



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**SBDC and Value Added Ag program announce joint hiring of new program specialist**  
***Shared position to benefit many Iowa business and agriculture concerns***

AMES, Iowa – America's SBDC Iowa (SBDC) and Iowa State University (ISU) Extension and Outreach's Value Added Ag program (Value Added Ag) have hired Brian Tapp of Ames to perform feasibility studies, do financial analyses, and assist in advising entrepreneurs and existing business owners statewide.

Lisa Shimkat, SBDC State Director, says, "We are seeing an increased need for financial analysis and support projects across the state and this partnership gives us the ability to provide these services for our centers. America's SBDC Iowa is looking for ways to also get ahead of the surge of business successions in the state and, with this addition, we have another tool to keep our local businesses strong."

Ray Hansen, Director of Value Added Ag - ISU Extension and Outreach adds, "Brian brings a very diverse skill set to our team and will play a critical role in helping our team provide high quality feasibility studies and business development support."

Previously, Brian served as the Chief Operating Officer for the Missouri Innovation Corporation at Southeast Missouri State University (SEMO) where his duties included the research and development of regional entrepreneurship assessments for identified regions in Missouri. He also managed several other programs at SEMO including the development of a USDA \$1.4 revolving loan program, Small Business Technology Development Center (SBTDC), LaunchU Entrepreneurship Training Program, securing funding for an Ag-Tech Incubator Analysis, and external engagement with key stakeholders.

More recently Brian managed and expanded an SBA loan portfolio for an SBA preferred lender that generated successful loans through the newly named SBA Advantage Loan and SBA Grow

Loan programs. His previous work with SBTDC and collaboration with SBTDC staff led to the completion of over 25 new business plans for start-ups and acquisitions during 2016.

Brian began working for the SBDC and VAAP on December 5<sup>th</sup>.

America's SBDC Iowa is an outreach program of Iowa State University's College of Business and the Office of Economic Development and Industry Relations. Iowa State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, ethnicity, religion, national origin, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, sex, marital status, disability, or status as a U.S. veteran. Inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies may be directed to the Office of Equal Opportunity, 3350 Beardshear Hall, 515 Morrill Road, Ames, Iowa 50011, Tel. 515-294-7612, email [eooffice@iastate.edu](mailto:eooffice@iastate.edu).

Funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration, America's SBDC Iowa has 15 regional assistance centers located strategically across the state. Since program inception in 1981, the SBDC has helped hundreds of thousands of Iowa businesses and entrepreneurs through no fee, confidential, customized, professional business counseling and practical, affordable training workshops.

For more information on America's SBDC Iowa programs or services, call (515) 294-2030 or visit [www.iowasbdc.org](http://www.iowasbdc.org).

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach's Value Added Ag Program (VAAP) provides unbiased, science-based information to help establish or expand agricultural-related or rural businesses in Iowa. Whether it's a new start-up, or an established business wanting to expand, the VAAP works directly with the owners of the business. The Value Added Ag Program has been key in helping move Iowa farmers forward with bigger gains and better returns.

For more information on VAAP, visit <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/valueaddedag/> or call 515-294-9483.

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