing education is a vital requirement that helps keep professionals informed and maintain their licenses. However, the sheer variety of information and topics discussed during these educational sessions is beneficial to anyone.

The series features tax industry experts discussing a variety of topics including health savings plans, ABLE accounts, tax incentives, health insurance options, ERISA, retirement planning, statutory updates, employment rights, living with disabilities – even food security, and sustainable design and architecture. These sessions provide attendees with a chance to expand their knowledge and skills. They also offer attorneys, insurance providers, third-party administrators, architects, landscape architects, social workers, and other professionals the ability to earn valuable continuing education credits. So far, the series has covered the many different types of health savings plans, health insurance open enrollment, and how to increase disability representation on boards of directors.



UpLift— The Central Iowa Basic Income Pilot

In 2022, The Harkin Institute engaged in a new partnership to help bring a basic income pilot to our community. UpLift – The Central Iowa Basic Income Pilot is a community study monitoring the impact of a no-strings attached, monthly \$500 payment for 24 months given to 110 low-income Iowans in Polk, Dallas, and Warren counties. Now, over a year into payments, we're getting an idea of how the money is being spent.

Throughout the year, UpLift hosted numerous Community Conversations events. The first, "What is Basic Income?" was held at the Varsity Cinema and served as an opportunity for interested stakeholders to learn more about the basic income model and to share their thoughts about what a basic income could do for the Central Iowa community. The next Community Conversation was "Investigating Matthew Desmond's Poverty, by America." Through a partnership with Seattle Arts and Lecture, UpLift was able to begin the event with a viewing of a previously recorded, virtual conversation with author and acclaimed sociologist, Matthew Desmond, in which he discussed his latest book, *Poverty, by America*, along with his potential solutions for addressing poverty in America.

UpLift also held several Library Talks in partnership with the Des Moines, Adel, Knoxville, Norwalk, Cowles, Redfield, Johnston, Lisbon, and Urbandale Public Libraries, as well as CultureALL. The events were centered around two of Matthew Desmond's Books - *Evicted* and *Poverty, by America*, in addition to screenings of the film *Raising the Floor*, and sparked important conversations about poverty and its effect on Iowans.

To commemorate the one-year anniversary of the first UpLift payments, the community was able to hear directly from five UpLift participants about how a basic income is impacting their lives. Attendees heard powerful stories about how UpLift has provided new opportunities to local families like moving to safer neighborhoods, finding better employment opportunities, and creating generational wealth.



(Left) UpLift participants speaking at UpLift's Storytelling Panel.

(Right) UpLift Project Coordinators Michael Berger and Ashley Ezzio.

(Page 13 left) Attendees discussing the film "Raising the Floor" after a showing at the Varsity Cinema.

(Page 13 right) Visual notes taken by artist Nathan T. Wright during an UpLift Community Conversation event.

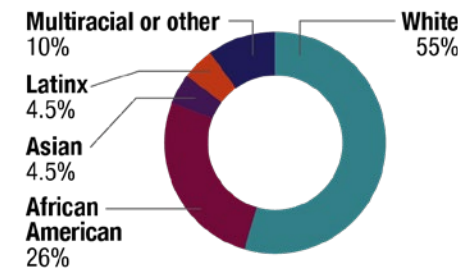
UpLift Participant Demographics



Source: Baseline Applicant Survey

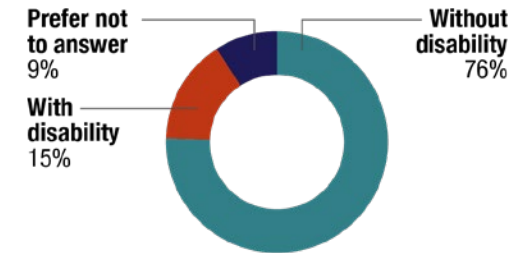


Race



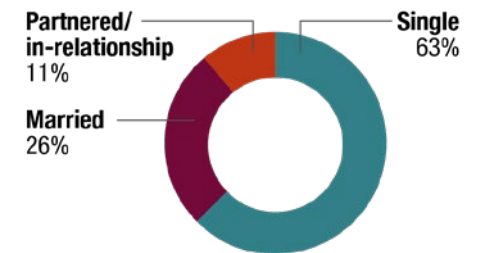
Source: Baseline Applicant Survey

Identified having a disability



Source: Participant Onboarding Form

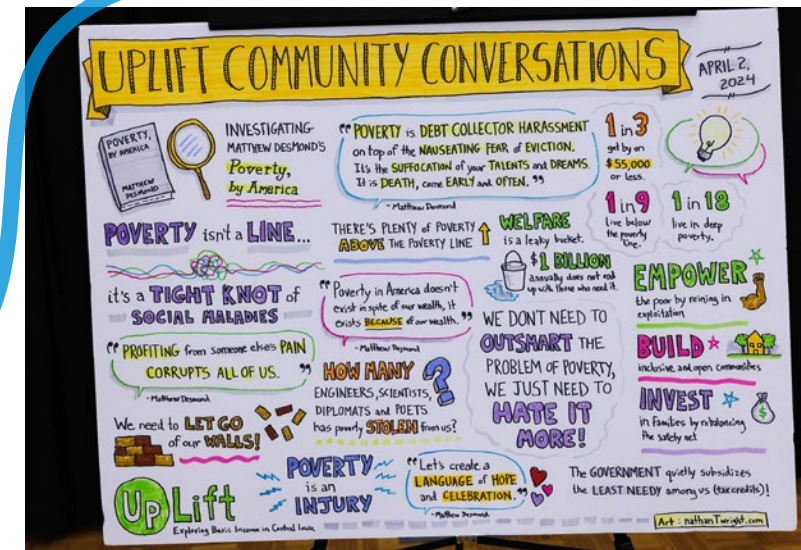
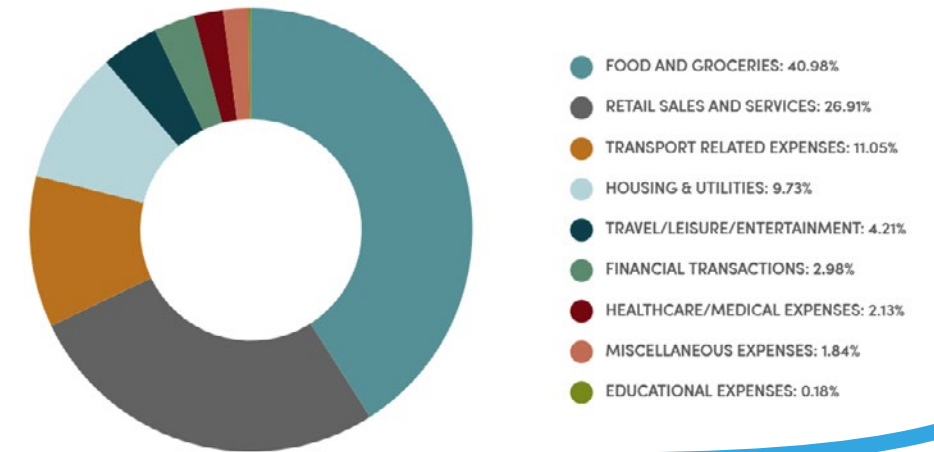
Marital Status



Source: Baseline Applicant Survey

Spending Breakdown

The data in this pie chart shows aggregate spending for guaranteed income participants in Iowa. This includes all non-cash expenditures from the participant's pre-paid debit card that is loaded with guaranteed income payments monthly.



Drake University Student Scholarships 14

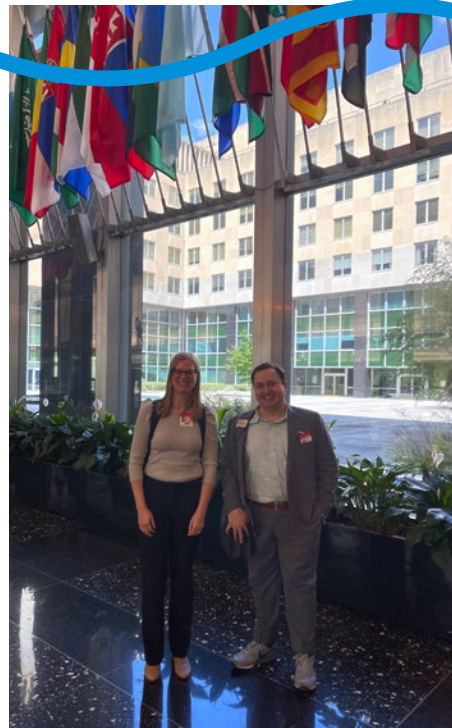
The Harkin Institute offers two scholarships for Drake University students pursuing internship opportunities in Washington, D.C.

The Harkin Institute D.C. Experience Scholarship was established in 2014 to honor Senator Harkin's legacy by providing financial assistance to Drake undergraduate students with financial need who have secured a summer internship in a non-profit organization, congressional office or government agency in Washington, D.C.

The Robert J. Waters and Patricia J. Beneke Endowed Washington, D.C. Experience Scholarship was established in memory of Bob Waters – Senator Harkin's former Chief of Staff – by his wife and daughter. This scholarship supports Drake students with internships in Washington, D.C., to enable undergraduate or graduate students (including law students) with an interest in and commitment to public service to work with congressional or executive branch federal government offices or private organizations engaged in addressing: delivery of universal, high-quality health care; enhanced human, women's, LGBTQ, and civil rights; improved civic engagement and effective governance; expanded disability rights; a strong system of accessible public education; and sustainability, environmental protection and climate change.

2024 Scholarship Recipients

- Kit Reimer - Pharmacy Quality Alliance
- Will Blevins - Senator Cory Booker
- Rachel Rozendaal - Office of Personnel Management



(Left) Scholarship recipient Will Blevins at his internship with Senator Cory Booker's office.

(Middle) Scholarship recipient Rachel Rozendaal with Daniel Van Sant inside the State Department building.

(Right) Scholarship recipient Kit Reimer at her internship with the Pharmacy Quality Alliance.

The Harkin Institute Team 15

Full-time Staff Members



Michael Berger
UpLift Project Coordinator



Hope Bibens
Drake University Director
of Archives &
Special Collections



Ashley Ezzio
UpLift Senior Project
Coordinator



Lila Johnson
Graphic Designer & Digital
Accessibility Specialist



Mindy Jones
Director of Operations



Kathryn Kuckelman
Communications Manager



Matthew Reed
Executive Director



Adam Shriver
Interim Director of Wellness
and Nutrition Policy



Stephanie Sinovic
Drake University Senior
Advancement Officer



Rayna Stoycheva
Director of Retirement
Security Policy



Daniel Van Sant
Director of Disability Policy



Student Employment

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A position at The Harkin Institute is much more than a part-time job; it is a real-world opportunity to do real-world work. Student employees receive a unique opportunity to join full-time employees in a variety of settings, help on long-term research projects, and gain exposure to national thought leaders and policymakers.

FY 2024 Student Employees

- Alex Bates, Undergraduate Student Staffer
- Leetal Cohn, Undergraduate Student Staffer
- Ashley French, Graduate Capstone Student
- Mira Gaitanis, AAPD Summer Intern
- Shanna Joseph, Undergraduate Policy Associate
- Aubrey Kohl, Graduate Student Staffer
- Natalie Massey, Graduate Student Staffer
- Rachel Rozendaal, Graduate Student Staffer
- Morgan Ryan, Undergraduate Chief of Staff
- Michael Seok Suh, Graduate Student Staffer

New Student Employees (Starting Fall 2024)

- Ava Basso, Undergraduate Student Staffer
- Nicole Frazier, Graduate Student Staffer
- Chloe Lepak, Undergraduate Student Staffer
- Mara Schell, Undergraduate Student Staffer



National Advisory Council

- Patricia Beneke, Former US Assistant Secretary of the Interior
- Charles E. Cook, Jr., Founder, The Cook Political Report
- Ruth R. Harkin, Former Senior Vice President, United Technologies Corporation
- Sharon Haselhoff, General Manager & Regional Vice President, Grand Falls Resort
- James W. Hubbell III, Chairman, Hubbell Realty Company (Retired)
- Rachel R. McLean, Ruan Companies
- Kevin Nordmeyer, Principal, BNIM Architects
- Mary Sellers, President, United Way of Central Iowa
- Liz Shuler, President, AFL-CIO
- Matt Stagner, Lead Advisor, Foster Group
- Steve Sukup, President and CEO, Sukup Manufacturing
- Marsha Ternus, Former Iowa Supreme Court Chief Justice
- Ray Walton, Retired Shopping Center Executive

Consultants and Fellows

- Lacey Be, Consultant, Disability Policy
- Brad Biren, Consultant, Disability Policy
- Ashley DeLayo, Consultant, Disability Policy
- Ben Grauer, Consultant, Disability Policy
- Ashlea Lantz, Senior Policy Advisor, Disability Policy
- Robert Ludke, Senior Fellow, Disability Policy
- Meredith Moore, Assistant Professor of Computer Science, Drake University
- SueAnn Morrow, Consultant, Disability Policy
- Bob Oakley, Consultant, Disability Policy
- Joshua Pearson, Senior Fellow, Retirement Security Policy
- Tai Tomasi, Consultant, Disability Policy

(Left) Shanna Joseph, an Undergraduate Student Staffer at The Harkin Institute, introducing Senator Tom Harkin at the reception before Tim Shriver's Sussman Lecture.

(Middle) Aubrey Kohl, a Graduate Student Staffer at The Harkin Institute, speaking with Senator Harkin at the reception before Tim Shriver's Sussman Lecture.

(Top Right) Alex Bates, an Undergraduate Student Staffer at The Harkin Institute, speaking at the reception before An Evening With Charlie Cook.

Honor Roll of Donors

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Our friends of The Harkin Institute make what we do here possible. We thank them for their generous support of our mission. This is an honor roll of donors who have made a gift in fiscal year 2024 (July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024.)

\$100,000+

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The International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers

\$25,000-\$99,999

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ING Group

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Richard and Jackie Seibert (Richard, BN'71)
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Iowa Dept. of Insurance and Financial Services
Krause Group
Kresge Foundation
Mary K and Daniel M Kelly Family Foundation
Navigate Wellbeing Solutions
RPC, Inc Charitable Foundation
Sukup Manufacturing Co.
F A Wittern Charitable Foundation

\$1-\$999

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Dr. Natalie Adkins
Dave Affeldt
Samir Afridi
Robert Anderson
Peggy Anderson
Barrie Anderson
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Heidi Dryden
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Sally and Gordon Faber (Sally, PH'67)
Mark Feye
Jack and Sandra Fleishman

Beth Freeman (JO'78)
Michael Gadiant (LA'71)
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Philip Heckel
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Thomas Henderson and Nan Horvat (Thomas, LA'77, JD'80; Nan, JD'81)
Jack Holveck Jr. and Andrea Holveck
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Susan Lerdal
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