The Iowa Department for the Blind’s 100 Year Anniversary is April 2, 2025. We are currently developing our plans for our Centennial Celebration. We are taking advantage of this historic anniversary to remember the past, acknowledge the accomplishments that have been made and focus on our story for the next century. A 100-year anniversary is truly a historic event and a huge accomplishment. We are hoping to capitalize on this historic event to solidify Iowa Department for the Blind’s place in Iowa’s future.

The main event of our Centennial Celebration is an Open House to be held in our building on April 2, 2025. This is the perfect opportunity to invite the blind community, our business partners, neighbors and state and municipal government representatives. This is an opportunity to re-introduce ourselves to our downtown neighbors, future employers of our clients and students by show casing our building and what we do here. I had the opportunity to work with the DSM Magazine reporter who wrote the story about Zac Ellingson. One quote from the reporter that sticks in my mind every time I do a tour is, “I have lived in downtown Des Moines for 20 years. Until I came here to write this story, I never knew what you did here. Now every time I drive by, I think, if people only knew the magic that goes on inside those walls”.

We would like to take this opportunity to open the doors of IDB and invite the public inside to see the “magic” that goes on inside these walls.

The Open House will consist of a walking tour of the building, large screen monitors on the first floor with videos showing our programs and services, history, staff and library and other IDB Facts. The Open House will take the place of our Legislative day at the Capitol, we will use this opportunity to bring the legislature here to learn about us and meet local and distant constituents.

In addition to the Open House, we will be taking this opportunity to review all outward facing materials including flyers, presentation materials, power pointsand agency identification banners. This one-hundred-year anniversary provides us with a unique promotional opportunity, we want to be certain that everything promoting Iowa Department for the Blind is branded the same and conveys the same message. In addition to material review we are hoping to take advantage of the Centennial milestone to increase our outreach in Iowa. We are working on a list of events where Iowa Department for the Blind can present or have a booth. These events include the Iowa State Fair, several county fairs, an increased presence at the Downtown Farmer’s Market and other markets around Iowa. We would also like to create a PSA commercial that can be run on several local networks in Iowa.

In order to do all of these things I am asking on behalf of the Iowa Department for the Blind for a grant up to $50,000. This agency has consistently served blind and low vision Iowans of all ages for 100 years. We have proven blindness does not stop a person, the only thing that prevents a blind person from leading a successful, empowered and independent life is lack of confidence. With this grant money we can work to ensure Iowa Department for the Blind will continue to serve blind and low vision Iowans. My personal goal as Chief Information Officer is to make sure the Iowa Department for the Blind is no longer the best kept secret in the state of Iowa.

Included in this document is the current guest list for the Open House, menu items, various other items that we will need for this event and promotional items for our future 100 years and the projected cost.

Open House Event

Current Invitation List – This is not a final list

Governor

Governor’s Staff

Legislature

Iowa Department for the Blind Commission Board

County Board of Supervisors

Mayor

City Council

DM Chamber of Commerce

Other State Agencies- example DHHS, Dept of Ed, Workforce Develop, D.A.S,

Police Chief

Fire Chief

Mercy, Methodist, Blank appropriate staff

U of I Eye Clinics appropriate staff

IESNBVI

Downtown Des Moines businesses

V.A. – appropriate staff

Consumer Groups on a local and National level

Former students, clients’ families and staff members

All school districts in the state

All public libraries across the state

Employer connections current and future possibilities

Local trade unions

All Colleges in the state – appropriate staff

Media – TV and Radio

AEA’s

Area Agency on Aging

Typically, one third of all invited guests will attend an event like our Open House, at one third of this list we are projecting 300 to 400 people will attend.

Menu

Appetizers

Cookies/Cake

Drinks

Invitations

We will be using a combination of Save the Date, informal and formal invitations depending on the recipient. For example, the Governor, Mayor and other “dignitaries” will receive a formal invitation.

IDB All Staff Meeting - April 4, 2024

IDB All Staff meeting will include a catered breakfast for all staff members to celebrate the work we do and encourage our goals for the future.

Projected Cost

Catering costs per person - $25.00

Invitation per person - $6.00

Videography - $28.00 per hour

Marketing giveaways for Open House $3.00 average low end to high end products-

Promotional materials – price will vary by vendor and item – these will be used to promote IDB during the Centennial year.

With a projected guest attendance of 490, guests and staff the food costs will be approximately $12,250.00.

Invitations – Approximately 700 invitations will be mailed out. The projected cost is $4,200.00

Video Time – We will be bringing in a videography specialist to update the management and staff videos, take videos of the building and program and service descriptive videos. Approximate time involved 120 hours – Projected cost $3,360.00