

The mission of the Chamber of Commerce is to promote progressive community and economic development to benefit Chamber members and the North Iowa region.



Business After Hours is back!
The Chamber and businesses are taking precautions to hold a safe networking event for members. Stay tuned for specific dates on the following upcoming *Business After Hours* events:

April 29: Mason City Noon Rotary
May: & Prime N Wine
June 24: Mint Springs Dentistry
July: First Security Bank
August: Smithfield
August 5: Lee Realty
September: First Citizens Bank
October: CENT Credit Union
November: Thrivent - Alyse Hesley
ISU Extension

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Ag Breakfast - March 23

The 39th annual **Ag Breakfast** is slated for 7AM on Tuesday, March 23 at The Music Man Square. The event, which celebrates Ag Week, features an ag program, breakfast, and door prizes. Headlining the 2021 program is Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Mike Naig and Bushel Boy Farms President Chuck Tryon.



Mike Naig, Iowa Secretary of Agriculture

Naig learned the value of hard work as he grew up helping his dad run their crop and livestock farm. Before serving in his current role, Naig was active in agribusiness, serving in public policy roles for state and national trade associations and in private industry. He served as the Iowa Deputy Secretary of Agriculture under Bill Northey, which showed him the importance of being accessible to Iowans to better represent their interests and be responsive to their needs.



Chuck Tryon, President of Bushel Boy Farms

Tryon spent most of his career in food and agriculture, including leadership roles at Pillsbury, General Mills, and Ecolab. In addition to marketing, sales, and general management, he led numerous initiatives related to E-Business, sustainable agriculture, and food safety. Tryon serves as a leader in key industry groups focused on sustainable agriculture. He is proud to support economic growth in North Iowa with the addition of their new facility in Mason City.

In addition to the keynote speakers, the Agribusiness committee will recognize Century Farms and the Alpha Media "Farmer of the Year."

The format has been modified to accommodate physical distancing and safety measures. In-person attendance will be limited to 150. A Zoom webinar link will be provided to participants choosing to attend virtually; a drive-up option for breakfast is available. For more information, contact the Chamber at chamber@masoncityia.com or call 641.423.5724.

Tickets are available for purchase in books of ten for \$100 for Chamber members and \$120 for non-members. Individual tickets are priced at \$12 each and \$5 each for students. All tickets can be purchased online at masoncityia.com or by calling the Chamber office.

A portion of the proceeds from the **Ag Breakfast** fund a scholarship at NIACC for a student studying Agribusiness.

Thank you to the 2021 **Ag Breakfast** Sponsors:



New Members

BAKERY LANE

Sam Davison, Owner
Mason City, IA 50401
(641) 420-7189

Bakery Lane is a Home Bakery that focuses on gourmet stuffed cookies. Its cookies are all handcrafted, individually wrapped, packaged together and ready for a gathering or for the perfect gift.

BUSHEL BOY FARMS

Chuck Tryon, President
4660 S Monroe Ave
Mason City, IA 50401
(641) 548-7322
vjusino@bushelboy.com
bushelboy.com

At Bushel Boy Farms, their talented team grows the best tasting fruits and vegetables, providing consumers across the Midwest with high-quality, locally grown, fresh produce all year long.

IOWA CORN

Joni Erwin, North Central Iowa District Field Manager
5505 NW 88th St
Johnston, IA 50131
(515) 225-9252
corninfo@iowacorn.org
iowacorn.org

Comprised of the Iowa Corn Promotion Board & Iowa Corn Growers Association, Iowa Corn works to unlock the potential of corn in a sustainable manner to meet the global need for food and energy.

MASON CITY MOTOR SPEEDWAY

Ryne Staley, Owner
3700 4th St SW
Mason City, IA 50401
(515) 297-3128
ryne@usmts.com
masoncitymotorspeedway.com

Mason City Motor Speedway is the premier dirt track racing venue in North Iowa. North Central Iowa's fastest 1/3 mile dirt track with races every Sunday at 6PM, May-September, plus special events.

From the President

Pandemic, Perseverance...and Other "P" Words

Last spring, when news reports showed shoppers coming to blows over toilet paper, I thanked my lucky stars we live in North Iowa...a place where neighbors help neighbors during tough times. (Yes, even sharing a spare roll.)

PURPOSE

The Chamber's role during emergencies—flood, pandemic, or otherwise—is clear. We connect our members to resources. Local business counts on us as a source of accurate information.

PLAN

Soon after Iowa's first coronavirus case was confirmed on March 8, our staff quickly gathered with partners to develop a response plan. With so much to be done, it was important to avoid duplication of effort and stretch scarce resources as far as possible. Thankfully, strong relationships were already in place among us, and we kept our focus on the goal—to keep North Iowa open for business and keep our essential workers safe.

PEOPLE

This is our greatest strength. North Iowa benefits from PRINCIPLED leaders who PROMOTE dialogue over division. Our team made telephone calls to all 650 member businesses twice during the early months of the pandemic. We answered questions, collected information, and tried our best to assist them. Perhaps most importantly, we let them know we care.

PPP (and other relief programs)

Many of our referrals were to economic relief programs such as the federal Paycheck Protection Program, Economic Injury Disaster Loan, Employee Retention Tax Credit, etc. as well as state and local resources. We offered webinars and conference calls with program experts and federal elected officials including Sen. Charles Grassley and Sen. Joni Ernst, enabling employers to ask questions and share information regarding their most urgent needs.

POWER

As the region's designated cheerleaders, we harnessed the POWER of spending locally by rallying community support for Buy Local promotions and put together a special Chamber Bucks promotion to boost local sales. Funds spent locally churn again and again in the North Iowa economy and produce a multiplier effect that benefits everyone.

PUSH-POKE-PROD

We promoted the "Mask of Wellness" campaign with our partners, and provided "starter kits" for local businesses with door signs, promotional materials, and a supply of disposable face masks. Masks are a PAIN, but they are a key tool in keeping local businesses open.

POSITIVITY

Economic recovery will be a long process, but we can feel positive that county unemployment rates are nearly back to pre-pandemic levels, manufacturing job increases are well above national averages, and private investment in North Iowa new facilities and expansion projects continued despite the pandemic.

PATIENCE

We all want vaccines, we all want students back in school, and we all yearn for our "normal" lives to return. Our best shot at transitioning to the "new normal" is to exercise PATIENCE and to place the needs of our most vulnerable neighbors first. We can do this.

PROGRESS

Day by day, we're making progress against this worldwide threat. We have neighbors who are hurting emotionally from the loss of loved ones and financially from mandated closures and capacity limitations. But North Iowans have demonstrated their resilience and their heartfelt support for one another. We're #NorthIowaStrong and we'll continue to work together.



Robin Anderson
President & CEO

CEO Conversations - March 25

In the past year, Michael Davis of the IOOF Home & Community Therapy Center has overcome hurdles he never expected to encounter. Davis has led his team and maintained the safety of his residents through a pandemic. Now he has agreed to share the lessons he learned at the next **CEO Conversations** event from 11:30AM-1PM on Thursday, March 25.

Davis will discuss his path to becoming CEO, leading through a pandemic, and offer advice to young and experienced leaders alike.

Attendance is limited to 20 participants to encourage meaningful conversation. Registration is \$20 and includes a boxed lunch. Find more details or register online at masoncityia.com, or contact Colleen Frein at cfein@masoncityia.com | 641.423.5724.



Michael Davis
IOOF Home &
Community Therapy
Center

CEO Conversations Series Sponsor:



State of North Iowa Preview

In January 2020, the Chamber hosted the inaugural **State of North Iowa** event at the newly-opened Multipurpose Arena. State and local officials touted the progress made on the county-wide *Vision North Iowa* strategic plan and the positive momentum in the local economy.

Stories about something called a coronavirus in China began appearing more frequently in news reports, but for the most part North Iowans busied themselves discussing the Iowa Caucus debacle and looking forward to spring. Then the pandemic hit home, and almost everything seemed to change.

Thanks in large part to the relationships built during the strategic planning process, North Iowa leaders quickly convened to organize the local pandemic response. Early on, Vision North Iowa partners vowed to keep essential workers safe and keep North Iowa open for business. In fact, local business led the way in these efforts.

On February 24, local leaders convened to provide an update to the business community on pandemic response and on strategic plan progress. In addition, Chamber staff produced a video that demonstrates how North Iowa businesses stepped up to help during the worst days of the pandemic. While it would be nearly impossible to document all the instances of neighbors helping neighbors, the intent of the video is to provide an emotional boost to keep North Iowans moving forward.

The video is available on the Chamber's YouTube channel and Facebook page.



New Members (cont.)

GOGERTY & ASSOCIATES PLC

Eric Gogerty, CPA
103 E State St, Ste 619
Mason City, IA 50401
(641) 423-8000
egogerty@gogertycpa.com
www.gogertycpa.com
CPA Firm - Tax and Accounting Services

NELSON MEDIA COMPANY

Chris Nelson, Owner
2714 22nd Street SE
Rochester, MN 55904
(507) 272-5857
cnelson@nelsonmediacompany.com
NelsonMediaCompany.com

Nelson Media Company is a Video Marketing & Production - Helping you create shareable digital content to grow your business brand!

REALTY ONE GROUP WELCOME HOME

Krystle Hesse, Broker/Owner
2227 19th St SW
Mason City, IA 50401
(641) 430-7654
krystle@rogwelcomehome.com
www.realtyonegroup.com

At Realty One Group, real estate professionals are provided with the best training, support, tech tools, marketing and branding.

SIMPLY NOURISHED MASON CITY

Melissa Fabian
13 S Federal Ave
Mason City, IA 50401
(701) 212-5566
simplynourishedmc@gmail.com
bewellnessclearlake.com/simply-nourished

Simply Nourished is North Iowa's leading independent and locally-owned organic and natural health market; providing customers with healthy food, nutritional supplements and natural wine since 2015. Mason City location opening April 2021!

New Members (cont.)

EDWARD JONES - MATT SONQUIST, FINANCIAL ADVISOR

Matt Sonquist, Financial Advisor
956 E State St
Mason City, IA 50401
(641) 424-6811
matt.sonquist@edwardjones.com
www.edwardjones.com

WEALTH PARTNERS/ AMERIPRISE FINANCIAL SERVICES, LLC

Phil Johnson, President
103 E State St, Ste 300
Mason City, IA 50401
(641) 423-7070
Phil.Johnson@ampf.com
www.ameripriseadvisors.com/phil.johnson

For more than 125 years,
Ameriprise has been committed
to helping its clients achieve their
financial goals.

Be Our Guest

Tune in Friday mornings
to the Chamber "Be Our
Guest" program at 8:40AM
on KRIB 1490 AM, courtesy
of Alpha Media.

March 5 | **Mason City Motor
Speedway**
Ryne Staley

March 12 | **Bakery Lane**
Sam Davison

March 19 | **Iowa Corn**
Join Erwin

March 26 | **Nelson Media Company**
Chris Nelson

United Airlines Service Launches at MCW

Following a long hiatus, the "Friendly Skies" are returning to North Iowa. Beginning March 1, United Airlines (operated by SkyWest Airlines) offers 12 round trip flights per week to Chicago O'Hare with online connections to 211 cities around the globe. The Mason City Airport Commission announced this air carrier change late last year.

United Airlines, with its global network, provides many benefits to North Iowa travelers:

- Passengers ride in the comfort of a two-engine 50-seat regional jet operated with two pilots and a flight attendant and will embark and disembark via jet bridge at United Airlines gates in Chicago.
- Passengers use the united.com website or the United app to book flights, check-in, get boarding passes, and find flight status information.
- Customers check bags at the point of their originating flight with United, and retrieve them at their final United destination.
- With a single airline in the itinerary, air fares will be more competitive with those from Minneapolis (MSP) and Des Moines (DSM)—without the hassle of driving or paying for parking.
- United CleanPlus® COVID 19 cleaning standards ensure traveler safety.
- Passengers enrolled in United Mileage Plus frequent flyer program earn miles to/from Mason City to/from their destination. (Sign up at united.com)
- United offers complimentary loyalty and discount programs for both individuals and organizations. PerksPlus® enables organizations to earn travel points, while travelers earn their frequent flyer miles. In addition, if being in another airline's frequent flyer program discourages use of the local airport, United Airlines matches passenger status (united.com/status-match).
- The SkyWest 50-seat CRJ-200 is a roomy, quiet, and dependable aircraft with a record of more than 99% flight completion and some of the best on-time performance in the industry.



Mental Health Workshop: "Make It OK"

Learning how to identify and support people facing mental health illnesses is more important than ever. The Chamber Wellness Committee is hosting a Mental Health Workshop from 10AM-noon on Thursday, April 22 to help members learn how to "Make It OK." This community campaign endeavors to reduce stigma by starting conversations and increasing understanding about mental illness.

Healthiest State Initiative Executive Director Jami Haberl will lead participants through the "Make It OK" Ambassador training. Learn about mental illness & stigma, practice scenarios for talking about it, and receive guidance for helping others at the workplace or in the home. Ambassadors will also learn how to give a "Make It OK" presentation that they can take back to their workplace for in-house training.

Participation is \$5 for Chamber members and \$10 for non-members and includes instructional materials. Register at masoncityia.com or by contacting the Chamber at chamber@masoncityia.com | 641.423.5724.

Make It OK

Marching Forward with Band Fest Plans

When the **Band Festival** Committee cancelled the 2020 festival due to COVID-19 concerns, they vowed the festival would be back bigger and better than ever in 2021. No one could've predicted the long-term impact the pandemic would have on, well, everything.

The committee is busy planning the **82nd North Iowa Band Festival**, with some adjustments and some tentative scheduling. The festival theme reflects our challenging times: Banding Together and Marching Forward. Longtime committee member and local artist Jim Zach eagerly took on the challenge to quickly design a new logo for the festival—and captured the spirit perfectly!



TENTATIVE SCHEDULE | MAY 27-31, 2021

Thursday, May 27:

- 6PM John Adams Middle School Band (Plaza)
- 6:45PM Municipal Band (Plaza)
- 6-8PM Carnival open (Central Park)

Friday, May 28:

- 4-7PM Stu Nevermann Run Packet pickup (Aquatic Center)
- 5PM Carnival/Concessions/Marketplace open
- 5PM MCHS Orchestra (Plaza)
- 6PM MCHS Jazz Band (Main Stage)
- 7:30PM High & Mighty (Main Stage)

Saturday, May 29:

- 8AM Stu Nevermann Run (Aquatic Center)
- 10AM **82nd North Iowa Band Festival Parade**
& Marching Band Competition
- Noon Carnival/Concessions/Marketplace open
- 1:30PM Mohawk Danzers Performance (Main Stage)
- 2PM NIACC Extreme Makeover Announcement
- 2PM Awards Ceremony (Main Stage)
- 3-5PM Instrument Petting Zoo Activities (Central Park)
- 5PM Brad + Kate (Main Stage)
- 7:30PM The Hepperly Band (Main Stage)

Sunday, May 30:

- 9AM Outdoor Worship at Trinity Lutheran Church
- 11AM-5PM Marketplace open
- Noon-8PM Carnival/Concessions open (Wristband Day)

Monday, May 31:

- Noon-6PM Carnival/Concessions open (Wristband Day)

Plans are progressing for the Saturday morning parade. For the safety of participants and spectators, all hand-outs (candy, flyers, trinkets) will be prohibited this year. Placement in the parade is based upon receipt of the enclosed entry form (also available on the website).

Membership Renewals

Congratulations to the Chamber members celebrating membership anniversaries in March!

Eighty Plus Years

Alliant Energy (87)
McKiness Excavating, Inc. (81)

Seventy Plus Years

DeVries & Price (71)

Fifty Plus Years

Home Lumber & Builders, Inc. (54)

Forty Plus Years

Baker Floral (44)
Federal Fire Equipment (43)
Hertz Farm Management, Inc. (42)

Thirty Plus Years

Haines Insurance Group (34)
Salvation Army (31)

Twenty Plus Years

Hearing Associates, P.C. (27)
North Iowa Golf Center & Driving Range (27)
Ultrasound Studio 1 (26)
LeDoux Signs (23)
Manpower (22)

Fifteen Plus Years

Nagle Signs, Inc. (18)
Prairie Ridge (18)
TQ Technologies (18)
Town Square Publications (16)
Yunek Law Firm PLC (16)
North Iowa Corridor EDC (16)
Fertile Valley Gardens (15)
Determan Electric Co (15)

Ten Plus Years

Country Inn & Suites - Worth County (14)
Aesthetic Touch Day Spa (14)
EXIT Realty Mason City (13)
Grants, Etc. (12)
Flooring America (10)
Bliss Bridal & Formalwear (10)

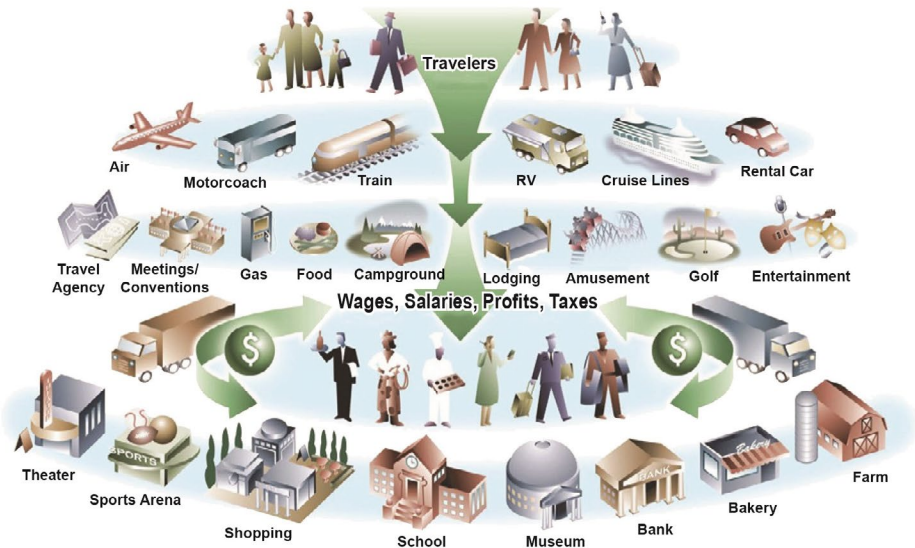
Five Plus Years

Paint Me Gourmet (8)
Mystic Lanes (7)
Friends of the 457 (7)
Principal Financial - Brent Willis (7)
Cerro Gordo County Community Foundation (7)

We need YOUR support to rebuild Iowa's economy!

Tourism in Iowa is about more than places to visit; it's jobs, economic growth, quality of life, and revenue generation. It's about investing in Iowa's future. **Tourism generated \$9.26 BILLION in Iowa state tax expenditures in 2019** and generates revenue for all 99 counties that can be invested in roads, schools and community development.

THE POWER OF TRAVEL: *How Travel Dollars Support America*



2021 Legislative Priority: Funding for Tourism Marketing

Tourism is a critical piece of Iowa's effort to attract more people, including visitors and residents. Research shows two-thirds of U.S. adults say they have seriously considered moving somewhere after visiting. However, most people outside of Iowa do not know enough about the state to consider visiting. Currently, the marketing budget for tourism in the state of Iowa is 42nd in the nation. A statewide tourism campaign, comparable to those in competing states, will be a key economic driver that demonstrates return on investment.

PROPOSED ACTION

The Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) proposes to transfer \$5 million annually from the beer and liquor control fund to support a dedicated statewide tourism marketing campaign.

A CALL TO ACTION

- ✓ This new structure will create a more secure self-funding mechanism for tourism marketing, which would directly benefit hospitality businesses and increase the amount of revenue generated by beer and liquor sales at restaurants, wineries, breweries, distilleries, hotels, festivals and events.
- ✓ Additional funding for tourism is a recommendation from the Governor's Economic Recovery Advisory Board, and is a result of input from workgroups and listening sessions in 2020.
- ✓ The pandemic disproportionately impacted tourism and hospitality businesses.
 - As tourism activity recovers, it will be critical to market Iowa as open for business and for travelers. Pent-up demand for travel is growing: 22.2% of travelers plan to travel more in 2021
source: Destination Analysts
 - Rural areas are strong competitors to urban destinations in this recovery period and Iowa is well-positioned for post-COVID travel.

Iowa's tourism and travel industry asks for your support!

Please join us in reaching out to your legislators and ask them to support [HSB233](#).



March 2021

Main Street Mason City Welcomes New Board Members

Matt O'Brien grew up in Dubuque, IA but has called Mason City home for over 7 years while working with the North Iowa Area Council of Governments. Previously, Matt earned a BS at University of Dubuque and a MCRP degree with graduate certificate in GIS from Iowa State. Alongside volunteering at Main Street Mason City's events and committees the past few years, Matt is actively involved with Wright on the Park, Mason City Jaycees, and City of Mason City's Planning and Zoning Commission. During his free time when not hanging out in downtown Mason City (which he does a lot), he is snowboarding, running/sprinting, bicycling, gardening, lifting, cooking, and helping rehab old houses.



Mason City native, Steve Bailey, is a Realtor with Century 21. Steve serves on many boards and committees within Mason City and devotes a large portion of his time to sharing his passion of cycling. Founding board member of the SPIN DEVO Junior Cycling program, he serves as President and Coach, teaching young cyclists the range of safety and basics of cycling to the competitive aspects of Road, Cyclocross and Mountain bike racing. Steve has also been instrumental in bringing mountain biking to schools within the state, serving on the Board of the Iowa Scholastic Mountain Bike League and Coach of Mason City's Mohawk Mountain Bike Club. Steve and his wife Brooke have been married for 18 years. They and their 2 children, Colton and Caelyn, enjoy competitive cycling in multiple disciplines, skiing, backpacking and traveling.



Diane grew up in Cresco Iowa and then moved to the 'big city' of Mason City and now calls it home. She went to Capri Beauty School and after working at a salon for 6 years, ventured out with a fellow stylist and opened Reflections Salon in downtown Mason City. Reflections will celebrate their 30th year of being in business this April 15, 2021. Diane and her staff will celebrate with a trip to Mexico. Diane has served on many committees in the past including The Mason City Chamber of Commerce, the executive committee with the Chamber, and currently, is a member of the Morning Kiwanis Club. Diane is a big proponent of the downtown businesses and their interactions with each other and is very excited to be serving on the board. She believes that a strong Main Street is the most variable artery of a city and is hoping to be able to contribute ideas and enthusiasm to this! When not at work, Diane lives with her husband (and Chesapeake Bay Retriever, Luther) on an acreage just outside of Rock Falls, a small town 10 miles from Mason City. They have 2 daughters, Chloe, 30, who is an 8th-grade teacher at SEP, and Jenn, 26, who is a registered dietician with Mercy One right here in Mason City.



LOCATING BUILDING AND DEVELOPMENT SITES IN NORTH IOWA

A STATEWIDE DATABASE MAKES IT EASY FOR BUSINESS DEVELOPERS

to find available property in the Mason City and Clear Lake area. North Iowa Corridor Economic Development Corp. utilizes LOIS, the Location One Information System, as a service for owners to assist them in marketing their properties.

"LOIS is for economic developers to keep track of and catalogue available buildings and sites," said Shaun Arneson, Vice President, Existing Business & Project Management at NIC. "About 35 states use LOIS through their statewide economic development groups."

Arneson pointed out that NIC is not a real estate firm, but it works with local agents to keep listings on LOIS up-to-date for searches. The purpose is to make it easy for anyone considering a business expansion or relocation to find the perfect location in North Iowa.

A large real estate firm or site consultant working with a business client would first find out their specific needs for a potential greenfield site or building. Then they can do a search on LOIS by available square footage or acres, existing zoning, location, and much more. "That's why it's so important to keep our information up to date, so we can be in the game," he said. "We provide the service for free."

NIC typically lists large commercial and industrial properties on LOIS, including buildings with 5,000 square feet or more that are currently

occupied or vacant, available for sale or lease. As of April, NIC lists 18 existing buildings with approximately 464,000 total square feet and 32 greenfield sites of approximately 1,310 total acres in the Mason City/Clear Lake area.

"What's kind of unique about LOIS is that you can click on a listing and we provide as much information about it as we can," Arneson said. "We include images, contact information, available utilities, transportation details, and networks. There is also regional

demographic information available, like population numbers within a 10, 20, or 30 mile radius of the site." If the current owner is willing, the listing might show the lease or sale price. NIC is the point of contact for inquiries, but listings also include the owner or Realtor contact information. "We like to know, but we don't want to be the middle-man or slow things down," Arneson said.

LOIS is located at www.locationone.com and is also accessible on the NIC website at northiowacorridor.com.

Indianhead South Certified Site - Mason City

Shovel-ready 148 acre site with exceptional business structure in a highly strategic location.



MD Products Building - Mason City

Clean and modern warehouse (formerly for food products), with offices. 60,000 square feet.



CHAD SCHRECK

PRESIDENT & CEO

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SHAUN ARNESON

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MANAGEMENT

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MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS
COORDINATOR

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PAPPAJOHN
ENTREPRENEURIAL
CENTER

The Entrepreneurial Edge

A NIACC John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center Publication

John Pappajohn Iowa Entrepreneurial Venture Competition to Award \$100,000 in Cash Prizes

Applications for the 2021 John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Venture Competition will open soon. This year's statewide competition will again be awarding \$100,000 in cash prizes.

Iowa businesses that have been in operation for four years or less, or are not yet cash flow positive are eligible to apply. This competition is open to businesses including, but not limited to, technology, bio-technology, green technologies, medical, advanced manufacturing, agriculture, engineering, and education industries.

Participants will present their business plan containing components to represent and execute on a viable end business model. Participants will be judged on written submissions, and, if they advance to the final round of the competition, they will present to the judges. First place will be awarded \$40,000, second place \$25,000, and third place \$15,000. Awards for other categories will total \$20,000.

Applications for the John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Venture Competition goes live on March 15 and are due May 17. Awardees will be introduced at the Pappajohn 25th Anniversary event on September 23, 2021.

For more information or to apply, visit www.pappajohncompetition.com.

The 2021 John Pappajohn Iowa Entrepreneurial Venture Competition is co-hosted by the John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Centers and the Iowa Economic Development Authority.



JOHN
PAPPAJOHN
ENTREPRENEURIAL CENTERS

March Upcoming Events

Go to our website to register at www.pappajohncenter.com/events

Start Smart Workshops

March 10 & March 24—6:00-8:00 pm (via Zoom)

Financial Fridays 11:00 am (via Zoom)

March 12 - Network and Password Security

March 26 - Business Valuation and why you need one

North Iowa TechBrew—5:00-6:30 pm (via Zoom)

March 23—Topic "The Pros and Cons of Cloud Computing" | Sponsors: Heartland & First Citizens Bank

PAPPAJOHN CENTER STAFF

Tim Putnam, Director

Brook Boehmler, SBDC Director

Candi Karsjens, Innovation and Acceleration Director

Kelley O'Rourke, School Partnership Entrepreneurial Coordinator

Joyce Martin, Marketing & Communications Coordinator

Mary Spitz, Administrative Assistant-Pappajohn & SBDC



www.niacc.edu/pappajohn

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Mason City, IA 50401

Visit us online @ www.niacc.edu/pappajohn

1-888-GO-NIACC or 641-422-4111

Membership Renewals

Five Plus Years (cont)

Yellowbook (6)
Hart Brothers South, LLC (6)
D. Randall Construction, LLC (5)
Lake Time Boat Club (5)
Matt Dodge Agency (5)

One Plus Years

Child Care Resource & Referral (4)
Interstate Batteries (4)
Caribou Coffee | Einstein Brothers
Bagels (4)
Shibboleth Toastmasters (3)
Tech Nerds (3)
A1 Portables (1)

Premier Members

Thank you to the Premier Members who have gone above and beyond in their support of the Chamber programs, events, and the *North Iowa Band Festival*.

GOLD \$6,000+

Cargill Protein
Clear Lake Bank & Trust Co.
CURRIES
First Citizens Bank
Holiday Inn Express and Suites -
Mason City
Jane Fischer and Associates LLC
MercyOne North Iowa Medical
Center
POET Biorefining - Hanlontown

SILVER \$3,000-\$5,999

Century 21 Preferred
REG Mason City, LLC

BRONZE \$1,000-\$2,999

98.7 Kiss Country / 103.7 The Fox /
KIOW 107.3 / KCHA 95.9
Bergland + Cram Architects
Dental Center of North Iowa
Farmers State Bank
First Security Bank & Trust
Henkel Construction Co.
North Iowa Area Community
College
NSB Bank
SERVPRO of Mason City
Sukup Manufacturing Co.

Breaking Glass - April 8

April's **Breaking Glass Leadership Series** features Cynthia (CJ) Warner, the President & CEO for Renewable Energy Group, Inc (REG). REG is an Ames, IA based producer of biodiesel fuel, with a facility in Mason City producing 30-million gallons per year. This session is set for 8AM on Thursday, April 8 on the Third Floor of the Commerce Center, sponsored by First Citizens Bank. A virtual option is also available.



CJ Warner
REG

Women make up just 22% of the workers with oil and gas expertise in the energy sector, and Warner is one of the standouts. She has more than 35 years of experience, with an extensive background in refining. Warner stays on top of industry trends and changes to ensure REG maintains its position as an industry leader.

According to the Department of Energy, "Globally, a small number of women enter the energy sector and many leave because of gender biases, lack of adequate training, inadequate policies, workplace inflexibility and unequal pay, among other reasons." Warner is determined to break down these barriers and eliminate gender stereotypes. She argues that policies and practices are needed to ensure that women and other underrepresented groups are engaged and empowered in the workplace.

Sponsored by:



Tickets are \$10 each for employees of Chamber member businesses and \$20 for non-members. Register online at masoncityia.com or contact Allyson Krull (akrull@masoncityia.com) at the Chamber for more information.

Living in Mason City is a Bargain!

Mason City continues to rank favorably among Midwest communities in the most recent *Cost of Living Index Report*. The Chamber of Commerce participates in research to assist the Council for Community and Economic Research (C2ER) in producing the quarterly index. Raw data from 273 metropolitan and micropolitan areas across the United States is analyzed to compare the cost of living in various geographic locations. The index is based on six components—housing, utilities, groceries, transportation, health care, and miscellaneous goods and services.

The most expensive place to live in the most recent survey is Manhattan in New York City with a composite score of 237.0, which is more than twice the national average. The least expensive is Harlingen, TX with a score of 73.2, which places it more than 20 percent below the national average.

The table below illustrates the most recent data for some of the Iowa Micro-Urban communities. (100.0 represents the mean; a low percentage means the cost of living is less than the average). Mason City's score of 86.2 is the lowest cost in Iowa among reporting communities.

City & Composite Score	Groceries	Housing	Utilities	Transportation	Health Care	Misc. Goods & Services
Mason City 86.2	89.7	65.3	107.2	87.5	100.5	93.3
Ames 99.9	99.8	100.1	92.2	105.8	100.9	100.2
Burlington 86.5	96.2	64.2	107.5	101.6	95.7	89.4
Dubuque 90.2	100.2	74.1	99.8	94.1	105.5	93.2

Chamber Bowl Results

Although it looked a little different than previous years, **Chamber Bowl** was a big success! 16 teams participated over the course of the three-night event and enjoyed bowling, food, and prizes.

Congratulations to Mystic Lanes for winning the tournament! Heartland Asphalt and Mason City Red Power came in close behind at second and third place, respectively. The Program Committee thanks to the bowlers for following precautionary guidelines to ensure this was a safe event.



2nd Place Overall:
Heartland Asphalt



High Series: Mystic Lanes



3rd Place Overall:
Mason City Red Power

College Connections

An important initiative of the Chamber is to help attract and retain workers to our region. One way to appeal to college students is to show them what the North Iowa region has to offer and connect them to peers and professionals. North Iowa is a great place to live and work and it needs to be shared.

The **College Connections** program provides a series of social and educational activities on a once-a-week schedule throughout the summer, June 1 - July 26, 2021. Topics include networking, personality styles, managing credit, evaluating cost of living, and more. In addition to the scheduled social activities, a list of popular area recreational activities is provided to participants to pursue at their leisure.



Businesses are encouraged to enroll summer interns in this program to help connect young workers to the community and to each other. Each \$100 sponsor of this program may register up to 5 interns in the program. If a business does not wish to be a sponsor, the cost per intern is \$25.

Wellness

The Roadmap to Recovery Guest Article by CG Public Health

In the fall of 2020, all of Iowa began to see a drastic increase in COVID-19 cases and, in turn, deaths. On November 4, 2020 Cerro Gordo County saw an all-time high 14-day positivity rate of 55%. On November 17th, Governor Reynolds implemented a statewide mask mandate. Since that mandate, Cerro Gordo County has seen a steady decline in positive cases and, in turn, fewer deaths.

In December, Iowa began vaccinating healthcare personnel and long-term care residents and staff. The state has since moved on to vaccinating individuals aged 65 years or older, as well as healthcare personnel, long-term care residents and staff, first responders, PreK-12th grade school staff, early childhood educators, and childcare staff.

Though the vaccine supply has been limited, positive cases and deaths in Cerro Gordo County continue to decline.

Throughout the pandemic, and in the past months in particular, the science remains clear. Masking, physical distancing, washing hands often, and not gathering in large groups help slow the spread of COVID-19. These efforts, combined with safe and effective vaccines, are the roadmap to a quick and sustainable recovery.

As vaccine supply remains limited, patience and vigilance are key to keeping our community healthy. CG Public Health thanks you for your continued support and your continued efforts in stopping the spread of COVID-19. #MaskUpIowa #SleevesUpIowa #RallyForRecovery



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Upcoming Events

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Professional Development

Thursday
March 25

CEO Conversations | 11AM-12:30PM
3rd Floor Event Room, Commerce Center | 9 N Federal Ave

Networking Events

Tuesday
March 23

Ag Breakfast | 7AM Breakfast, 7:15AM Program
The Music Man Square | 308 S Pennsylvania Ave | Virtual option

Get Involved/Committee Meetings

Tuesday
March 2

Ambassador Meeting | Noon-1PM
3rd Floor Event Room, Commerce Center | Virtual option

Wednesday
March 10

Agribusiness Committee | 8-9AM
The Music Man Square | 308 S Pennsylvania Ave | Virtual option
Program Committee | Noon-1PM
Zoom Conference Call

Friday
March 12

North Iowa Band Festival Committee | Noon-1PM
3rd Floor Event Room, Commerce Center | Virtual option

Tuesday
March 16

Wellness Committee | 3-4PM
3rd Floor Event Room, Commerce Center | Virtual option

Wednesday
March 24

Board Meeting | Noon-1PM
3rd Floor Event Room, Commerce Center | Virtual option

April 2021

April 8 | **Breaking Glass Leadership Series** with CJ Warner

April 22 | "Make it OK" Mental Health Workshop

April 29 | **Business After Hours** hosted by Mason City Noon Rotary & Prime N Wine