



MIKE BURLEY • *Telegraph Herald*

rough the back door of Taco John's on Central Avenue in Dubuque on Wednesday.

## Company to work for'

hometown. She was offered jobs with three different companies and said she chose to work at the local cable system because it was such a new and unfamiliar business at that time.

"Dubuque was an early adopter of cable television service. But in those early years, it was just 13 channels," McMullen said.

One channel was local programming and two others were microwave channels from Chicago that brought in Cubs and White Sox games, she said.

"People today just can't imagine the

difference between what it was like then and what it is now," McMullen said. "Over my career, I've seen this industry re-invent itself every five years, so there has always been something new to make the job interesting."

She added: "It's been a great company to work for."

The cable system in Dubuque and the surrounding area has had five different owners during McMullen's tenure as local operations manager. Mediacom purchased the company in 2001 and McMullen has been responsible for managing the company's systems in southwest Wisconsin, northwest Illinois and the greater Dubuque area.



Kathleen McMullen

## Dyersville leads to arrest

Hammond, Ind., at the Dubuque Law Enforcement Center on Tuesday.

The Dyersville Police Department received a call Tuesday from a concerned family member regarding questionable comments made to a group of 12- to 14-year-old girls.

Upon reviewing surveillance video and speaking with witnesses, Tinsley was identified as a suspect.



Carl Walter Tinsley

While doing routine searches through state and federal databases, it was determined that Tinsley had a valid warrant from Burlington. The suspect was located at 503 Ninth St. SE in Dyersville and was arrested without incident. He was transported to the Dubuque Law Enforcement Center.

Additional charges are pending, and individuals with information regarding this or similar incidents are requested to contact the Dyersville Police Department at 563-875-7366.

# Funding cure sought for Direct Care Initiative

Forum details efforts to implement education standards and credentialing.

BY ERIN MURPHY  
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The direct health care workforce is 73,000 strong in Iowa, making it the largest workforce in the state, according to one study.

But those workers in hospice, home health, assisted living, etc., are not credentialed and do not face minimum academic or skill requirements for employment.

Many direct health care personnel — both at the management and ground level — would like that to change.

That is the undertaking of the Direct Care Workforce Initiative, a project of the Iowa Department of Public Health to implement education standards and credentialing for direct care workers.

"(Those workers) are on the front line," said Erin Drinnin, of the Department of Public Health, which along with the Iowa Direct Care Advisory Council hosted a public forum on Wednesday afternoon at the Holiday Inn in downtown Dubuque.

The initiative runs on state funding — \$149,000 each of the past two years — and a \$750,000 per year federal grant that expires in September 2013. Supporters hope for passage of state legislation that would

TH video interview  
Erin Drinnin discusses the initiative, [THonline.com](http://THonline.com)

continue to fund the project and establish an oversight board. Such a bill passed the Democrat-controlled Iowa Senate on party lines during the 2012 legislative session but was not brought to the floor by the Republican-controlled House.

The Senate managed to get funding for the initiative into the Health and Human Services budget.

"Our focus was to make sure vulnerable Iowans would receive the best health care they could," said Sen. Pam Jochum, D-Dubuque, who chaired the subcommittee for the Senate bill and has an adult

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daughter with intellectual disability. "Our goals were to make sure there are statewide education standards, and that the people hired are truly

trained and know what they're doing."

Among the initiative's goals: meet direct care workforce demands, reduce turnover and provide career pathways so competent workers remain in the field.

"I agree (many workers) are not prepared for the job," said Lorrie Meier, chief executive officer of G&G Living Centers in Guttenberg. Meier said her best employees then wind up burned out because they're asked to mentor new hires, pick up hours and work overtime.