

# August 2023

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



## Dual-Chamber Business After Hours



+



**Time:** 4:30-6PM

**Date:** Thursday, August 24

**Location:** Clear Lake Arts Center  
17 S 4th St, Clear Lake

**Hosted By:**



Thank you to 98.7 KISS Country/103.7 The Fox for highlighting Business After Hours on its stations!

## IN THIS ISSUE

- 2 From the President  
Ag Tour - Sukup Manufacturing
- 3 Moonlight Bike Ride - August 18  
New Member Luncheon  
YIELD Sponsorships
- 4 Building CommUNITY  
College Connections  
Chamber Cup
- 5 Nominations Committee Presents  
Slate  
Understanding Microaggressions -  
September 28
- 10 Peru Trip Deadline Approaching  
Save the Date - Annual Meeting  
Become an Investor in the Chamber
- 11 Wellness Seminar - October 26  
North Iowa Navigators  
Ribbon Cuttings
- 12 Upcoming Events

## Breaking Glass After Hours - Faith & Four Letter Words

**F**aith and Four Letter Words, founded by Tara Thomas and Amanda Goodman, is an unapologetically real look at surviving the boys' club, Perfect Polly and motherhood all while living in a glass fishbowl. Through humor and raw honesty, Faith & Four Letter Words, Tara and Amanda want to empower other women to find their voice and never apologize for using it.

**FAITH &  
FOUR  
LETTER WORDS**

Tara and Amanda started a podcast called "Faith and Four Letter Words" about four years ago, and it gained such a following that they decided to take it on the road! Tara and Amanda have what they call a "Unicorn Friendship". One's departure from the boys' club was led by faith, the other was led by four-letter words. In the world of television news, an incoming and outgoing female anchor rarely become friends, but that's exactly what happened. Tara was leaving her evening anchor chair and Amanda was hired to replace her. They resemble each other, share the same birthday and both have a love for 90s hip hop. They both also have no problem telling it like it is. This friendship blossomed into Faith & Four Letter Words.

The Chamber is excited to bring this program to North Iowa for a first ever **Breaking Glass After Hours** event. The event will run from 5-9:30PM on September 7 at the Surf Ballroom in Clear Lake. Sponsorships are available for this event for \$250 and include two free tickets to the program and the opportunity to have a booth at the event. Tickets are \$30 for both Chamber members and non-members. To register, head to the Chamber's website at [www.masoncityia.com](http://www.masoncityia.com) or call 641-423-5724.



## New Members

### ADOBE

Valerie Cecil  
345 Park Ave  
San Jose, CA 95110  
408-753-5826  
cit46532@adobe.com  
www.adobe.com

Creativity is in their DNA. Adobe's game-changing innovations are redefining the possibilities of digital experiences. They connect content and data and introduce new technologies that democratize creativity.

### DENIMFEST

Todd McCubbin, CFO  
1225 US-69  
Forest City, IA 50436  
515-571-2110  
todd@denimfest.com  
www.denimfest.com

Denimfest is a 3 day music Festival with live music, camping and denim!

### MASON CITY YOUTH HOCKEY FUNDRAISER

Cameron Sprecher  
Mason City, IA  
641-812-2503  
mchockeygolfouting@gmail.com

Mason City Youth Hockey is a fundraising organization to help Mason City Youth Hockey grow.

### TERRI'S HOME CARE

Terri Arends, Owner  
610 6th St SE  
Mason City, IA 50401  
641-425-0390  
terriarends2973@gmail.com

Providing homecare services for the elderly and disabled, services include but are not limited to: 24-hour care including overnights, bathing, cleaning, help with meals and groceries, and doctor appointments.

## From the President

I often get asked about the Chamber's goals and priorities for the next few years, and at the top of my list is access to reliable child care. If you don't have children, or if it's been a few years since your kids were young, you may not understand why. So, let me make my business case.

I recall trying to get care for my son (who is now nine). I started looking months before he was born, and every center had a waitlist. I'll never forget receiving a phone call shortly after his FIRST BIRTHDAY that a spot had opened up. That was my first "aha" moment.

My second "aha" moment came in the days leading up to the pandemic. We got wind that schools were going to be forced to close. But what would happen with the kids? We couldn't overwhelm centers with children, and we questioned how (or even if) businesses could remain open if parents needed to be at home with their kids. That's when I realized our economy truly hangs on the shoulders of our child care workforce. If you don't have child care, you can't work.

Before the pandemic, inadequate child care was already costing employers \$13 billion a year in lost productivity, and the issue has only gotten worse. In 2022, inadequate care cost businesses an average of \$1640 for each working parent they employed, totaling \$23 billion annually. Why? Parents who don't have reliable care are more likely to miss work, have frequent tardiness, be underemployed, or leave the workforce altogether – at a time when everyone is looking for workers. Hopefully this is your "aha" moment.

In the coming months, you will be hearing more about our efforts to tackle this issue in Cerro Gordo County. We have formed a public/private coalition called Child Care Works and received a grant from the de Beaumont Foundation to get us off the ground. Our goal is to make a REAL impact, one that is felt by parents, businesses, and the community as a whole. Because, at the end of the day, we're not just talking about recouping lost dollars. We are talking about the health, safety, and education of our most important asset – our children.



Colleen Frein  
President & CEO

## Ag Tour - Sukup Manufacturing

The **2023 Ag Tour** is scheduled from 1-4:30PM on Monday, August 21st at Sukup Manufacturing in Sheffield.



Sukup is constantly evolving! Sukup Manufacturing Co. is the world's largest family-owned and operated manufacturer of grain storage and grain drying and handling equipment. Following a tour of the plant, attendees will be given an additional tour of Steve Sukup's nearby farm. A bus is scheduled to transport tour-goers to and from the site. The bus will depart at 1PM from the parking lot south of Principal. Participants are also welcome to transport themselves if preferred.

The **Ag Tour** is organized by the Chamber's Agribusiness Committee. The tour provides an opportunity for individuals to see and learn about various agricultural industries that are important in the North Iowa community. The **Ag Tour** is FREE to attend thanks to generous sponsors!



CLEAR LAKE  
BANK & TRUST



## Moonlight Bike Ride - August 18

Pump up those tires and fasten that helmet, because the **Moonlight Bike Ride** is back! The Chamber's Worksite Wellness Committee is bringing this family-friendly fun event back to life on August 18!

Scheduled from 8PM-Midnight on Friday, August 18, 2023, this ride will ensure fun for the whole family! Following the Friday Night Live Summer Series with music by The Kung Fu Hippies from 6-8PM, riders can head over to Central Park and check-in for the ride! The schedule for the night is as follows:

8PM – Check-in in Central Park. Feel free to park your car in the City Hall Parking Lot!

8-10PM - Activity Zone including music, glow in the dark decorations, and locally sponsored activity booths!

10PM - Riders embark on a 10 mile ride.

11PM-12:30AM - Breakfast Burritos (included in registration fee) provided by the Happy Donkey!

The Chamber's Worksite Wellness Committee encourages community members to think healthy this summer. Participants may enter as an individual or family for this fun event. The **Moonlight Bike Ride** has been endorsed by the Iowa Healthiest State Initiative, a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization driven by the goal to ensure every Iowan can live their healthiest life.

Riders are asked to sign up ahead of time to "beat the line" on August 18. Activity stations this year will include face painting, glow stations, and more. A rain date is scheduled for the following Friday, August 25!



### Full Moon Sponsors



ASSA ABLOY



### Half Moon Sponsors



Renewable Energy Group



MERCYONE

### Crescent Moon Sponsors

Clear Lake Bank & Trust, Co.

## New Member Luncheon

New Chamber members or new employees at a Chamber member businesses are invited to attend the upcoming **New Member Luncheon** at 12PM on Thursday, August 24 at the Commerce Center!

This event will cover the benefits of chamber membership and connect members to representatives from the Chamber Board of Directors, staff, and fellow new members. Lunch is provided courtesy of the **New Member Luncheon** sponsor, Clear Lake Bank & Trust!



Please contact Jeremiah Frein at [jeremiah@masoncityia.com](mailto:jeremiah@masoncityia.com) or call the Chamber to register for this free event!

## YIELD Sponsorships

Since 2003, the Chamber has provided training for our future community leaders through **YIELD (Youth Investing Energy in Leadership Development)**. High school juniors from Mason City recognized as good students and good citizens with leadership potential are selected to participate in the program. Students meet once/week for 15 weeks to participate in leadership training sessions, team-building exercises, and to complete a community impact project.

Businesses are invited to sponsor the program with a \$100 contribution designated to student course tuition. Please contact Allyson at the Chamber ([akrull@masoncityia.com](mailto:akrull@masoncityia.com)) for more information or to become a sponsor of this valuable leadership program.





# Membership Renewals

Congratulations to the Chamber members celebrating membership anniversaries in August.

## *Seventy plus years*

Fareway Stores, Inc. (74)

## *Sixty five plus years*

Bergland + Cram Architects (67)

## *Thirty Five Plus Years*

Dean Snyder Construction (39)

## *Thirty Plus Years*

Girl Scouts of Greater Iowa (34)

River City Communications, Inc. (34)

United LP (34)

## *Twenty Five Plus Years*

City of Mason City (28)

Lorados (26)

Manly Specialty Care (25)

## *Twenty Plus Years*

North Iowa Orthodontics (24)

Fitzsimmons Law Firm (24)

CENTURY 21 Preferred (23)

Children's Dental Center of Mason City (22)

Culver's of Mason City (21)

Mason City Chiropractic, Inc. (21)

ServiceMaster of Mason City (21)

## *Fifteen Plus Years*

Westview Corporation (19)

NG Property Management, LLC (18)

Wright on the Park, Inc. (18)

Mason City RentAll (17)

Raymond James (17)

Mason City Senior Activity Center (16)

NutriQuest, LLC (15)

## *Ten Plus Years*

Oakwood Care Center (13)

Historic Park Inn Hotel (12)

NIP Fitness Center (12)

# Building CommUNITY

Chamber members are encouraged to enroll in the **Building CommUNITY** initiative and become a Certified Inclusive Employer (CIE). With declining population, the need for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) has never been more important. Attracting high-quality workers begins with ensuring North Iowa is a welcoming community for all.

To become a Certified Inclusive Employer, Chamber members are asked to take the four steps in the Certified Inclusive Employer guide:

1. Build an Inclusive Environment (complete a confidential unconscious bias test)
2. Walk the Talk (develop a DEI policy)
3. Take the Pledge
4. Utilize **Building CommUNITY** resources and seminars

The steps above are outlined in detail in the CIE guide. After completing the steps, a toolkit is presented to the business containing Certified Inclusive Employer logos, graphics, sample news releases, and free admission to **Building CommUNITY** seminars.

The Chamber is planning to have an information session on this initiative for members in November. Details will be announced soon.



## 2023 Chamber Cup Tournament

The fourth annual **Chamber Cup** will be held from 1-4PM on Thursday, September 14!

The **Chamber Cup** is an adult field day and team-building competition like no other. Businesses may enter teams of 4 people to compete in numerous challenges. Activities include a Hula Hoop Competition, Office Relay, and Office Chair Racing, to name a few. Events will vary in skill sets, but it's important to note that this event does not require you to be an athlete. It's all about having fun! Registration is now open!



## College Connections



This year's College Connections program hosted 32 interns from across North Iowa. Sessions held each Wednesday in June and July highlighted fun things to do in North Iowa and focused on topics for young adults entering the workforce. Thanks to the program sponsors!



## Nominations Committee Presents Slate

The Nominating Committee has recommended the following candidates to serve three-year terms on the Board of Directors beginning October 1, 2023. Each is a Chamber member in good standing and has agreed to the responsibilities of directorship.

Amy Kaduce, KCMR-FM Inspiration 97.9FM  
Chad Kuhlers, Golden Grain Energy LLC  
Josh Congello, Pappajohn, Shriver, Eide & Nielsen P.C.  
Troy Elwood, Larry Elwood Construction, Custom Modular Homes by Elwood  
Matt Bradley, Pritchard Companies

In addition, per Chamber Bylaws, incoming Board Chair Dr. Paul Manternach has made the following one-year appointments:

Dr. Michelle LaCoste, Animal Medical Hospital  
Mark Sainci, Elite Boxing Academy & Fitness Club  
Ambassador Chairperson (TBD)

Additional candidates may be nominated by a petition bearing the signatures of at least 20 Chamber members. If no petition is received by Monday, August 14, 2023, the nominees will be declared elected. If a petition is submitted and deemed proper, a ballot of all candidates will be sent to the membership. This publication serves as official notification to the membership of the action of the Nominating Committee.

## Understanding Microaggressions - September 28

September's **Building CommUNITY Training session** is at 10AM on Thursday, September 28 via Zoom and will cover microaggressions and how to build an inclusive culture at work.

Microaggressions are little actions and comments that erode an inclusive and welcoming culture. They are demeaning, hurtful, uncomfortable, and dehumanizing -- the equivalent of saying: 'you don't belong here', 'I don't understand you', or 'you are not my equal'. In the workplace, microaggressions can lead to increased anxiety, stress, depression, and lowered job satisfaction.

This session will cover what microaggressions are, why they are a problem, how to control them, and how to develop a program of inclusivity in an organization. Session speaker Brian Jones has more than 18 years of experience in diversity and inclusion work and spent several years as an Inclusive Excellence Advisor at American Family Insurance.

Registration is free for Certified Inclusive Employers. To learn more about the Chamber's **Building CommUNITY** initiative, contact Allyson at the Chamber (akrull@masoncityia.com | 641.423.5724)



Brian Jones  
Inclusive Excellence  
Advisor

## Membership Renewals (cont.)

### Five Plus Years

Mason City Youth Task Force (9)  
Mason City Motor Company (8)  
Great Plains Title Co. (8)  
Wausau Homes of Mason City (7)  
Edward Jones - Jason Geving,  
Financial Advisor (7)  
FrrrBabiez Inn (7)  
Today's Your Day (7)  
The Blue Heron Bar & Grill (5)  
Rolling Acres Christian Reformed  
Church (5)

### One Plus Years

Millenium Hall (4)  
Color Couture (4)  
Mosaic (4)  
ARES of North Iowa | Northland  
Communications Group (3)  
SOO Green (2)  
The Big Wing Group (2)  
Avion Azul (2)  
Brix Wine & Whiskey (1)  
DaaBIN Store Mason City (1)

## 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.

Aug. 4 | Pete's Kitchen  
Alan Camen

Aug. 11 | Three on the Tree  
Lindsay Greenwood

Aug. 18 | LD's Filling Station  
Lori Schade

Aug. 25 | CENTURY 21 Preferred  
Dodie Wilkins

# NEWS

# TODAY



## Grant funds available for tourism marketing

Are you involved with an event, convention, tournament, or facility that attracts visitors to Mason City? If so, you may be eligible for Visit Mason City's Tourism Marketing Grant Program! Visit Mason City's Tourism Marketing Grant Program provides financial assistance for marketing projects that promote events, tournaments, conventions, activities, and facilities that attract tourism to Mason City, Iowa. Grant funds are awarded for marketing projects that directly increase visitor spending in the community and help build a positive image of the North Iowa area. Projects must focus on bringing visitors from outside a 90-mile radius of Mason City. Grant awards of 50% of eligible costs (up to \$1,000) are available. A 50% cash match is required.

# GROWING TOURISM

Grants will be awarded in two rounds with a total of \$5,000 available for each round. The deadline for **ROUND 1** applications is **4 PM on September 29, 2023**. Visitor-focused marketing projects completed October 1, 2023-September 30, 2024 are eligible. Priority is given to projects that focus on attracting visitors to the City versus projects that focus on visitors once they have arrived. Other evaluation criteria include the number of visitors attracted, number of lodging rooms generated, distribution plan, projects held during the "off season" and during the weekday.

**Application and complete program details are available online at [visitmasoncityiowa.com/tourism-marketing-grant](https://visitmasoncityiowa.com/tourism-marketing-grant).**

Applicants seeking assistance in completing an application are invited to make an appointment with Visit Mason City staff. Appointments may be scheduled during Visit Mason City office hours, Monday through Friday 8 AM to 4:30 PM. Appointments must occur three business days before the application deadline. Applications received three business days before the grant deadline will not receive staff application assistance. Incomplete applications will be ineligible. For more information or to set up an appointment, contact Visit Mason City at [cvb@VisitMasonCityIowa.com](mailto:cvb@VisitMasonCityIowa.com) or 641-422-1663 / 800-423-5724.





AUGUST 2023

## MAIN STREET MASON CITY WELCOMES NEW PROGRAM ASSISTANT

We're excited to welcome Tracy Dorn as our new Program Assistant.

*Born in Denver, Colorado, I was raised in the small town of Castle Rock. I have always enjoyed and appreciated the spirit of community.*

*I attended San Jose State University and Ohlone College in California. I graduated with an associates degree in art. My concentration was graphic design, journalism, and radio. Throughout my career, I have been a graphic designer, newspaper designer and publisher, radio personality and a restaurateur. I moved to Iowa in 2013 to be closer to family and my mother was born and raised here in Mason City.*

*I have participated in many volunteer engagements, over the years, including Rotary and have worked on local town economic development committees, as well as many fundraising events for a variety of non-profit organizations. My personal art projects include dabbling in graphic design, sculpting, and furniture refinishing. Whenever possible, I enjoy all types of water sports, camping and hunting.*

*I am excited to join the Main Street Mason City Team and use my passion for event and promotional planning. The collaborative environment makes the Main Street program a perfect fit. Bloom where you are planted!*

In her role as Program Assistant, Tracy will be working part-time, providing support to the numerous projects and events organized by Main Street Mason City. We're look forward to the increased organizational capacity her role will allow as we continue our work to foster a vibrant and welcoming downtown district. Please join us in welcoming Tracy!



**Tracy Dorn**  
Program Assistant  
P: 641.494.0009

E: [tracy@mainstreetmasoncity.com](mailto:tracy@mainstreetmasoncity.com)

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

#### PRESIDENT

**Diane Arndt**, Reflections  
641.424.7001  
[diarndt12@gmail.com](mailto:diarndt12@gmail.com)

#### VICE PRESIDENT

**Tessa Trout**, MercyOne  
641.430.6607  
[tessa.trout@mercyhealth.com](mailto:tessa.trout@mercyhealth.com)

#### SECRETARY

**Melissa Fabian**, Simply Nourished  
701.212.5566  
[melissafabian@yahoo.com](mailto:melissafabian@yahoo.com)

#### TREASURER

**Jaclyn Meier**, First Citizens Bank  
641.425.3475  
[Jaclyn.Meier@myfcb.bank](mailto:Jaclyn.Meier@myfcb.bank)

**Mike Bloomingdale**,  
Clear Lake Bank & Trust  
641.428.9408  
[mbloomingdale@clearlakebank.com](mailto:mbloomingdale@clearlakebank.com)

**Melissa Evans**, BRIX Wine & Whiskey  
641.781.1377  
[brixwinemc@gmail.com](mailto:brixwinemc@gmail.com)

**Jason Geving**, Edward Jones  
515.320.3945  
[Jason.Geving@edwardjones.com](mailto:Jason.Geving@edwardjones.com)

**Abigail Lee**, Lee Realty  
641.512.2208  
[leerealtyiowa@gmail.com](mailto:leerealtyiowa@gmail.com)

**Isaac Nelson**, Moorman Clothiers  
641.423.5222  
[inelson02@gmail.com](mailto:inelson02@gmail.com)

#### CITY LIAISON

**Steven Van Steenhuyse**  
641.421.3626  
[svansteenhuyse@masoncity.net](mailto:svansteenhuyse@masoncity.net)

#### PAST PRESIDENT

**Steve Bailey**, Century 21  
641.424.9400  
[steve.bailey21@gmail.com](mailto:steve.bailey21@gmail.com)

## Thank You to Our Investors





AUGUST 2023

## NORTH IOWA RURAL DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT AUGUST 17 AT THE MASON CITY ARENA

The North Iowa Corridor is excited to partner with NIACC and First Citizens Bank for the inaugural North Iowa Rural Economic Development Summit. This event is for individuals passionate about the economic growth and future of the North Iowa area to experience expert information and thought-provoking panel discussions about how we can collaborate to proactively build our future.

The event will be keynoted by Dr. David Kohl, an academic Hall of Famer in the College of Agriculture at Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA. Dr. Kohl has keen insight into rural development and the agriculture industry gained through extensive travel, research, and involvement. He has traveled over 10 million miles; conducted more than 7,000 presentations; and published more than 2,500 articles in his career. Dr. Kohl's wisdom and engagement with all levels provide a unique perspective into future trends.

Following his address, Dr. Kohl will lead panel discussions about the latest strategies and innovations in rural economic development. Panelists include Iowa Economic Development Director Debi Durham, USDA Rural Development Iowa Director Theresa Greenfield, and Iowa Division of Banking Superintendent Jeff Plagge. Dr. Kohl will also lead a local panel with NIACC President Dr. Steven Schulz, Sukup Manufacturing's Emily Schmitt, and Norseman Trucking Founder David Steffens.

North Iowans are encouraged to attend to connect with these experts and colleagues from across the region to learn about successes and challenges of our communities. This is an excellent opportunity to network and collaborate from the greater North Iowa area to build relationships and opportunities for partnerships to improve the lives of all North Iowans.

We are going to be addressing important topics such as:

- Who will build north Iowa's future economy?
- What place will rural Iowa occupy in tomorrow's global economy?
- What do our agricultural roots reveal about present reality and future opportunities?
- How might greater collaboration and further development of a shared regional vision benefit all?

We sincerely hope to see you at the Mason City Arena from 11-4 this August 17th. Registration is free and lunch will be provided. For more information and to register, please visit the website at the QR Code.



Dr. David Kohl



Debi Durham



Theresa Greenfield



Jeff Plagge

**CHAD SCHRECK**

PRESIDENT & CEO

[cschreck@northiowacorridor.com](mailto:cschreck@northiowacorridor.com)

**SHAUN ARNESON**

VP, EXISTING BUSINESS & PROJECT MANAGEMENT

[sarneson@northiowacorridor.com](mailto:sarneson@northiowacorridor.com)

**KACIE ROYSTER**

WORKFORCE SPECIALIST

[kacie.royster@niacc.edu](mailto:kacie.royster@niacc.edu)

**ISAAC BARTZ**

SERVICE AND OPERATIONS ASSOCIATE

[admin@northiowacorridor.com](mailto:admin@northiowacorridor.com)





## Fall 2023 Venture School now accepting applications

The NIACC John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center is now accepting applications for the Fall 2023 cohort of the University of Iowa Venture School program. The Fall 2023 program will be held as a hybrid in-person/online on Thursday evenings, and will begin with an in-person orientation session on Thursday September 28, 2023.

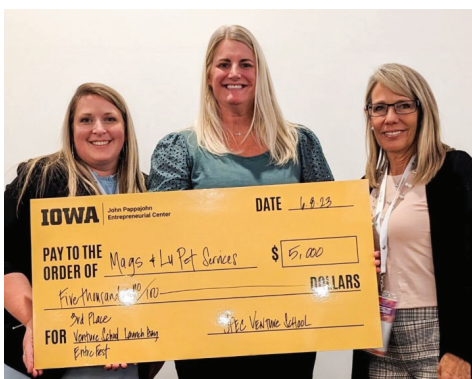
U of I Venture School is the premier statewide program for entrepreneurs and is built from a streamlined curriculum developed by the National Science Foundation I-Corps at Stanford University and the University of California, Berkeley. Venture School emphasizes real-world entrepreneurship and innovation based on a leading-edge curriculum. Participants will encounter the chaos and uncertainty of creating new ventures based on customer discovery.

The Fall 2023 Venture School program will be held as a hybrid class. An in-person orientation will be held Thursday September 28 to explain the course expectations and to meet the coaches. Following classes will be held via Zoom on Thursdays, October 5 – November 9, 5:30-9:00pm. The Launch Day Pitch Competition will be held in-person on the NIACC campus on Thursday November 16, 2023. The cost for the program is \$299.

Each Venture School team will be assigned a local entrepreneur as their coach. Participating teams will be eligible to compete for cash awards both locally and at the state level during the Venture School launch day at EntreFEST 2024. Last year's Mason City Venture School graduates were awarded \$7,000 in prize money during the 2023 EntreFEST pitch competition.

Contact Mary Spitz at [mary.spitz@niacc.edu](mailto:mary.spitz@niacc.edu) with any Venture School questions, or if you are a local entrepreneur interested in becoming a Venture School coach.

To apply for the Fall 2023 cohort, visit <http://www.venture-school.com> and select the Mason City cohort in the drop-down menu. The deadline to apply is **September 18, 2023**.



### Mary Jo Vrba wins Third Place at 2023 Launch Day Competition

Mary Jo Vrba of Mason City, IA took home the Third Place prize of \$5,000 at the 2023 University of Iowa Venture School Launch Day which was held June 8, 2023. Eleven teams from across the state of Iowa competed in the event which was held at EntreFest, a two-day entrepreneurial conference in Iowa City, IA. Mary Jo's business is Mags & Lu, a full-service dog boarding and daycare. The Launch Day semi-finalists also included Oscar Madong of Retrofit Electric in Mason City, and Brittany Bock of A Kneaded Break in Charles City; each semi-finalist received a prize of \$1,000. Mary Jo Vrba and semi-finalists Oscar Madong and Britt Bock are graduates of the Venture School program at the

NIACC John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center. Candi Karsjens, Director of the NIACC Pappajohn Center, said, "EntreFest is such a great culminating event to celebrate the best Venture School graduates from across Iowa and really celebrates the spirit and culture of entrepreneurship in Iowa. Our participants did a fantastic job pitching their business ideas and representing North Iowa and the culture of entrepreneurship of our region."

### NIACC Pappajohn Center & SBDC Staff

Candi Karsjens, *Director*

Brook Boehmler, *North Iowa Area SBDC Director*

Ashley Page, *Director of Entrepreneurship Programs*

Kelley O'Rourke, *School Partnership Coordinator*

Joyce Martin, *Marketing & Community Relations Mgr.*

Mary Spitz, *Administrative Assistant*

## 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*. These members have made commitments to Investor Packages or supported the many events, sponsorships, and marketing opportunities of the Chamber.

### GOLD \$6,000+

Cargill Protein

Clear Lake Bank & Trust Co.

First Citizens Bank

Holiday Inn Express and Suites -  
Mason City

MercyOne North Iowa Medical  
Center

POET Biorefining – Hanlontown

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

Chevron Renewable Energy Group  
CURRIES

First Security Bank & Trust

Jane Fischer and Associates LLC

Pritchard Companies

Thrivent - Todd Leet

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

98.7 Kiss Country / 103.7 The Fox /  
KIOW 107.3 / KCHA 95.9

Bergland + Cram Architects

Century 21 Preferred

Edward-Brandt & Associates

Farmers State Bank

Henkel Construction Co.

Martin-Brower

Mason City Motor Company

Midwest Construction & Supply

North Iowa Area Community  
College

SERVPRO

Smithfield

Sukup Manufacturing Co.

## Peru Trip Deadline Approaching

Last call for the Chamber's Peru Trip in March 11-20, 2024! Register by August 11 to ensure a place at the quoted price. Just a dozen spaces are still available for Chamber members and friends of the Chamber!

There are countless reasons to explore incredible Peru. Here are just a few highlights included on the itinerary:



- Machu Picchu - Visit one of the 7 Wonders of the World!
- Lake Titicaca - Take in the highest navigable lake in the world...and visit its floating islands!
- Sacred Valley of the Incas - Explore a number of famous and beautiful Inca ruins
- The Food - Channel your inner "foodie" and indulge in some of the best dishes in the world.
- Andean Culture - Meet locals and learn more about how they live.

The trip cost is \$4,329/person for a double occupancy. Contact Allyson for more details and to register ([akrull@masoncityia.com](mailto:akrull@masoncityia.com) | 641.423.5724).

## Save the Date - Annual Meeting

The Chamber's **107th Annual Meeting** will be held on Thursday, October 12 at the NIACC Auditorium. Stay tuned for an exciting announcement on this year's theme!

The **Annual Meeting** recognizes individuals, businesses, and organizations for special achievements, including *Distinguished Citizen*, *Small Business of the Year*, and *Boss of the Year*. To purchase tickets for the Chamber's **Annual Meeting**, visit [www.masoncityia.com](http://www.masoncityia.com)



Tickets are \$25 per person. Thanks to our **Annual Meeting** sponsors, Clear Lake Bank & Trust, 98.7 Kiss Country and 103.7 The Fox, and Renewable Fuels - REG Mason City.

## Become an Investor in the Chamber

Members who would like to get more involved in Chamber activities, programs, and events may contact Membership Director Jeremiah Frein to learn about creating a custom-designed Investor Package for 2024. These packages allow members to plan ahead for their budget AND get early-access to sponsorship opportunities, event tickets, and more! Jeremiah will work to create a package that fits with each member's budget and interests. Contact him at [jeremiah@masoncityia.com](mailto:jeremiah@masoncityia.com) or by calling 641.423.5724.

## Wellness Seminar - October 26

Save the date for the Chamber's fall **Wellness Seminar** "Mental Health in the Workplace" scheduled for 1-3PM on Thursday, October 26 at the Commerce Center.

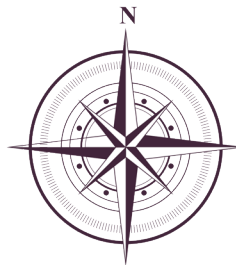
The session will cover mental health concerns both generally and in the workplace, signs and symptoms, general guidance for how to help others, and how employers can assist in the needs of their employees.

## North Iowa Navigators

After several successful years of the **Community Concierge** program, the Chamber is looking to expand its efforts and utilize community members to help in making North Iowa a more welcoming place.

The purpose of the **North Iowa Navigators** is to connect candidates or new residents ("newcomers") with a community member who has chosen to live here and who can help a newcomer feel welcomed and connected. The Navigators offer knowledge of the region in terms of lifestyle, recreation, schools, healthcare, real estate, industry, and career opportunities.

For information about the application process, contact Allyson at the Chamber (641.423.5724 | [akrull@masoncityia.com](mailto:akrull@masoncityia.com))



## Ribbon Cuttings

Pete's Kitchen  
629 6th St SW



Innovation Workspace  
North Iowa Area Community College  
500 College Dr

## Wellness Article

### Wellness Award Process

CG Public Health's Workplace Wellness Award will be presented at the **2023 Annual Meeting at the NIACC Auditorium on Thursday, October 12.**

Nominees who best-fulfill the following criteria will be honored by the Mason City Chamber of Commerce and the Chamber's Workplace Wellness Committee:

- Organization demonstrates strong management and leadership support for employee wellness activities
- Organization showcases an effective wellness program structure
- Organization utilizes employee and program data to drive the well-being efforts
- Organization's wellness program is goal oriented
- Organization demonstrates actions and outcomes illustrating program or employee success
- Organization performs continuous evaluation of the wellness program

Do you know a business that fits the above criteria and should be honored with the Workplace Wellness Award? Head to [www.masoncityia.com](http://www.masoncityia.com) or contact the Chamber to submit a nomination!





# Chamber Leadership



Periodical Postage Paid at Mason City, Iowa  
(USPS 060-350)

## Executive Committee

Evan Raulie, Board Chairperson  
*Smithfield*  
Dr. Paul Manternach, Chair Elect  
*MercyOne North Iowa Medical Center*  
Jane Fischer, Past Chairperson  
*Jane Fischer & Associates, LLC*  
Danielle Pace, Treasurer  
*Clear Lake Bank & Trust Co.*  
Kyle Bermel, Small Business  
Division Vice President  
*Metalcraft, Inc.*  
Phil Meekins, Government Affairs  
Division Vice President  
*CURRIES*  
Jessica Tierney, Workforce & Leadership  
Division Vice President  
*Tierney Properties*  
Todd Leet, Community & Membership  
Division Vice President  
*Thrivent - Todd Leet*

## Board of Directors

Michael Davis, *IOOF Home & Community  
Therapy Center*  
Jeremy Holman, *Kraft Heinz*  
Chris Jessen, *Heartland Asphalt, Inc.*  
Janet Johnson, *One Vision*  
Matt Koch, *Sukup Manufacturing*  
Dr. Michelle LaCoste, *Animal Medical Hospital*  
Matt Leibrand, *Stoney Creek Hospitality Corp.*  
Kevin Meyer, *First Citizens Bank*  
Amber Morud, *Charlie Brown Preschool &  
Child Care*  
Jessica Reith, *Cargill Protein*  
Jenna Sheriff, *Jane Fischer & Associates*  
Katy Showalter, *Window World of Mason City*  
Luke Weiss, *Hoover's Hatchery*  
Valerie Zahorski-Schmidt, *NIACC*

## Staff

Colleen Frein, MBA IOM  
President & Chief Executive Officer  
[cfrein@masoncityia.com](mailto:cfrein@masoncityia.com)  
Allyson Krull, IOM  
Vice President  
[akrull@masoncityia.com](mailto:akrull@masoncityia.com)  
Noah Harris  
Program & Marketing Director  
[nharris@masoncityia.com](mailto:nharris@masoncityia.com)  
Jeremiah Frein  
Membership Director  
[jeremiah@masoncityia.com](mailto:jeremiah@masoncityia.com)  
Isaac Bartz  
Service & Operations Associate  
[chamber@masoncityia.com](mailto:chamber@masoncityia.com)  
Keagan Barkema  
Marketing Associate  
[kbarkema@masoncityia.com](mailto:kbarkema@masoncityia.com)

This is a Mason City Chamber of Commerce Publication.  
Mason City, Iowa 50401 641.423.5724

Publications are monthly for \$20 per year by the Mason City  
Chamber of Commerce, 9 N Federal Ave, Mason City, IA 50401-  
3250. Second Class postage paid at Mason City, IA. Postmaster:  
send address changes to The Chamber, 9 N Federal Ave, Mason  
City, IA 50401-3250.

<<First Name>> <<Last Name>>  
<<Company Name>>  
<<Address 1>>  
<<Address 2>>  
<<City>>, <<State/Province>> <<Postal Code>>

## Upcoming Events MARK YOUR CALENDAR

### Networking Events

Friday <b>August 18</b>	<b>Moonlight Bike Ride</b>   8PM-Midnight Central Park   100 N Federal Ave
Monday <b>August 21</b>	<b>Ag Tour</b>   1-4:30PM Sukup Manufacturing   1555 255th Street, Sheffield IA
Thursday <b>August 24</b>	<b>New Member Luncheon</b>   12-1PM Anderson Event Room, Commerce Center   9 N Federal Ave
Thursday <b>August 24</b>	<b>Business After Hours</b> hosted by <b>ServiceMaster by Rice</b>   4:30-6PM Clear Lake Arts Center   17 S 4th Street

### Get Involved/Committee Meetings

Wednesday <b>August 9</b>	<b>Agribusiness Committee</b>   8-9AM Third Floor Event Room, Commerce Center   9 N Federal Ave <b>Program Committee</b>   Noon-1PM Board Room, Commerce Center   9 N Federal Ave
Monday <b>August 14</b>	<b>Wellness Committee</b>   1-2PM Board Room, Commerce Center   9 N Federal Ave
Wednesday <b>August 23</b>	<b>Chamber Board Meeting</b>   Noon-1PM Board Room, Commerce Center   9 N Federal

## September Events

**Chamber Cup** | September 14  
**DEI: Microaggressions** | September 28

