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Immigrants Contribute \$390 Million to GDP in Iowa's Story and Boone Counties

Foreign-born also hold \$145.5 million in spending power and contribute \$17.3 million in state and local taxes

NEW YORK, NY — Immigrants living in Iowa's Story and Boone Counties are preserving American jobs and paying millions in state and local taxes, a new research brief released by [New American Economy](http://NewAmericanEconomy.org) and the Ames Chamber of Commerce finds. Though making up just 6.6 percent of the population, they contributed \$390 million to GDP in 2015 and paid \$17.3 million in state and local taxes. Furthermore, nearly 97 percent of the immigrant population is employed.

"Immigration pays big dividends in the heartland and Iowa, especially," said **John Feinblatt, President of New American Economy**. "As more immigrants establish roots in Story and Boone Counties, they're giving local companies the customer base and workforce they need to keep jobs here and grow Iowa's economy."

"Immigrants in Story and Boone Counties are a critical part of our local workforce, and their contributions to the local, state, and national economy cannot be understated," noted **Dan Culhane, president and chief executive officer of the Ames Chamber of Commerce**.

"As the proud home of Iowa's land grant institution, and a community that consistently has one of the lowest unemployment rates in the nation, we are always looking for new and innovative ways to attract and retain talent," he adds. "The immigrant and international population is certainly a target demographic in our talent acquisition and retention strategy."

The brief, *Immigrants as Economic Drivers in Story and Boone Counties*, finds:

- **96.8 percent of the foreign-born population in Story and Boone Counties are employed.** Immigrants are also more likely to be of working age (between 16 and 64 years old) than their U.S.-born neighbors. Nearly 60 percent of foreign-

born residents are of working age, compared to 43.6 percent of U.S. born residents.

- **Immigrants living in Story and Boone Counties in 2015 helped create or preserve 378 local manufacturing jobs that would have otherwise vanished or moved elsewhere.** This is due to the role immigrants play in the workforce helping keep jobs on U.S. soil.
- **More than 12 percent of population growth in Story and Boone Counties between 2010 and 2015 is attributable to immigrants.** Foreign-born residents make up just 6.6 percent of the counties' populations.
- **Foreign-born residents were much more likely to have an advanced degree than U.S.- born residents in Story and Boone Counties.** Half of immigrant residents (50.1 percent) held an advanced degree in 2015, compared to only 13.4 percent of U.S.-born residents.
- **Immigrants contributed \$390 million to GDP in 2015.** The foreign-born population held \$145.5 million in spending power, and paid \$17.3 million to state and local taxes.

Read the full research brief [here](#) or visit www.ameschamber.com.

About New American Economy

New American Economy (NAE) brings together more than 500 Republican, Democratic and Independent mayors and business leaders who support immigration reforms that will help create jobs for Americans today. Coalition members include mayors of more than 35 million people nationwide and business leaders of companies that generate more than \$1.5 trillion and employ more than 4 million people across all sectors of the economy, from Agriculture to Aerospace, Hospitality to High Tech and Media to Manufacturing. Learn more at www.NewAmericanEconomy.org.