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SEPTEMBER | OCTOBER 2021



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This page: Dr. Heather Poskevich on her day off, page 114.



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MY BONES.”

Bick Carfrae, M.D., on her memory of how her mother and aunts cleaved bones while preparing Vietnamese dishes. See story, page 119.



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TUNE IN

Listen to *dsm*'s CultureCast podcasts featuring local restaurants, cultural organizations and artists. Recent podcasts have included conversations with Pyramid Theatre's Tiffany Johnson and musician Madison Ray (*pictured*).

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photo Giovanni Gastel

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BACK IN ACTION

Toward the beginning of this issue and then again at the back, you'll find two features we haven't been able to run since the pandemic hit:

Out and About (page 28) and rsvp (page 169). While virtual events are still going on—and, as I write this, the delta variant is spreading at an alarming rate—we're excited by the number of in-person shows, fundraisers and festivals that are happening across the metro.

Spotlighting our community's nonprofit sector, rsvp has always been a reader favorite as it provides a fun peek at who was where. I encourage you to send us photos of your event that we can consider for publication. For (easy!) instructions, go to dsmmagazine.com and click on "submit photos" on the menu bar at the top of the page. The deadline is two months before publication.

Like a lot of organizations, *dsm* is planning virtual, hybrid and in-person events for this fall. Our unveilings, I'm thrilled to report, are back to in-person parties. **Exec 1 Aviation** was the location of our first one in June (page 178) for the July/August issue, and **Silent Rivers Design and Build** and **Olson-Larsen Galleries** are hosting the soiree for this issue.

However, our **LGBTQ Legacy Leaders** event will be virtual, making it

easier for people from across the state to attend. We invite you to join us in recognizing Iowa's LGBTQ leaders, and an ally, who are dedicated to making their communities better and advancing equality for all. The free celebration will be **Oct. 15** from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.; register at dsmmagazine.com/lgbtq-legacyawards-2021. In the story starting on page 95, you can read about the inspiring individuals we're recognizing.

In fact, this issue is packed with people who I promise will inspire you, such as, to name just a few, **Dr. Heather Poskevich**, a MercyOne emergency physician who is a champion bicycle racer (page 114); **Ruthie Jackson**, whose considerable creativity in remaking her home on a budget will have you reaching for a paint can (page 84); **Cameron Sadeghpour**, an award-winning photographer who also makes artfully crafted knives (page 78); and **Dawn Martinez Oropeza**, who has launched a project that she hopes will improve the health of Latino residents (page 136).

Indeed, whether you're interested in makers, dreamers, doers, or even partygoers, you'll meet plenty of people in these pages. And, hopefully, you'll also see them—and us—at an event, a performance, a park or anywhere else that helps make Greater Des Moines an interesting and vibrant place to live. ■

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KARLA
WALSHYOU CAN
HANDLE
THE TRUTH

When was the last time you answered “How are you doing?” with the real, raw truth?

It’s tough to pin down exactly where I learned to take that classic “A Few Good Men” line “You can’t handle the truth!” so literally. Perhaps it was growing up in an environment of Iowa Nice, in which we don’t want to burden others with our worries. Or maybe it was traveling to Tanzania and seeing people with no running water and realizing how remarkably privileged I was. Or it could be a vestige of my eating disorder days, when I starved away all of the hormones that would have made me experience any feelings and spent several years as a numb and skinny shell of myself.

Regardless, somewhere along the way I began to reframe my not-so-great days as A-OK in the grand scheme of things, and I’d gloss over my fears, sadness and anger. Hey, I have a roof over my head, more food than I could ever want, loving parents, supportive friends ... my bad days are *not* bad days in the grand scheme of things. And with that in mind, I found that I was consistently invalidating my feelings

and skating through life on a superficial cloud of “I’m good, thanks!”

That is, until I started diving into the concept of intuition. When I learned to tune in to my gut instead of relying on my head or my external environment to tell me how to feel, I found a new

MY SHOULDERS
FELT THE WEIGHT
OF THE FEELING
“YOU WERE
SUPPOSED TO BE
‘OVER’ THESE
EATING DISORDER
THOUGHTS.”

level of feeling. I discovered that it’s not always pretty, but it is always easier to process when I let it out rather than bury it deeper.

This mindset stepped into the spotlight last May. One evening, I attended a five-course dinner with friends at the Iowa Culinary Institute. Each unforgettable plate was not only

a visual work of art but also a symphony of flavors. In the joy of the evening, I ate more than I had in a long time in one sitting, and in a relic of mental health struggles past, I spent the whole night tossing and turning and beating myself up for eating too much.

That sleepless night led into a big day; I was nominated for a humbling award by a nonprofit organization and would spend the lunch hour in a room with 500 of some of the most inspiring people in Iowa. I’d do so while seated at a table with my mom, grandma and four of my best friends. Although I was able to still soak up the magical experience, my head and stomach ached with the burden of the 12 hours prior. My shoulders felt the weight of the feeling “you were supposed to be ‘over’ these eating disorder thoughts.”

Later that afternoon in the car, my mom asked, “How did you sleep last night? How are you doing?”

At the thought of answering that question with the real, raw truth, I started bawling—the almost-needed-to-pull-over type of sobbing. I leveled with her how frustrated I was that I still

Continues on page 24



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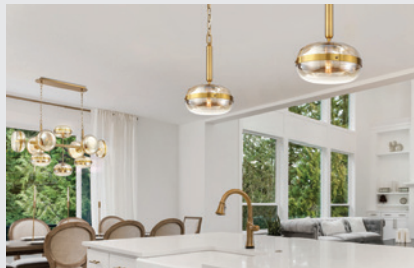


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Continued from page 22

struggled with these body image-bashing thoughts that I overindulged. That I felt puffy and ashamed. But when I dug deeper and kept trying to answer “how *am* I doing?” I could also acknowledge all of the growth that was on display in that uncomfortable, teary moment.

Rather than carry those negative feelings around with me, ruminating over the fact that I may never be fully separated from my anorexic thoughts, I was giving myself permission to feel frustrated that these feelings came up. To feel vulnerable enough to share them with others. To feel proud that I didn’t let those thoughts change my actions the next day—I didn’t overcompensate with exercise or restrict my eating to “make up for” the five courses the night prior.

Once I let that out, the cloud over my head began to lift. Simply realizing that those thoughts were no longer mine alone to carry, and being able to separate those worries from who I truly am, I felt lighter. My stomach and head stopped aching, and I was able to go about my weekend knowing that these thoughts don’t have to control me. It was a huge step in my emotional growth.

So consider this your permission to be real, to be *really* real when your inner circle asks you, “How are you doing?” We truly want to know, and chances are your gut and your heart truly want to share. ■

Drop freelance writer and editor Karla Walsh a line at karlawalsh@gmail.com to tell her how you’re doing or to share topics you’d like to see covered in future No Filter columns. You can also keep in touch on Instagram @karlawalsh.



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FOCUS

UPCOMING EVENTS // PHOTO PROJECT // NEW PLANT EXHIBIT

PHOTOGRAPHER: JENNIFER MARGUEZ

Des Moines artist Hannah Sung modeled for photographer Jennifer Marguez's project, "Stop Asian Hate," which seeks to give voice to local Asian American women. See story, page 32.

OUT AND ABOUT

WHAT WE'RE DOING IN SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER

1 This went on our calendar the moment we heard about it: Pyramid Theatre Company and Des Moines Performing Arts are partnering to present the

musical **"The Gospel at Colonus"**

Sept 17-19 at Riverview Park's amphitheater. Based on Sophocles' tragedy "Oedipus at Colonus," the show is set at a Black Pentecostal service and features a lively score of gospel and blues music. Focusing on themes of forgiveness, love and redemption, the production—which debuted on Broadway in 1983—translates the 2,400-year-old Greek myth into a modern-day Christian parable that explores Black music, pain and joy.

One reason we're confident "The Gospel of Colonus" will be riveting: It's being co-directed by the dynamic duo of Ken-Matt Martin, a Pyramid co-founder who is now artistic director at Chicago's Victory Gardens Theater, and Tiffany Johnson, Pyramid's producing artistic director. The show begins at 7:30 p.m. Sept. 17 and 18 and 5 p.m. Sept. 19. Attendance is free; go to dmpa.org or pyramidtheatre.org for more information.

2 **"The Band's Visit"** seems like a perfect way to once again enjoy the thrill of an in-person Broadway musical. Winner of

10 Tony Awards, the story takes place in a small Israeli desert town, where a band of lost Egyptian musicians shows up at the local cafe. That night, the lives of the locals and the band members intertwine, and the result, the New York Times claims, "is one of the most ravishing musicals you'll ever be seduced by."

Presented by Des Moines Performing Arts, "The Band's Visit" runs **Oct. 12-17** at the Civic Center. For specific times and ticket info, go to dmpa.org.



Sara Kapner and
Joe Joseph in
"The Band's Visit,"
which will play the
Des Moines Civic
Center Oct. 12-17.

PHOTOGRAPHER: MATTHEW MURPHY



3 With three September concerts sure to appeal to a variety of listeners, the **Des Moines Symphony** is getting back into the full swing of live performances. For its free Pops Series at the Lauridsen Amphitheater at Water Works Park, the symphony on **Sept. 4** will present “Aretha: A Tribute,” starring Broadway star Capathia Jenkins and Grammy Award nominee Ryan Shaw. The next day, **Sept. 5**, the symphony will perform works from “Star Wars,” “Indiana Jones” and other film favorites by composer John Williams. Both shows start at 7:30 p.m.

Then, on **Sept. 25**, the symphony will debut its classical music season by performing, among other works, Beethoven’s famous Fifth Symphony as well as his Egmont Overture. The concert begins at 7:30 p.m. at the Des Moines Civic Center and repeats at 2:30 p.m. **Sept. 26**. For tickets and more info: dmsymphony.org.



4 As fans of the piano, we were pleased to learn that the launch of the Lauridsen Great Pianists Series starring **Yefim**

Bronfman had been rescheduled for this fall after 2020’s pandemic delay. The world-renowned pianist will play sonatas by Beethoven and Chopin, among other works, **Oct. 20** at Hoyt Sherman Place. Presented by Civic Music Association, the recital starts at 7:30 p.m. For ticket info, visit hoytsherman.org or civicmusic.org.

5 Pancit Bihon, anyone? Yes, please. Expect to find the Filipino noodle dish and cuisine from dozens of other countries at the free

World Food and Music Festival, which returns this year **Sept. 17-19** after being sidelined in 2020. Some 40 vendors, 13 new this year, will offer culinary creations from Europe, Central America, Asia, the Middle East, Africa and more. Cooking demonstrations, craft beers and live music round out the fun. Produced by the Greater Des Moines Partnership, the event will take place at Western Gateway Park. At press time, details were still being determined. For up-to-date info, go to dmspartnership.com/worldfoodandmusicfestival.



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NEW AND NOTABLE

ELEVATING ASIAN AMERICAN WOMEN

As attacks on Asian Americans flashed across evening newscasts this past year, Jennifer Marguez felt compelled to use her photography to give voice to local women.

The result? “Stop Asian Hate,” a photo project the 26-year-old Marguez developed that gives Asian American women a chance to speak out against the racism and violence the community has endured. She especially wanted to focus on elevating women’s voices after last March’s mass shooting in Atlanta that killed eight people, six of whom were Asian American women.

The theme of the project borrows from the Japanese proverb “hear no evil, see no evil, speak no evil.” The four women featured in the project—Hannah Sung, Dah Dah, Day Say and Briana Tran—wrote their own messages on wraps that interpret that theme, such as “blind to reality,” “not docile,” “no hate” and “hate is the virus.” The women are dressed in colorful traditional garb, including a Korean hanbok and Vietnamese áo dài, and have flowers over their eyes, mouths and wrists to further the theme.

“It was very important to show [these women’s messages] to others, and have it be more meaningful to them because they chose that message for themselves,” Marguez says.

“I hope that for others, [the photo project] speaks to them or opens their



eyes into realizing what’s been going [on] with hate crime and the violence starting to rise up,” she adds. “I hope to create change with this.”

Marguez, who is of Mexican and Native American descent, became a full-time photographer last year and graduated from DMACC’s graphic design program in December 2020.

She’s also produced photos featuring other underrepresented communities, highlighting Black Lives Matter and local Latina women.

Find her images on Instagram @jamscreativephotography or on her website, jamscreativephotography.com.

—Linh Ta





PATIO OR PORCH



FIREPLACE



LANDSCAPE



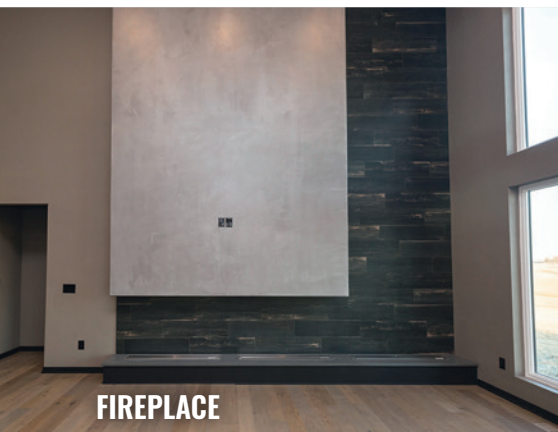
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FOR YOUR CALENDAR PLANT POWER

Just as there are child music and math prodigies, there are plant prodigies. And Elvin McDonald has always been one of those.

McDonald, who lives in West Des Moines and is in his ninth decade, has had an illustrious career including writing and illustrating some 75 gardening books. He's also held various editor positions with *Better Homes & Gardens* and is secretary emeritus of the American Horticultural Society.

Now, to honor McDonald and to dedicate a new official collection of gesneriads, the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden will open a special exhibit of the plant on Sept. 17. Several dozen different gesneriads will be on display, and McDonald will also teach a master's class.

The plant has always been one of his favorites. In his early teens, growing up on his parents' farm in the Oklahoma Panhandle, McDonald grew a wide variety of gesneriads in a greenhouse he built with help from his father.

"Whenever I got any money, I always spent it on plants and books," says McDonald, who also started freelancing horticulture articles to magazines and other publications to earn spending money.

Gesneriads are perfect for collectors. The family Gesneriaceae includes more than 3,500 species and 150 genera. The best known are African violets, with gloxinia a close second. But there are hundreds more.



McDonald started gaining national attention at age 13, attracting visitors from all over the country to see his plants. A story about gloxinias in a 1949 magazine piqued his interest, and he wrote a letter to the magazine, asking anyone interested in starting a gloxinia society to get in touch. Several hundred people from around the globe expressed interest, and Elvin founded what ended up becoming the Gesneriad Society, which is still going strong.

In the same way that art museums build their collections of a certain artist or movement, the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden is focusing on expanding its collections, says horticulturist Aaron Harpold. These include, for example, more than 700 genera of coleus, one of the largest in the world.

"This gesneriad collection will set the pattern" for the Botanical Garden's collection expansion, McDonald says. "People will come from all over to see it." ■ —Veronica Lorson Fowler





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ABOUT YOUR PROJECT

36

LOOK



HANNAH WAGNER

Age: 27

Profession: Photographer, artist

How would you describe your style?

I'm always looking for ways to elevate or subvert comfortable basics, whether by layering textures and accessories or styling a piece in an unconventional way.

The piece of clothing or accessory you couldn't live without: Pretty lace pieces for layering.

Style icons: Bianca Jagger and Grace Jones—their self-confidence is the foundation of their style.

The part of your style you're most

known for: I am consistently overdressed, but I love to stand out.

Any fashion regrets? Playing it safe!

What you can't resist splurging on:

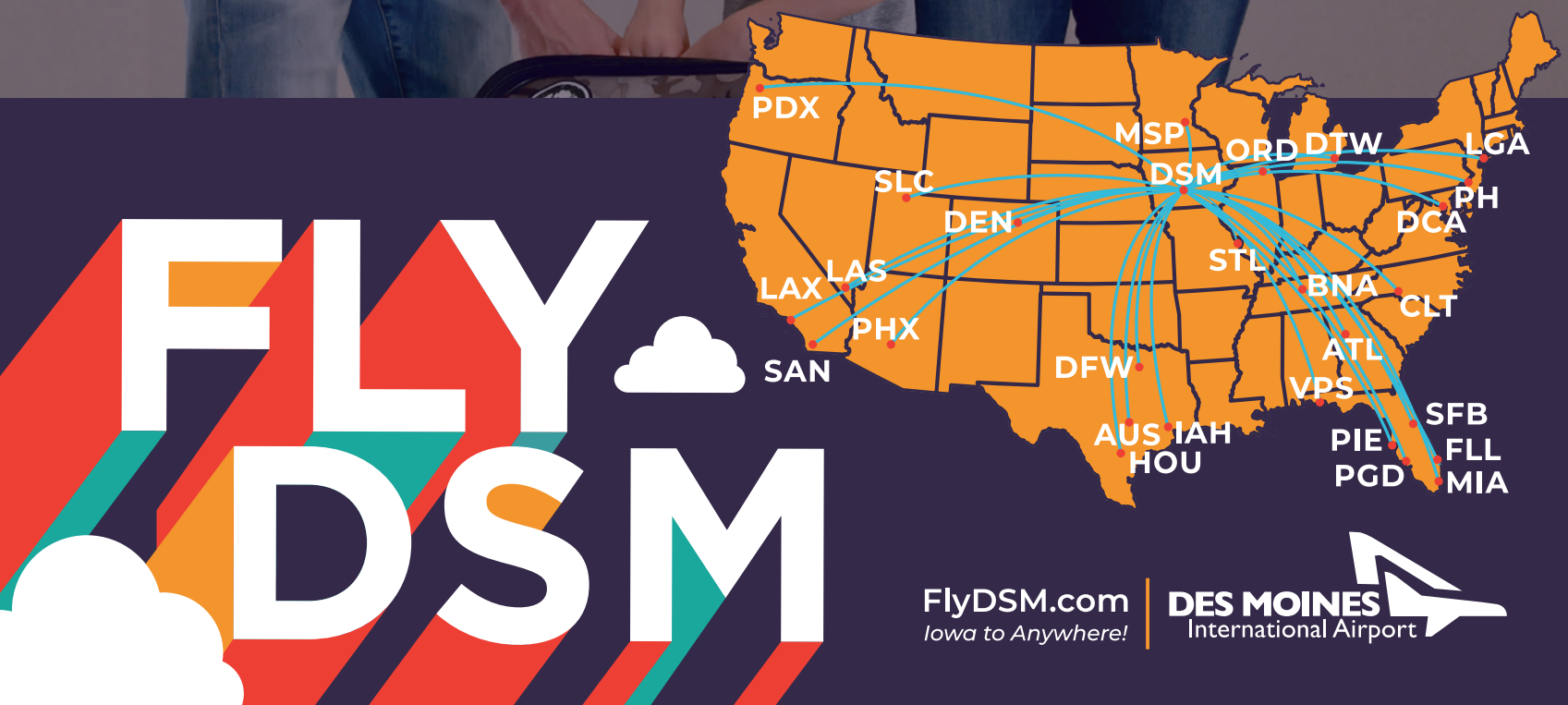
Footwear; shoes can change the energy of a look.

Closet MVP: Fitted black turtleneck. ■

PHOTOGRAPHER: JOELLE BLANCHARD



LET'S GET AWAY



TRAVEL

CHARLOTTE GETAWAY // MADISON COUNTY DAY TRIP

A direct flight from Des Moines on American Airlines will take you to Charlotte, North Carolina, where you'll discover plenty of ways to enjoy dining, outdoor recreation, and arts and culture. See story, next page.

ALL HAIL QUEEN CITY

A quick 2 1/2-hour flight away, Charlotte pulls out the royal treatment with a rich mix of arts and culture.

WRITER: BETH ESLINGER

Charlotte could be Des Moines' big, bold older sister. The city is a hub of finance and has a booming downtown, robust food and entertainment scenes, and a love of sports—including golf and several professional teams including the Carolina Panthers and Charlotte Hornets. Plus, there's a plethora of public art and museums to explore.

The city of about 2 million is the epitome of the New South. It has one of the fastest-growing populations in the country and is a banking center; it's home to Bank of America, and several banks have sizable operations there, including Wells Fargo. Founded in 1768, the city was named after King George's wife, Charlotte—hence the nickname the Queen City. (Fun fact: The queen in “Bridgerton” is the same Charlotte.) You'll see her likeness prominently in sculpture after departing from the Charlotte-Douglas International Airport. (Find direct flights twice daily through American Airlines.)

For a walkable base, choose Uptown in the city center. You'll find numerous upscale hotels, museums and

art centers, rooftop bars, sports venues, plus dining to suit any preference. Here's our perfect fall getaway.

Experience the arts: With a multitude of museums as well as music and performing arts venues, Charlotte delivers on the cultural scene. The challenge: how much to pack in.

The Levine Center for the Arts:

This cultural campus includes the Betchler Museum of Modern Art (U.S. and European works from the 20th century), the Mint Museum (the state's first art museum), the Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts and Culture (artifacts and African American creations) and the Knight Theater. For just \$20, you can get a two-day pass to explore the art museums. At the **Levine Museum of the New South**, interactive exhibits include words by civil rights leaders, an early Belk discount store where you can try on a fedora, and a one-room tenant farmer's home.

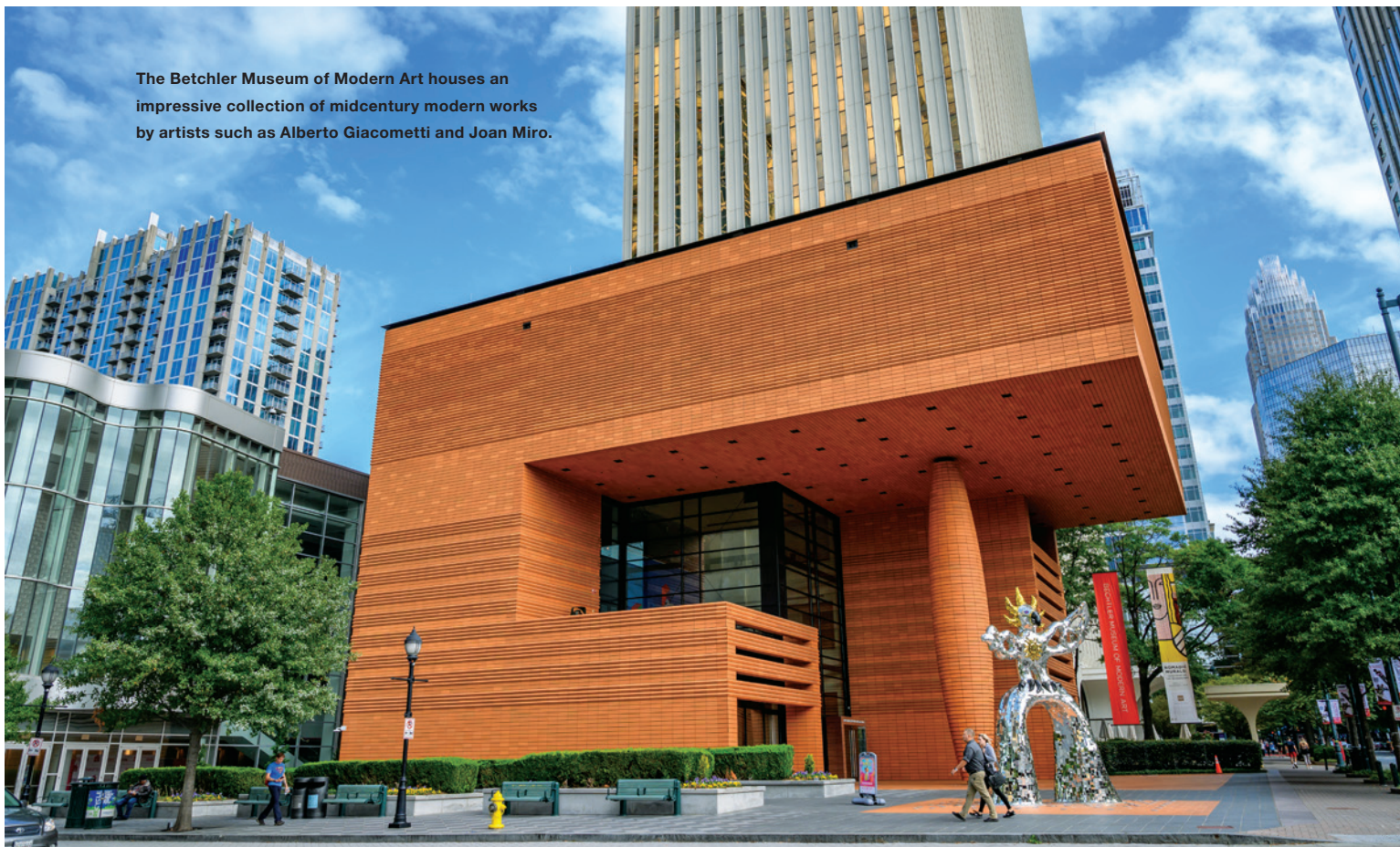
At **Blumenthal Performing Arts**, book tickets to Broadway hits such as “Rent” and “Ain't Too Proud.” The three performance spaces also host musicians such as North Carolina artist Ben Folds, ballet and comedy acts.

AvidXchange Music Factory is another complex of venues where you can listen to indie rock, funk, country, comedy acts and more. Located on-site, **Explicit Bistro & Lounge** serves small bites and seafood options, plus craft cocktails.

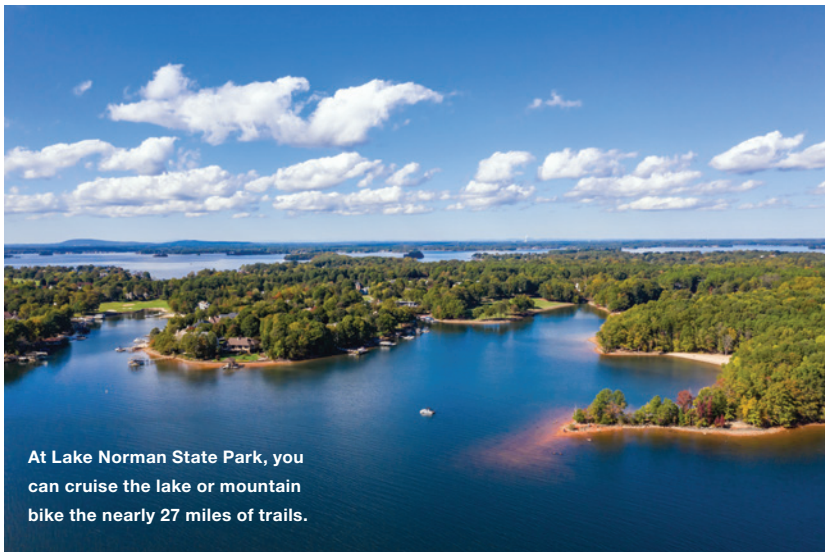
Explore trendy spots: Once a Model T manufacturing plant, **Camp North End** is a complex with retail, local businesses, artists and restaurants in a mix of genres—coffee shops, breweries, charcuterie, regional farm-to-table, ramen and more. One top spot is **Leah & Louis**, a James Beard semifinalist emphasizing new Southern cuisine such as the Rich Boys (fried oyster sliders) and Down & Dirty (slow-roasted grits). Plan on spending Friday evening in the district exploring shops and relaxing outside with live music.

In **NoDa**, Charlotte's hip historic arts and entertainment district, stroll the streets to see murals, then stop for some of the city's best fried chicken as well as North Carolina trout at **Haberdishis**. Their patio is the perfect people-watching spot. For more snacking, on your way back to Uptown, stop by **Optimist Hall**, a former textile

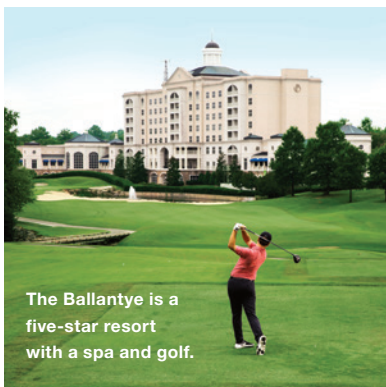
The Betchler Museum of Modern Art houses an impressive collection of midcentury modern works by artists such as Alberto Giacometti and Joan Miro.



Kindred, located in nearby Davidson, is known for its fresh takes on Southern cuisine and its season-driven menu, which changes weekly.



At Lake Norman State Park, you can cruise the lake or mountain bike the nearly 27 miles of trails.



The Ballantye is a five-star resort with a spa and golf.

mill transformed into a dining emporium. There you can find more tasty fried chicken, authentic empanadas, cocktail spots and more. Also at the hall, shop for take-home pup treats and paper gifts.

Get active, then dine in style: If you're into the outdoors, plan a day at the **U.S. National Whitewater Center** on the Catawba River on the northwest side of the city. The outdoor playground has whitewater rafting on the world's largest manmade river, plus rock climbing, paddleboarding on the Catawba, mountain biking and more.

For more mountain biking and water bliss, head south for a day to the Lake Norman area. Rent a kayak or pontoon to cruise the lake, or mountain bike the nearly 27 miles of forested

trails at **Lake Norman State Park** (rentals available in the area). Nearby in Davidson, **Kindred** is a must-visit dining spot. Book reservations for the James Beard semifinalist, which focuses on seasonal dishes and fresh takes on Southern cuisine.

Where to stay: Upscale options abound in Uptown and beyond. Find brands such as Ritz-Carlton, Westin, Aloft, Kimpton and more in the area, or opt for one of these boutique options.

The Ivey's Hotel: Situated in the heart of Uptown near museums and the performing arts center, this locally owned boutique hotel features sophisticated design and fine dining, including **5Church Charlotte**, whose menu was created by chef Jamie Lynch of "Top Chef" season 14. There's also one of the top cocktail spots in the city.

Duke Mansion: Located southeast of Uptown (it's a 10-minute drive or a 2-mile walk), this bed and breakfast is a true Southern charmer located on 4 1/2 acres. All 20 rooms have private baths. Book the king porch room, which includes a porch for enjoying your morning coffee or evening nightcap.

The Ballantye: If you're looking for a golf or spa getaway, this five-star resort about 15 miles south of the city center offers a variety of lodging options, including a four-bedroom cottage with a gourmet kitchen. Laze away after a day of shopping and touring at the outdoor pool or Gallery Bar, which stocks more than 200 whiskeys. ■

For more planning help, visit Charlottesgot alot.com.

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A PERFECT DAY IN MADISON COUNTY

Located less than an hour southwest of Des Moines, Madison County makes for an idyllic fall trip. Here are a few of our favorite stops besides the covered

bridges and John Wayne landmarks. Plan on a trip the last Sunday of September, when many of these businesses are open for tour.



CEDAR SHAKE FARM

PICK UP POSIES

The rich soil makes a perfect foundation for flowers, and there are two growers where you can grab the ultimate sunflower or dahlia background for your social feed. **Cedar Shake Farm**, west of Winterset and new as of 2018, is open to flower peepers. Contact their social channels or website to arrange a visit. And **PepperHarrow Farm** south of Winterset features 20 acres of blooms; fall is a particularly lovely time to visit.

SEE CUTE CREATURES

For yet another social feed success, stop at **Rusty Stars Alpacas** east of Winterset. Open Saturdays, the farm also has a store with clothing from the animals, yarn from the farm, socks and more, plus, of course, the South American softies.

dsmDestinations: One-Day Escape

DINE AND SHOP WINTERSET'S TOWN SQUARE

Anchored by its historic courthouse, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, downtown Winterset offers one of the newest, hottest dining halls in the state, **the Drift** (pictured). Featuring craft cocktails, beers, wines and grazing boards loaded with European cheese, plus other bites such as grown-up grilled cheese, the new-in-December restaurant is quickly becoming a fan favorite (open Wednesday through Sunday). While at the square, shop for custom-made jewelry at **B. Shannon Designs**, home decor at **re:Home** and fun gifts at **Madison County Mercantile Co.**

SIP SOME SWEETNESS

With three wineries and a cidery in the county, you can pick your spirits adventure. Awarded as 2020's winemaker of the year by the Iowa Wine Growers Association, **Covered Bridges Winery** and vintner Kevin Fifo consistently deliver tasty flavors in a relaxed environment. For beer lovers, check out **Big Rack Brew Haus** (sample the seasonals). Cider fans can enjoy flavors such as apple pie and limestone habanero at **Winterset Cidery**.

PLAN ON A FALL CRAWL

Book Sept. 26 on your calendar for a daylong tour of area businesses at the **Madison County Fall Crawl** (find information on Facebook). In addition to flowers, wine and a few family farms, stop by **Pammel Park Coffee** near Cedar Shake Farm, which roasts small batches of specialty coffees. Take home a growler of cold brew. ■

—Beth Eslinger



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SAVOR

BEST BREAKFASTS // FOUR-CHEESE TORTELLINI //
AMES' DINING DESTINATIONS



Fresh strawberries and citrus Chantilly cream top the Liège waffles at RC's Diner. See story, next page.

50

SAVOR



Early Bird offers a variety of pancakes, including these cinnamon roll ones.

PHOTOGRAPHER: DUANE TINKEY

WHAT WE LOVE

5 CAN'T-BE-MISSED BREAKFAST SPOTS

Whether you have time just for a pit stop or want to make a day of it, there's a breakfast boom happening in Central Iowa. Here are five restaurants to check out.

Early Bird

With pages of sweet and savory options including cinnamon roll pancakes (*pictured*), biscuits and gravy-inspired pot pie, and avocado toast with whipped ricotta and poached eggs, it would take dozens of visits to make your way through the menu. Classics like egg white omelets and fluffy French toast as well as over-the-top creations like bloody mary cocktails garnished with a chicken sandwich (yes, this exists!) mean there's something for every diet and craving.

Aim to be an early bird to beat the crowd or visit Yelp to join the waitlist—demand has been high since this new West Des Moines spot opened in May. (9250 University Ave., Suite 107, West Des Moines; earlybirdbrunch.com)

RC's Diner

Similar to "Cheers" but with a kid-friendly twist, RC's Diner is the place where everyone knows your name. Co-owners Joe Tripp (of James Beard-nominated Harbinger fame) and Simon Goheen (the patriarch of Simon's)—two of Des Moines' most well-known hospitality pros—have been seeing to it since opening in July. The name RC's is a clear sign of the familial vibe: It's a tribute to Simon's daughter Rori and Joe's son Clayton, and the menu at the Windsor Heights all-day modern diner

nods to Tripp's Jewish roots. You'll find delights such as bialy avocado toast, eggs Benedict and Liège waffles.

Save room for a dessert or pastry, such as a baked-to-order cookie, slice of pie or cake, or milkshake. (6587 University Ave., Windsor Heights; rcsdinerdsm.com)

5 Borough Bagels

As much as we'd love for every day to start with a sit-down breakfast, our lives don't always allow for that, which is where this bagel shop at 13435 University Ave., Suite 300, in Clive (5boroughbagels.com) and its open-since-March sibling 5 Borough Bagels Express (12493 University Ave., Clive; 5boroughexpress.com) come in. Fast and available for pre-order, the scratch-made bagel sandwiches, biscuits, scones, breakfast wraps and coffee drinks can be enjoyed on the go.

It's affordable, too: All menu items (including the piled-high Empire bagel sandwich with cream cheese, bacon, sausage, ham, egg and three cheeses) ring up at \$9.95 or less.

The Breakfast Club

For a weekend or holiday, you can't do much better than a long, lingering and possibly boozy meal at this East Village hot spot. Co-owner Joe McConville's menu is nostalgic with a twist, featuring recipes like angel food cake French toast, a Southwestern-spiced Juan Denver omelet, and a fried pineapple and ham-crowned Hawaiian eggs Benedict. Elvis—a brioche breakfast sandwich stuffed with peanut butter, bacon, banana and honey—is even invited to the party. Pair any of the above with a mimosa flight or a classic espresso or cappuccino (212 E. Third St.; thebreakfastclubusa.com)

Crepêrie Viva La Crêpe

Enjoy a taste of Paris in the heart of West Des Moines at this family-friendly cafe. Showcasing an expansive mix of sweet and savory toppings, the crepes steal the show (although coffee, soups and salads are also available). For a lighter option, try one filled with fruit jam or sautéed veggies and feta. If you've got a larger appetite, try the quesadilla-esque steak or pork al pastor crêpeadillas.

For dessert, ask for yours adorned with Oreo cookies and ice cream or Kit Kat candy bars and cream cheese. (9250 University Ave., Unit 113, West Des Moines; facebook.com/creperievivalacrepe) —Karla Walsh

I SNAGGED THE RECIPE WEEKNIGHT NOODLES

WRITER: LISA HOLDERNESS BROWN

Ask Kali Brudos about her beet pasta roses and she lights up as if there were nothing she would rather talk about. “I fold seven raviolis in half and arrange them to look like a rose,” she says, beaming. “Bake or boil them and serve in garlic butter with Parm.”

Brudos talks pasta speak as if she grew up at the knee of an Italian grandmother, but crafting fresh pasta is a more recent venture. She and husband, AJ, met working at Biaggi’s in West Des Moines and shared their passions for pasta, puppies and the Green Bay Packers. At some point after years of marriage and several moves, they dusted off a hand-cranked pasta machine that was a gift and started making their own noodles. Both were hooked and converted all their friends to fresh pasta. “It was so simple. We could totally do this,” she recalls.

Translating their new hobby into a business seemed like a natural progression for a couple with over 40 years of restaurant experience between them, but they knew starting slowly made sense. The duo kept their day jobs and toted their pasta machine to the Mickle Center Shared-Use Community Kitchen in Sherman Hill.

“We are super thankful for the shared use kitchen,” Brudos says. “It allows so many new businesses to have the opportunity to lease space and use the equipment. It has worked really well.”



Now they hand-crank over 100 pounds of pasta weekly in a variety of shapes and flavors, including beet and spinach—made from fresh vegetable purees—and egg noodles that start with Shriver Farms eggs.

“We morphed a lot bigger than expected, mostly due to Facebook and word of mouth,” Brudos says. “We hope to make this full time and eventually open a small dining room. AJ wants to do pizza, too.”

For now, the couple keeps a sharp focus on all things pasta, including homemade sauces, herb butters, take-and-bake lasagna and manicotti, and pasta meal kits. Their products are available for pickup at the Mickle Center at the corner of 16th and Pleasant streets. Order on the dsmpastaco.com website and pick up on Tuesdays. They also have a booth at the Maxwell farmers market on Sundays.

PASTA POINTERS

Portion patrol: Figure 4 to 6 ounces fresh pasta per main dish serving, depending on what other ingredients are going into the dish and how hungry you are. To sub fresh pasta in recipes that call for dry pasta, use 6 to 8 ounces fresh for every 4 ounces of dried.

No-stick noodles: Some cooks add olive oil to the pasta water to keep the pieces from sticking together, but that keeps the sauce from adhering to the cooked pasta. Instead, use a large pot with plenty of water (3 to 4 quarts for 4 to 16 ounces pasta) so the pasta has room to move. Bring the water to a boil before adding the pasta and stir it occasionally during cooking.

Salty like the ocean: “Don’t skimp on the salt in the pasta water,” Kali Brudos says. “It really heightens the flavor of the pasta.” She recommends 2 to 3 tablespoons kosher salt per pot of water, ideally added when the water is boiling so it dissolves quickly.

Liquid gold: “Don’t pitch the pasta water when you drain it,” Kali insists. “Save a cup or so and add it (as much as desired) to the pasta as part of the sauce.” The salty, starchy water adds flavor and gives your dish a silkier texture.

Al dente defined: Fresh pasta cooks lightning fast compared with dried. The couple recommends 2 to 4 minutes (fresh or frozen) for most of their pasta shapes (see package directions). Al dente means “to the tooth” in Italian and is used to describe the perfect pasta doneness. Sample a piece of pasta at the minimum cooking time and always before draining the pasta water. “Fresh pasta should have a chewy bite, not a hard bite like dry pasta,” Kali says. Filled pasta, such as tortellini, floats to the top of the water when done.

**“FRESH PASTA SHOULD
HAVE A CHEWY BITE, NOT A
HARD BITE LIKE DRY PASTA.”**

KALI BRUDOS

Learn how to make Kali and AJ Brudos' four-cheese tortellini with sausage and mushrooms. Find the recipe on the next page.

FOUR-CHEESE TORTELLINI WITH SAUSAGE AND MUSHROOMS

Start to Finish: 20 minutes. Serves 4

Ingredients

1 pound Italian sausage (Kali and AJ Brudos like a mix of half Graziano's sweet sausage and half Graziano's garlic sausage)

6 ounces oyster or cremini mushrooms, trimmed and thickly sliced (about 1 3/4 cups)

2 ounces DSM Pasta Co. fresh herb butter* (1/4 cup)

1 pound DSM Pasta Co. beet and four-cheese tortellini

1 cup pasta water (reserved from cooking pasta)

3 ounces baby spinach (about 3 cups)

1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese, plus extra for serving

Kosher salt

Freshly ground black pepper

**Fresh herb butter:* Purchase DSM Pasta Co. fresh herb butter online when you order the pasta, or you can make your own. Here's how: In a small pan, melt 2 ounces (1/4 cup) Irish butter (such as Kerry Gold). Stir in 1 teaspoon each chopped fresh thyme, fresh rosemary, fresh oregano and fresh sage. Stir in 1 teaspoon finely chopped roasted or fresh garlic. Season to taste with salt.

Directions

1. Bring a pot of salted water to a boil for the tortellini. In a large skillet, sauté sausage over medium heat until it is cooked through and browned. Add the mushrooms and herb butter. Sauté, stirring occasionally, for 3 minutes more. Remove from heat.
2. When the salted water comes to a boil, add the tortellini and cook for 2 to 4 minutes or until tortellini float. Reserve one cup of pasta water. Drain tortellini and add immediately to the skillet along with the spinach. Toss to coat; add pasta water in quarter-cup increments until desired sauce consistency. Add the 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese and continue tossing until the spinach is wilted and sauce becomes silky and smooth. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Top with additional grated Parmesan and serve immediately.



PINCH OF WISDOM

“Unless you’re using avocados that day, buy them a little hard. Put them on the counter and check them twice a day for the perfect ‘give.’ Once they have that, store them in the fridge. Then your avocados will last for at least a week in a perfectly ripe stage.”

Shauna Meany, owner of the Des Moines-based meal prep business Good Chives (goodchivesdsm.com).



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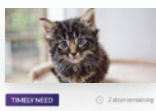
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CORNBRED

DINING TOUR

AMES CULINARY DESTINATIONS

Heading to Ames this fall to help a scholar settle in, see a show or cheer on the Cyclones? Fuel up at these restaurants, ones that would be worth the drive from Des Moines even without an event to draw you north.

If you're on a date:

Bar La Tosca

You might recognize the name from its previous location on Main Street, but now the eatery shares a space with the Campustown coffee shop Stomping Grounds. Come lunch and dinnertime, small plates steal the show and provide a communal dining experience. Order a bottle of wine to share or sample cocktails as you split an antipasto plate, goat cheese and local mushroom toast, and marinara-smothered beef and pork meatballs. If entrees are more your style, give the ricotta gnocchi or grilled pork loin a go. (303 Welch Ave., Ames; barlatosca.com)

If you're ravenous:

Cornbred (pictured left)

In early 2021, a Facebook post about their now-famous 1 1/2-pound cinnamon rolls nearly broke the internet. But that's not the only creation on the menu at this barbecue spot in the old railroad depot downtown. For brunch, dig into the cheddar-chive biscuit and

brisket or the "porffle," a pulled pork and egg-crowned cornbread waffle. At dinner, order the slow-roasted burnt ends or turkey by the half-pound along with sides like cornbread pudding, fries, sweet corn salad or the creamy, cornflake-topped "hallelujah potatoes." (526 Main St., #106, Ames; cornbreddbq.com)



If you're with the family:

Provisions Lot F (pictured above)

While the Cafe on the north side is a timeless and tempting choice, its younger sibling near the south-side ISU Research Park has even more to offer kids and kids at heart. On Mondays, they add three seasonal pizzas to the menu, which join handmade pastas,

fresh-baked breads, sandwiches, salads and more. Adults will adore the seafood and steaks, while kids go wild for the rainbow-hued fairy bread.

It's also a stellar brunch spot for top-notch chicken and waffles, biscuits and gravy, and stuffed-to-the-brim three-egg omelets. And on the way out, swing by the bakery case for a fresh fruit tart or a slice of salted caramel cake. (2400 N. Loop Drive, Ames; provisionsames.com)

If you're craving Middle Eastern fare:

Pammel Deli

Yes, we're recommending a grocery store. But there's a reason why this shop has been open for 34 years. While it's not exactly a venue where you'd linger and enjoy the ambiance, the deli tucked inside the Middle Eastern, Indian, Pakistani, Turkish and African supermarket is home to some of the best gyros, hummus, falafel and baklava you'll find in Central Iowa. Every entree is under \$15, and most—including the top-notch chicken gyro dinner and kofta kabob sandwich with fries—ring in at \$9 or less. Make sure to pick up feta and olives before leaving the west-side shop. (113 Colorado Ave., Ames; pammelgroceryames.com/deli.htm) ■

—Karla Walsh

FINDING HER VOICE

WRITER: LUKE MANDERFELD

PHOTOGRAPHER: RAEALYN RAMEY

After attending a Taylor Swift concert in 2014, Eleanor Bernsten, then age 11, came home from school the next day and wrote her first song.

"It was absolutely terrible," she says now with a laugh.

But that first attempt drove her desire to learn more about music. Today, the 18-year-old Bernsten, who performs under the stage name EleanorGrace, has carved out a budding career in the industry. One of her songs, "Lighthouse," which she wrote at age 14, has more than 800,000 streams on Spotify.

Bernsten started songwriting by imitating other pop singers, copying song structure and lyric styles. As her ability progressed, she drew from her personal experiences and added her own touches.

"Most artists say that you find your own style by failing to imitate somebody else," Bernsten says. "I think that's what happened with Taylor Swift. I tried to imitate [Swift], but failed a little bit. I ended up finding my own [style]."

Bernsten got her break in late 2017, when she was 14. Her mother helped her connect with the local record label Station 1 Records and set up a meeting at Mars Cafe in the Drake University neighborhood. Bernsten didn't know what to expect, so she brought her

guitar, thinking they might ask her to play. They didn't.

"I wanted to be prepared for everything," Bernsten says, chuckling at the memory. "We ended up talking, and they wanted to help teach me about the industry. And it snowballed from there."

Tobi Parks, who helped launch and manages Station 1 Records, says she was impressed with Bernsten's voice and songwriting abilities. Parks remembers asking Bernsten to develop a few songs, expecting four or five. A few weeks later, she had 12 in hand.

"She's very prolific in that way. I was impressed with her acumen as a 14-year-old trying to get into the industry," Parks says. "She's naturally very, very talented. I think she has a real pop sensibility in the way other artists don't necessarily have. Every song she writes has a really great hook. She's really good at melody and song structure."

When Bernsten signed, her industry knowledge was limited. She knew how to create, but struggled to navigate the complex world of the music industry. Station 1 Records, a nonprofit label focused on artist development and support, helped her create a plan and taught her to fend for herself.


"Now I can meet with somebody by myself and say, 'This is what I need from you.' That's a great skill to develop," she says.

Bernsten is now independent; her mother, Stephanie Pickens, serves as a manager. This past spring, Bernsten released a single, "American Beauty," which she worked on with Max Jury, a singer-songwriter from Des Moines who currently lives in London. Bernsten says the song is about the roller coaster of emotions associated with social media, particularly during the pandemic.

"I really love social media for giving us this outlet to connect to people, but I also hate it," Bernsten says. "It doesn't feel that genuine."

Bernsten graduated from Des Moines Public Schools' Virtual Campus last spring and is currently taking a gap year to focus on music. Because of the pandemic, Bernsten had more than a one-year break between live performances, and performing is her favorite aspect of being a musician. As of press time, she was planning to get back in front of audiences and was continuing to mold her musical identity by working on new songs.

"I think I have a lot to figure out identity-wise," Bernsten says. "I'm still working to get into that head space of, 'I'm a musician. This is my job.'" ■

A full-page photograph of a woman standing in a minimalist room with a light gray wall and a wooden floor. She is wearing a black blazer over a pink floral dress and black loafers. She is holding a large silver disco ball in her right hand, which is raised above her head. The room is lit with natural light, creating soft shadows on the floor. Two wooden easels are visible on either side of the woman.

“NOW I CAN MEET
WITH SOMEBODY BY
MYSELF AND SAY,
‘THIS IS WHAT
I NEED FROM YOU.’
THAT’S A GREAT
SKILL TO DEVELOP.”

ELEANOR BERNSTEN



This summer, Hy-Vee had a full plate of partnerships and programs that focused on fighting food insecurity. We made it our mission to support local communities and we'll continue to do so, one step at a time.



Here are a few ways Hy-Vee helped fight food insecurity this summer:

3,800 boxes of cereal donated to local students following a school-wide event

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RESCUE MISSION

WRITER: ANDREA LOVE

Ellen Yee (left) and
Jennifer Abraham-White

It seems implausible that a country could struggle simultaneously with food insecurity and a surplus of food waste. Yet about 40% of the food produced in the U.S. is wasted, while 1 in 8 citizens struggle with hunger. The Food Recovery Network, a national movement to fight food waste and end hunger through engaging college students, is working to change that.

Started by four students in 2011 at the University of Maryland, the Food Recovery Network now has 230 campus chapters across the U.S., including Drake, Iowa State and Graceland universities in Iowa.

"In the U.S., food waste has increased about 50% per capita since 1974," says Ellen Yee, professor of law and director of international programs at Drake. She adds that major sources of waste include farms, stores, restaurants and homes—"all the way through the food chain."

Seven years ago, Yee founded Next Course at Drake, a student-led food recovery program that gathers extra food from campus dining halls and catering services to distribute to local nonprofit hunger relief organizations.

Next Course has donated more than 31,000 pounds of recovered food to partner organizations in Des Moines, according to Drake senior Ashly Frazier, an environmental sciences major and

service learning ambassador. Frazier helps coordinate the volunteers who recover food and deliver it to nonprofit partners, such as Central Iowa Shelter & Services and YMCA Supportive Housing.

When the pandemic closed down regular campus dining hall services and paused food recovery efforts, Frazier says the organization focused on installing new "Little Free Pantries" in Drake neighborhoods. Little Free Pantries are stand-alone wood structures stocked with donated nonperishable food items for food-insecure individuals to take whenever they need it. Next Course partnered with more than 16 businesses in 2020 to gather food donations and fill 12 pantries they installed in nearby neighborhoods and on campus.

Through its food recovery efforts, Next Course also strives to keep food

waste out of landfills. "You'd think organic waste would be good," Yee says. "But piles upon piles of organic waste in landfills lead to food decomposing without oxygen. This creates methane, and methane is 20 times worse for the environment than carbon dioxide. One-third of the earth's methane is from food waste in landfills. It's nuts."

The Food Recovery Network chapter at Graceland University in Lamoni serves residents in Decatur County, which has a median household income of less than \$45,000.

"The magnitude of food waste that goes on at a college campus is mind-boggling," says Jennifer Abraham-White, sustainability coordinator at Graceland. "There are people within a stone's throw with empty refrigerators."

Before the pandemic, Graceland hosted biweekly dinners for low-income students, staff and the community using food recovered from the campus's dining hall. Recovered food was also provided to residents of a local assisted living facility, and any that was no longer fit for human consumption was donated to a local pig farmer or composted.

"We've diverted a lot from going into a landfill," says Abraham-White. During the pandemic, food recovery was processed differently since all campus dining food was prepackaged

for take-away, she says, but the program still diverted nearly 4,000 pounds from the landfill last school year. In some ways, the take-away packaging made moving recovered food easier and more predictable, but Abraham-White believes one of the major benefits students received from community meals was the casual interactions with community members.

"We co-opted events to highlight other projects, like a sustainable table event, and would share about other available resources within the community," she says. "Or we'd use the meals as an opportunity for ad-hoc conversations about community issues across all populations."

Abraham-White adds that she hopes that coming out of the pandemic, the food recovery program can create a hybrid program of pre-pandemic community meals and the packaging done during the 2020 school year that made moving the food more convenient.

Emma Cleland-Leighton, a recent Graceland University graduate, says her participation in Graceland's food recovery program helped her to realize that some governmental regulations will need to change for effective food waste reduction across the country. This fall, she'll start law school to focus on environmental advocacy, which she plans to use to create change.

"Food waste policy changes in the U.S. have so much potential," Cleland-Leighton says. "We need to find a way to make it a safer process." ■

Iowa Stops Hunger is a Business Publications Corporation initiative to raise awareness of hunger in Iowa and inspire action to combat it.

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JENNY CHAI AND TAE KIM

Jenny Chai and Tae Kim married at Alta Lakes, a series of alpine lakes located south of Telluride, Colorado. "We chose to elope because we wanted our day to be our day. It was stress-free," Jenny says. "We loved that we could go into the mountains with no specific plan and come out with the best memories."

Wedding date: Oct. 6, 2020

Photographer: Anna Jones Photography

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2021

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A: Certainty about their purchase. We suggest overnight test drives of all vehicles being considered, to get a quality experience of how the vehicle performs and other attributes that it offers.

Q: WHAT TRENDS DO YOU ANTICIPATE IN THE NEXT 5 YEARS?

A: Fully electric vehicles are now at the breaking point where they can be considered for every day transportation in all circumstances. Faster charging batteries will emerge so people will think nothing of driving a Battery Electric Vehicle.



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BOTTOMS UP

Fresh looks for post-Zooming work and play.

PHOTOGRAPHER: JOELLE BLANCHARD

STYLIST: COURTNEY CONLIN

MODELS: THE PEAK AGENCY



After a year-plus of remote work when sweats and slippers dominated workwear, many of us are ready for more polished and complete outfits—beyond the waist-up demands of those endless Zoom meetings.

That doesn't mean, however, that we're willing to give up comfort and return to sky-high heels. "Everyone is reevaluating their wardrobe right now," says personal style consultant Courtney Conlin. "As you ease back into reality, you don't have to trade comfort for style."

For example, both men and women can juxtapose an elevated sneaker with

a skirt or suit pant, she says. You can wear a T-shirt under a blazer or choose a dressier denim that can seamlessly transition from the office to cocktails.

Whether you're shopping for something new or reviving pre-pandemic pieces, Conlin advises to keep versatility top of mind, as she did in creating the looks featured in this story. "Attainable, versatile pieces play an important role in creating a stress-free wardrobe," she says. "The more versatility you have within your wardrobe, the easier it is to create new outfits. Begin building your wardrobe with staple pieces and work from there."

Conlin offers a few additional tips on reentering the real world:

- Don't overthink your clothing and accessory choices. "When you do that, you stress yourself out and associate a negative feeling with your wardrobe," Conlin points out, adding that you should feel good in whatever you're wearing.
- If you're buying clothes at a store and you "find yourself hemming and hawing and trying to force something to work, don't get it," she says. "When in doubt, walk out. Otherwise, it'll end up sitting around collecting dust. That creates a negative space in your closet."
- When you do wear an outfit you love, "take a selfie or lay it out, shoes and accessories included, and photograph it," Conlin suggests. "Create a folder on your phone and add your outfits to the folder."
- No matter what you wear, "be true to yourself and your personal style," she says. "The truer you are, the happier and more confident you will be."
- Oh, and in case you're wondering: "Yes," she assures us, "you *can* wear white after Labor Day!"


Suit: Express
Crew neck T-shirt: Banana Republic
Cuff bracelet: Jaxxon
Messenger bag and sneakers: Aldo

Model: Erick Jay Charley, the Peak Agency
Location: Surety Hotel



Ivory top, stretch pants and bag: Blond Genius
Booties: Dillard's (Antonio Melani)

Model: Kristin Gredys, the Peak Agency
Location: Surety Hotel



Bomber jacket, V-neck T-shirt, beaded
bracelets, jogger pant, duffel bag: Express
Shoes: Aldo

Model: Paxton Morgan, the Peak Agency



Ivory top, handbag, scarf, skirt: Blond Genius
Sneakers: Dillard's (Sam Edelman)
Model: Emeri Sams, the Peak Agency ■

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CUTTING EDGE

**KNIFEMAKER CAMERON SADEGHPOUR
TURNS HUNKS OF METAL INTO SHARP
WORKS OF ART.**

WRITER: JAMES AUGUSTUS BAGGETT

This page: Cameron Sadeghpour forges steel into a one-of-a-kind knife.

Right: Sadeghpour uses American-made high-carbon tool steel and natural materials to make his knives.

PHOTOGRAPHER: BETHANY KOHOUTEK



PHOTOGRAPHER: CAMERON SADEGHPOUR

The carriage house behind Cameron Sadeghpour's 1905 Des Moines home stands maybe 50 feet from his back door. During the days when the 46-year-old commercial photographer isn't working his magic behind the camera lens, he's creating a different kind of art in his carriage house workshop.

This is where he wrangles his well-worn tools: saws, grinders, square-faced hammers, a rust-spotted anvil, propane-fired forges. When the metal glows, Sadeghpour pounds a crude block of steel into a one-of-a-kind handmade knife.

As a photographer, Sadeghpour has been creating intriguing images for magazines, advertising and custom publications for more than 15 years. With a background in medical illustration and painting, he brings a balance of technical mastery and artistic vision to each of his shoots. He says his love of the outdoors and travel brings to his work a connection to the environment as well as a respect for authenticity.

Born in Iowa City and raised during his early childhood in Tehran, Iran (where his father is from), Sadeghpour can't remember a time he wasn't fascinated with knives.

"I was more than a kid who liked knives," he says. "I probably got the bug from all the cool Iranian knives I had seen, and I had a small collection of old handmade stuff that my dad had given me. I still have them and consider them to be the original seeds."

At the age of 8, Sadeghpour moved to rural eastern Iowa where knives were everyday tools and where he soon bloomed into an avid fisherman, bow hunter, canoeist and camper. "My interest in natural history and biology led to lots of dissection," he says. "My mother was a science teacher, and I learned taxidermy to use for school displays."

As a photographer, Sadeghpour embarked on trips into the wilderness for months with minimal gear, relying heavily on knives. "I became a collector and have hundreds of the best production knives in the world," he says. "But I also buy blades and seek out smiths while traveling."

Sadeghpour has studied blade-making in different parts of the world and has made blades in Europe, India, Laos, Mexico and Turkey. But he says it wasn't until he was in his 30s that "I knew enough to make something better than these factory knives and got into the handmade realm."

As an outdoorsman and environmentalist, Sadeghpour says he's watched in dismay as humans squander the planet's resources and the climate emergency becomes

a reality. That's why he dubbed his knife studio—located in Des Moines' Mainframe Studios—Lost Planet Forge.

"People have lost touch with the natural world," he says. "And the objects around them are processed and global with no sense of place, made of foreign components by strangers in a faraway factory and designed to break. There is no connection other than the price paid."

"I'm hoping to create something that connects people to the outdoors, made from a scrap of the outdoors and minimally processed with knowledge and heat to create something special."

Sadeghpour's heirloom-quality knives are created one at a time, entirely by hand, with American-made high-carbon tool steel and unique natural materials. Most handles are made from horn, bone and native hardwoods finished with natural oil. Every knife comes fitted with a handmade leather sheath also crafted and tooled by


"I'M HOPING TO CREATE SOMETHING THAT CONNECTS PEOPLE TO THE OUTDOORS, MADE FROM A SCRAP OF THE OUTDOORS AND MINIMALLY PROCESSED WITH KNOWLEDGE AND HEAT TO CREATE SOMETHING SPECIAL."

CAMERON SADEGHPOUR

Sadeghpour. "I will never use any threatened or endangered plant or animal parts in my knives," he says.

Sadeghpour prefers fashioning his knives using local materials he's collected. "I have some cherry burl from a tree that sat a few feet from my shop," he says. "I've used lilac wood from my mom's old farmhouse, beams from old cabins, and teak from an old boat deck." He even has someone's titanium hip in a drawer that will be forged into fittings for knives.

"In a world of mass production and digital assets," he adds, showing off an impressive assortment of horn- and wood-handled knives, "these are reminders of handmade quality combined with practical function. Each has a character of its own, but they all will bring you home from your next adventure with a smile on your face." ■



Sadeghpour creates
his knives one at a
time, entirely by hand.

PHOTOGRAPHER: CAMERON SADEGHPOUR



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ROOMS TO GROW

Creative paint choices and an eclectic array
of arty finds freshen up a South of Grand home.

WRITER: CANDACE ORD MANROE
PHOTOGRAPHER: DUANE TINKEY



Left: Greg and Ruthie Jackson and their two children, Everett, 6, and Emmelie, 8.

This page: The house's 1935 charms include the wainscoting and staircase, which got a fresh swipe of paint. The traditional look of the painting and umbrella stand juxtaposes with the contemporary patterned stairway runner, which also adds texture and interest.

Ruthie Jackson says she regards the Georgian-style home she shares with her husband, Greg, and their two children as “one big art project. I’m always experimenting.” Jackson, a certified interior decorator, loves her design calling and brims with confidence. That’s why a tight budget couldn’t cramp her style when the family moved four years ago from their beloved Waterbury cottage into the roomier 1935 house located South of Grand.

“I’m a big Phase 1 fan for long-term renovations,” she says. “I’d rather have the whole house feel cheery, clean and safe than have one or two perfectly finished rooms.”

Her children were only 1 and 4 when the family moved in. “I worked quickly with anything we had on hand—things family gave us, including leftover paint, and lots of secondhand [pieces],” she recalls. “And nothing too precious with littles hanging around. When time, money and inspiration come together, I will go back through and make Phase 2 changes.”

Meanwhile, smaller projects are nonstop. Most recent

is the addition of black paint to the living room. “I’d stained the paneling on the adjacent [porch] black, and I like how the black ties the two spaces together,” Jackson says.

The black also grounds the softer blues and greens she favors, slathered over walls and decorating furniture fabrics, rugs and art. The palette knits all the spaces into one cohesive design.

“Paint is relatively inexpensive and wields so much power to change a space,” she says.

Jackson defines her style as “modern traditional. I like to listen to what the house wants. Anything old came from Craigslist, family or thrift stores. I like a bit of humor and whimsy throughout. I enjoy the layers that come throughout with time.”

The house provided more than extra square footage; it also met emotional needs. “I wanted a big old Christmas house where everyone piled in for the holidays. And bonus if it looked anything like the ‘Father of the Bride’ house,” says Jackson, wheels churning as she dreams up what comes next.

You can follow along with the Jacksons as they work on their house on Instagram @miracleonthirtyfourth.

“I’D RATHER HAVE THE
WHOLE HOUSE FEEL CHEERY,
CLEAN AND SAFE THAN
HAVE ONE OR TWO PERFECTLY
FINISHED ROOMS.”

RUTHIE JACKSON



Love seats from Target go back to back in the living room. Ruthie Jackson drew inspiration for the look from Tory Burch. "She often uses back-to-back sofas in her living spaces, which I've always admired," Jackson says. "I think the configuration elevates the whole look."

The light walls are painted Behr's Swiss Coffee, while the black fireplace adds drama to the space and grounds the room's softer tones.

A Century table, which the Jacksons bought during the Mansion's close-out sale, teams up with Nate Berkus chairs from Target to create a game area and spillover dining space in the living room.





Before the Jacksons moved in, the kitchen's last update had been in the 1960s. "We were able to keep all the charming and quirky parts," Ruthie Jackson says. The Jacksons avoided a gut renovation and instead have worked on it over the past four years, reusing and reconfiguring cabinets and disguising old appliances, Jackson notes.

"We kept the breakfast nook footprint and added built-in benches made from hairpin legs and leftover countertop," Jackson explains. "I reused the existing blind and added ribbon." In addition, she added a peg board storage space to fill out an awkward bumped-in wall.



This page: Ruthie Jackson's office features a curved-back sofa that was an Instagram collaboration with Homemakers when it brought in the TOV line. "I let people vote between two sofas and went with their pick. It was so fun! And I think they picked well," Jackson says. The wallpaper is York Garden Trellis.

Right: A salmon-hued door and wallpaper bring a fun, vibrant vibe to the mudroom. ■



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**Congratulations to the resilient, hardworking Iowans
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LGBTQ

LEGACY LEADERS

WRITER: CANDACE ORD MANROE

PHOTOGRAPHER: DUANE TINKEY

Now in their third year, *dsm* magazine's LGBTQ Legacy Leader awards recognize the outstanding professional, personal and civic achievements of LGBTQ Iowans. Their contributions and advocacy work have made our state a better place for us all; indeed, even amid setbacks and discrimination, they have strived to make "Iowa nice" a reality and not a mere

slogan. As in previous years, we're also recognizing an ally of the LGBTQ community who has been a passionate and effective advocate for equality.

Read about the honorees on the following pages, and listen to what they have to say in a video created by Emily Blobaum, available at dsmmagazine.com. The event to celebrate them will be virtual again this year; please join us on Oct. 15, from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., to meet this year's inspiring group of dynamic leaders.

Register at dsmmagazine.com/lgbtq-legacyawards-2021.



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CHRISTIASON**

TIM HICKMAN

ARTFUL CONVICTIONS

Des Moines architect Tim Hickman revealed the stuff he's made of early in his career. In 1990, just five years after earning a bachelor's degree in architecture from Iowa State University, he walked away from an internship in the field he loved to pursue a more urgent calling: The AIDS epidemic was raging, and as a proud gay man, he wanted to help. He worked for the Red Cross as an HIV/AIDS educator, volunteering for the Buddy Program.

"I wanted to be able to contribute more to the world than designing expensive houses," says Hickman, who founded Substance Architecture in 2005.

In fact, he's never stopped contributing. As an award-winning architect, most of his civic work revolves around arts and culture. Still, he's never stopped advocating for LGBTQ equality, often alongside his husband, Frank Vaia, who's retired. The two married in 2010, but have been in a relationship since 1988.

Hickman "daily acts on the values of equity, respect, nondiscrimination and inclusion," says Dory Briles, executive director of the Des Moines Public Library Foundation, where Hickman served as board president in 2017-2018.

"Through Tim and Frank's open and strong relationship, they have created straight allies for LGBTQ issues."

It wasn't always easy to be proud. "The toughest part of growing up gay was that my young life centered on my Southern Baptist church in Ames," the 58-year-old Hickman recalls. "The church was the center of my family and social life. Once I started to understand that I was gay, I felt trapped in a mindset that told me that only profoundly evil people could be gay and that being gay was a choice.

That led to years of hiding and self-loathing."

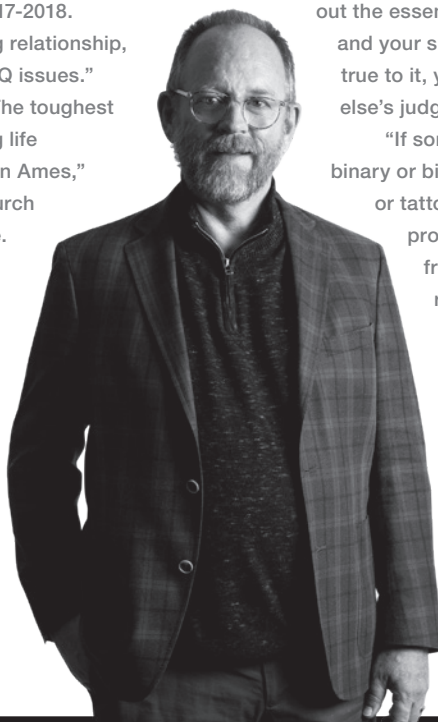
He adds that he may not be "naturally disposed to being empathetic, but my experience of being judged and shunned by parts of my religious community has allowed me to feel for anyone who is scorned for their difference."

Hickman earned a master's in architecture from Yale University in 2000. Earlier, he studied at the Ecoles d'Art Americaines in Fontainebleau, France. He worked at several Des Moines architecture firms before striking out on his own in 2005 with Substance Architecture.

Currently Hickman serves as president of the board of directors of the Greater Des Moines Public Art Foundation, a position he's held since 2017, and is a docent at the Des Moines Art Center. His volunteerism also includes helping out AIA (American Institute of Architects) Iowa in a variety of ways, including previously serving as its professional development committee chair.

No matter the cause or project served by his volunteerism, Hickman continues to work for LGBTQ equality. His advice for LGBTQ youths—or for anyone, for that matter—is "to figure out the essence of who you are, beyond your emotions and your situation. If you can find that essence, and be true to it, you can give up worrying about everyone else's judgement about you.

"If someone rejects you because you are gay, non-binary or bisexual, or because of your fashion choices or tattoos or lisp, you can say: 'That is their problem, not mine,'" he adds. "That can be very freeing, and will allow you the confidence required to accept and validate other people, which is what we are here to do."





CONGRATULATIONS

TIM HICKMAN
DES MOINES, PRINCIPAL,
SUBSTANCE ARCHITECTURE

EUGENIA KUTSCH-STANTON
DES MOINES, RESEARCH SCIENTIST,
CORTEVA AGRISCIENCE

RANDY MAYER
AMES, CHIEF OF THE BUREAU
OF HIV, STD AND HEPATITIS,
IOWA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

JOHN SCHMACKER
DES MOINES, RETIRED CERTIFIED
PUBLIC ACCOUNTANT AND
NONPROFIT EXECUTIVE

ELLE WYANT
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EUGENIA KUTSCH-STANTON

NATURAL-BORN ACTIVIST

As COVID-19 pummeled Iowa industry, employees like Corteva Agriscience research scientist Eugenia Kutsch-Stanton fought back with MacGyver-esque resourcefulness. As part of the company's crisis management team, she strategized how to keep communication flowing between employees working from home and workers in the field. "Plants continue to grow even in a pandemic," Kutsch-Stanton wryly observes.

The St. Louis native was up for the task. Kutsch-Stanton knew that it's imperative to clearly identify a problem before tackling its solution. Now 52, she's spent a lifetime polishing both skills.

"I was born an activist," says the daughter of a firefighter father—one of St. Louis' first African Americans to serve in the capacity—and a mother who taught special education and later worked in school administration. "Our mom would take us to the firehouse where we would hang on our dad," she recalls.

She also learned how to identify prejudice at her father's firehouse: "Meals would be provided, but they resented feeding my dad. Once he was fed dog food."

Kutsch-Stanton earned two master's degrees—an MBA from the University of Iowa and an MS in biology from the University of Missouri—and an undergraduate degree in biology from Jackson State University in Jackson, Mississippi. She began her career as a research scientist at Monsanto before joining DuPont Pioneer. She currently works as the U.S. crop protection regulatory lead at Corteva, based in Johnston. What's not in her job description is her behind-the-scenes advocacy for African Americans, women and LGBTQ people.

"My colleagues laugh, 'Oh, no, here comes Eugenia with another growth opportunity,'" she says. "Stoking that fire in people that gets them to identify what they can do to make the world a better

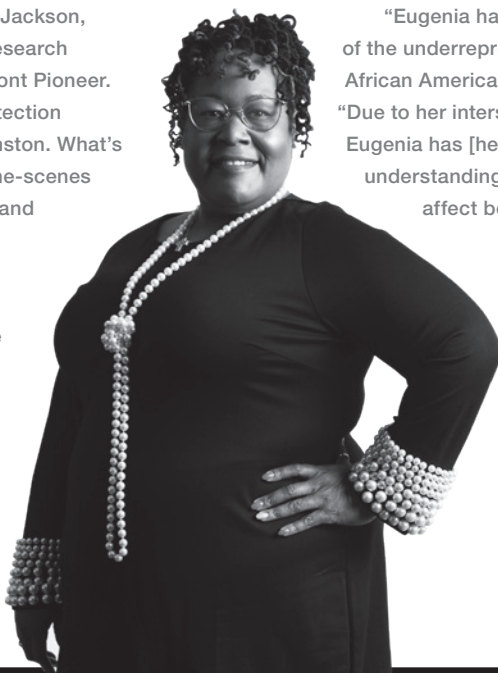
place for all of us is my goal. We're all just making this up as we go along."

Kutsch-Stanton's community volunteerism is tireless and multifaceted. She's a board member of the Greater Des Moines Leadership Institute, currently serving as chair-elect of its Equity and Inclusion Committee, of which she was a founding member. To hone her effectiveness as a leader, she graduated from the Greater Des Moines Leadership Institute's Community Leadership Program. Under her tutelage, the Leadership Institute launched a racial equity educational program to increase awareness of systemic racism in Greater Des Moines. In addition, she's an advisory council member of One Iowa's inaugural LGBTQ Leadership Institute.

Donning another hat, Kutsch-Stanton volunteers to address the unmet needs of women and girls as a board member of the Chrysalis Foundation, for which she recently finished serving as board president. "She's been instrumental in promoting the mission and vision of Chrysalis by advocating for the support of young women and recruiting new members," says Bridget Cravens-Neely, who first met Kutsch-Stanton through their membership in the historically African American sorority Sigma Gamma Rho.

"Eugenia has been a strong advocate for the rights of the underrepresented and marginalized LGBTQ and African American communities," Cravens-Neely adds. "Due to her intersectionality of these two groups, Eugenia has [helped] build awareness and increase understanding around the issues that adversely affect both groups."

Kutsch-Stanton, who is married to Sheri Kutsch-Stanton, advises LGBTQ youths as well as others to "spend time daily knowing and learning more about your authentic self. Be fabulously you. Identify your values, and let them guide your journey."





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RANDY MAYER

PUBLIC SERVANT

As a scientist, 56-year-old epidemiologist Randy Mayer is tasked with serving the state as the Iowa Department of Public Health's bureau chief of HIV, STD and hepatitis. As a gay man, he brings understanding, dedication and compassion that go beyond the job description.

"Randy has always been a champion for HIV positive individuals who have fought to live with dignity and hope," says Polk County Supervisor Matt McCoy. Quietly, Mayer has spent more than 20 years behind the scenes working to eradicate HIV in the state.

The results of his work are measurable: From 2016 to today, Iowa has shown a 30% decline in the number of individuals testing positive for the disease. "It's a true reduction," Mayer explains. "We're testing more people, not less."

The nature of Mayer's job is one part science, one part sociology, and all parts communication. "Randy has a rare ability to communicate effectively with a wide range of stakeholders," says colleague Holly Hanson. "He speaks [on the science] to laypersons without condescension and in terms they can easily understand."

Hanson and other peers admire Mayer for his willingness to take a stand on tough issues even when doing so could jeopardize his career. "His combination of effective communication and doing what is right has enabled Randy to effect change not only in Iowa, but across the country," Hanson says.

One such change is Iowa's modernization of its 1998 HIV criminalization statute, which made failure to disclose one's HIV-positive status to a sexual partner a class B felony punishable by up to 25 years in prison. In 2014, that law was repealed and replaced with one that reflected the latest scientific understanding of how HIV is transmitted; it's viewed as more humane and less socially stigmatizing. The update not only

has served as a template for other states, but even for other countries.

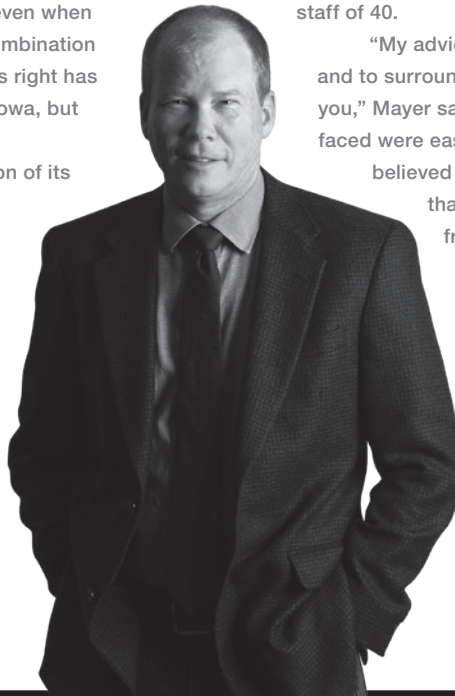
A San Antonio native, Mayer relocated to Iowa with his family before graduating from high school. He earned a bachelor's degree from Iowa State University in botany. Next, he received a master's in horticulture from Purdue University, where he met his husband, Bill Graves, a trained botanist and dean of the graduate school at Iowa State. The couple married in California in 2008, before same-sex marriage was legal in Iowa, but they have been together 35 years.

After marrying, they relocated to teach at the University of Maryland. While there, Mayer volunteered for a program at a health clinic, where he was paired to provide social support to someone with HIV. That man suggested that Mayer's true calling might be epidemiology.

He was right. Mayer went back to school for his second master's, this time earning a Master of Public Health degree in epidemiology from the University of Minnesota. After positions at Iowa State University and at the Iowa Department of Public Health as the state's chief HIV epidemiologist, he moved in 2008 into his current position as bureau chief, overseeing a staff of 40.

"My advice to younger people is to be yourself and to surround yourself with people who believe in you," Mayer says. "Any struggles that I might have faced were eased by having someone who has always believed in me fully. Together we created the life that we wanted to have despite pressure from society to make us feel less than whole."

He urges gay and trans youths not to believe that anything is wrong with them but rather "with those causing their pain. I would tell them to find their supporters and allies, and do their best to get away from the rest."



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JOHN SCHMACKER

STRONG SHOULDERS

LGBTQ rights that some Gen Zs and millennials may take for granted didn't emerge from a vacuum. They began with trailblazing activists like Des Moines native John Schmacker. Every time an LGBTQ person's sexual orientation is protected in the city of Des Moines, Schmacker is the person to thank.

In the late 1990s, then-Mayor Preston Daniels appointed Schmacker, now 78, to the Des Moines Human Rights Commission. He successfully led the effort to expand the city's protected rights to a broader ordinance that included sexual preference.

"It's true that younger members of the LGBTQ community don't always realize they're riding on someone else's shoulders every time they walk down the sidewalk holding hands or gather outside a gay bar without fear of being spit upon," Schmacker reflects.

Things weren't so easy for him growing up. "The hard part was not coming out to my family. It's hard work staying in the closet," he says. Before the Stonewall uprising in New York's Greenwich Village on June 28, 1969, "you were either in the closet or 'known.' There was no 'out' before then," he explains.

During the AIDS epidemic, he served on the Governor's Task Force on AIDS, starting with its creation in 1987 by then-Gov. Robert Ray. The goal was to help Iowa develop an appropriate, compassionate response to the crisis. He also has served as president of the Gay Coalition of Des Moines and as president of the Gay and Lesbian Resource Center. His many contributions to advancing LGBTQ equality include serving on the boards of the Iowa Pride Network, the Iowa Pride Center and the Des Moines Gay Men's Chorus.

In fact, Schmacker founded the chorus. "I was noticing gay men's choral groups forming in other cities, so I got a group from Des Moines together around the piano in my basement. That's where it started," he says with a laugh.

That was in the early 1980s. "At the time, the other members sadly did not want 'gay' in the name of the group," he recalls. After the choral group's first iteration dissolved, Schmacker relaunched the organization, this time with "gay" proudly in its name. It's celebrating its 20th anniversary this year.

A CPA and graduate of Iowa State University, Schmacker began his career in accounting and finance after the Navy, where he served during the Vietnam War aboard an aircraft carrier in the Gulf of Tonkin. He visited his first gay bar while drydocked in San Francisco on June 28, 1969—the same day as the Stonewall riots in New York City. He associates that infamous day with his coming out, though it would be later, in the late '70s, in Iowa. "It still wasn't safe to be out in Iowa in the 1970s," he says.

His professional life includes having worked as a senior financial consultant for the American Red Cross, the chief financial officer for the Iowa chapter of the Red Cross, and controller for the Iowa Democratic Party. He's also offered his expertise pro bono, serving as treasurer of several nonprofits.

But he views his teaching experiences as his greatest accomplishments. He was a frequent speaker to college students and to Iowa classroom teachers and principals and also led marriage equality debates at Drake University and at Buena Vista University in Storm Lake.

Even though some of those teaching experiences were 20 years ago, Schmacker was thanked as recently as this summer by someone who'd been in attendance.

"We change people's minds one brain at a time," Schmacker says. "Even with as much progress as we've made, we are always one vote and one Supreme Court decision away from having our rights taken away from us."



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ELLE WYANT

LIVING HER TRUTH

Kids know “be yourself” as the parental panacea used to settle nerves from the first day of school to the first date. For LGBTQ activist Elle Wyant—who began her transition from male to female in 2009, officially came out to her friends, family and colleagues in 2010, and had gender confirmation surgery in 2012—the advice remains spot-on. By living her truth, an act of courage and gravitas, Wyant supports individuals grappling with gender identity without having to say a word.

“I hope that by owning who I am I can be a role model to people in the community,” says Wyant, who lives in Marengo in eastern Iowa.

And what a role model that is, according to Vanessa M. Blanchfield, assistant general counsel in Wells Fargo’s legal department in Des Moines. “Elle is full of positivity and possibility,” says Blanchfield, a friend of 20 years. “She is the most fearless person I know.”

Wyant’s decision to transition included careful consideration for the feelings of her two daughters, now 13 and 14, whom she has with her ex-wife. “It’s best that children grow up knowing they have two parents who are happy,” Wyant says.

“You have to love yourself before you can love others, and I wanted the best for my children,” she adds. “The only way I could give them that was to love myself.” (This Father’s Day, her younger child presented her with a handmade card embellished with drawings of flowers and butterflies. A handwritten note that runs the length of a page says, among other things, “You mean the WORLD to me. ... I love you beyond imagination.”)

The 45-year-old Wyant, an Iowa State University communications graduate, is beginning her 19th year as an account executive with UPS. Chairwoman of the company’s LGBTQ Business Resource Group, she’s helped the Iowa City

organization grow from 30 to 130 members, making it the company’s largest group in the country except for the home office in Atlanta.

Her volunteerism extends to a variety of LGBTQ events, whether she’s behind the podium speaking or behind the scenes organizing. She attributes her outgoing nature and willingness to serve to having grown up in a family of extroverts. Her family owns two Iowa wineries: Ackerman Wine in the Amana Colonies and Fireside Wine—the state’s largest—in Marengo, where Wyant grew up.

She lives in a circa-1950 home, but she uses a 151-year-old restored one-room schoolhouse on the property for LGBTQ events. When a young person thinking of transitioning asked Wyant to appear with her on MTV, she agreed. The MTV camera crew flew to Iowa and shot the segment inside the old schoolhouse.

“When I was growing up, I didn’t know a single person in the LGBTQ scene,” Wyant says. “I had no one to mentor me. So whenever I can help someone else, I do.”

There was so little LGBTQ visibility in her town while she was growing up that Wyant learned about gender identity in a college library. “I didn’t know what I was feeling until I found the right book.” But once she knew, she was open about it when dating her future wife. When her wife filed for divorce, Wyant realized it was time to embrace making the transition.

Wyant recently met a girl “transitioning to her authentic life. I told her to hold her head high; to educate herself and others [on what it means to be transgender], and to not be afraid of what the world thinks,” she says. “You deserve to be happy. Live authentically, and the right people will come to you.”



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ALLY AWARD DR. KYLE CHRISTIASON HEATH INNOVATOR



Like many who stand with the LGBTQ community, this year's Ally honoree, Waterloo family physician Kyle Christiason, 51, deepened his commitment from support to activism when things got personal—specifically when his then-teenage son, Ben, now 24, announced he identified as transmasculine.

Christiason and his wife, Jennifer, began a “complex and cumbersome journey navigating the health care system. They quickly realized the gaps and lack of services available for Ben and others like him,” says Dave Williams, M.D., the CEO of the UnityPoint Clinic where Christiason practices.

What the family's research revealed were two uncomfortable truths: that 1 in 4 transgender people have had a negative health care experience and, more alarmingly,

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UnityPoint Health

that 1 in 5 have been refused care for no other reason than being transgender.

Christiason resolved to change that narrative. His idea was to provide a specialized health care facility for LGBTQ people. The clinic dedicated to LGBTQ care opened in 2018 as the UnityPoint Health Prairie Parkway LGBTQ+ clinic in Waterloo, an extension of the existing clinic where Christiason practiced. The specialized care services are open two days a month during extended hours from 5 to 7 p.m., when Christiason and another provider trained for LGBTQ patients offer care services.

"Its care teams are trained to nurture trust, learn terminology, understand concepts and identify available resources in order to appreciate the unique challenges and incredible resiliency of the LGBTQ community," Williams says.

The clinic provides primary care and routine exams, vaccinations, cancer screening, contraceptive management, and STI testing and treatment, among other services. Under Christiason's leadership, the clinic was an immediate success—so much so that another clinic for similar services was opened using Christiason's as a prototype, this time in Central Iowa: In 2019, UnityPoint Health LGBTQ clinic opened in Des Moines.

The Waterloo clinic has been recognized by the American Board of Internal Medicine Foundation's Trust Challenge. The clinic also has received commendation from JAMA, the American Journal of Managed Care, Modern Healthcare, and Health Affairs. Christiason serves as the inaugural chair of the UnityPoint Clinic/UnityPoint at Home board of directors and is CEO for UnityPoint Accountable Care, one of the largest ACOs in the nation.

Christiason's advice to parents with children exploring their gender truth is to "realize that what you may feel as personal grief is contrary to what your child is feeling. Your child, for the first time, can feel joyful. It's like a new birth. So please don't feel compelled to bring your doubts, fears, grief, guilt or any other of your issues to your child. Those are your issues, and this is your child's journey." ■

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**Tim Hickman • Eugenia Kutsch-Stanton
Randy Mayer • John Schmacker
Elle Wyant • Dr. Kyle Christiason (ally)**



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**CONGRATULATIONS TIM!
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AND INSPIRATION.**

Substance Architecture architects Tim Hickman (right) and Paolo Orlando review plans for *A Monumental Journey* (background) with artist Kerry James Marshall (left).

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HEALTH

DOCTORS' HOBBIES // GETTING FIT WITH FRIENDS //
THE LATINX PROJECT

Wander Women offers opportunities for women to experience nature through hikes, camping trips and other outdoor adventures. See story, page 130.



On a quiet morning, Broadlawns physician Larry Lindell relaxes by waiting for a perfect shot of the Iowa countryside. See story, page 115.

A landscape photograph showing a calm pond in the foreground, reflecting the warm, orange and pink hues of a sunset sky. The pond is surrounded by lush green grass and some reeds. In the background, there are rolling green hills and a line of trees under the soft light of dusk.

DOCS OFF THE CLOCK

WRITER: CAROLE GIESEKE

PHOTOGRAPHER: DUANE TINKEY

After a long, unpredictable year, some physicians may relax simply by putting up their feet and watching Netflix. But the Des Moines physicians featured in this story turn to more creative outlets—they pick up a musical instrument, a camera, a table saw, or maybe a soup pot. Or they speed off on their bicycle and ride for days. And, they have found, these hobbies not only have personal benefits but professional ones as well.

THE ULTRACYCLIST

HEATHER POSKEVICH, D.O.

*Emergency Care Physician
MercyOne*

Halfway through the Iowa Wind and Rock 340-mile bicycle race in 2019, Heather Poskevich was completely alone, navigating the steep hills of Madison County, gravel crunching beneath her tires. A full moon barely illuminated the road ahead. Nearby, in the darkened farm fields, she could hear the mechanical whooshing of wind turbines and see their red lights flashing on and off, on and off.

Poskevich, 41, savors the solitude of a long-distance race, and she thrives on the challenges that come from multiday ultras that can reach up to a thousand miles. And she's good at them, too: This past June, she took on Race Across the West, 930 miles from California to Colorado, winning first female and second place overall. She tied for first female at Iowa Wind and Rock, won and set a new female record at the HooDoo 500 in Utah in 2019, and won for fastest female at the Big Sky Spectaculaire last year in Montana, her home state.

"Racing has taught me a lot about being in pain," Poskevich says. Ultracycling, not unlike working as an emergency room physician, requires dealing with fatigue, working through inconsistencies, and being adaptable in the moment. "You learn to navigate and problem-solve and think on your feet."



THE PHOTOGRAPHER

LARRY LINDELL, M.D.

*Women's Health Center Section Chief
Broadlawns Medical Center*

Every Sunday morning, before the sun comes up, Larry Lindell grabs a cup of coffee, tunes his car radio to classical music, and drives to a farm field. There, he sits quietly, coffee cup in hand, listening to the dawn chorus of the birds and watching as the sun peeks from the horizon and spreads its light across the sky. When the light is especially interesting, he exposes a sheet or two of film. But sometimes he just enjoys the moment.

Fifteen years ago, Lindell bought a digital camera and started shooting the Iowa countryside. Over the years, he's slowed down, moving from digital photography back to film, using a large-format view camera. "I'm doing more expressive photography, not just reproducing the scene," Lindell, 66, says. "In the last five years, I've been heading away from just trophy-hunting shots, just pretty pictures. I've lost interest in that. I've gone from taking 100 pictures of a scene to taking three or four."

The process of slowing down has helped Lindell to be more present, both as a photographer and as a physician. "Photography is relaxing to me," he says. "It's just something I do when I'm not being a doctor."





THE WOODWORKER

TRACY L. EKHARDT, M.D.
Chief Medical Officer
UnityPoint Health

Two weeks into the pandemic, Tracy Eckhardt took over as chief medical officer while continuing to work in pediatric intensive care at UnityPoint. It was a frightening, unpredictable time.

As a way to relieve stress, her husband gently nudged her toward woodworking. Eckhardt had built sets

for the theater department in college, and she always had meant to explore the hobby. It turns out that in the midst of the “crazy chaos” at work, Eckhardt, 47, welcomed having something tangible to work on.

In a two-car garage, built as a carriage house for her 1909 home, Eckhardt created a compact woodworking studio. After a long day at work, she puts on her noise-canceling headphones and listens to music while she planes pieces of

hardwood to create stools, benches and cutting boards. Sometimes she works until midnight—or later.

“It’s an escape,” she says, “just to have something very separate from the constantly changing dynamics with COVID. It was fascinating to be in the middle of something that’s changing so quickly, but it also felt a bit out of control. And to have something small and discrete that you [can] actually see and have a product at the end [is] very therapeutic.”

THE BAGPIPER

MICA MURDOCH, D.P.M.

*Foot and Ankle Clinic Section Chief
Broadlawns Medical Center*

Nothing says “strong Celtic heritage” like the bagpipes, and for Mica Murdoch, 42, playing bagpipes with the Iowa Scottish Pipes & Drums corps is a direct connection to his ancestors. The group performs at parades, weddings, funerals, Oktoberfest celebrations—basically, Murdoch says, “anyone who will hire us.”

The highlight of any bagpiper’s year is, of course, St. Patrick’s Day. That’s when the group plays to a packed house at the Royal Mile pub in Des Moines’ Court Avenue District. “It’s very high-energy,” Murdoch says. “It’s packed to the max with lots of people, and everyone loves hearing the bagpipes. It’s always a very loud, hot, sweaty moment. We probably don’t play the best there, but it’s St. Patrick’s Day.”

Murdoch takes his musical craft as seriously as his work in reconstructive foot and ankle surgery. He plays tunes at the end of each day to relax. Like surgery, the bagpipe is a difficult instrument to play, and he constantly works to improve. “It’s not like riding a bike,” he explains. “You have to maintain your skill level. The instrument demands a lot of attention, or it sounds terrible.”



THE BASS PLAYER

MATTHEW C. BROWN, M.D.

*Obstetrics and Gynecology
UnityPoint Health*

A friendly conversation at their kids' baseball game led Matt Brown and a group of like-minded parents to form a rock band. It was nothing grand; the group performed in small venues and for people in their backyards. Then one day, Brown, now 53, got an opportunity to try out as the bass player for a local cover band that performed the music he loved the most: 1970s rock 'n' roll.

But here's the catch: For the band's next gig, he had to learn 35 songs in two weeks. No problem! That was six years ago, and he's been playing bass for the six-piece band, Stark Raving Madge, ever since. The group performs two to three times a month, often at outdoor locations or at Wooly's in the East Village and Gas Lamp on Grand Avenue.

"Most of us are older and have day jobs, so we tend to play earlier," he says, laughing. Madge has built up its repertoire to nearly 90 songs, adding new songs all the time.

"Being a musician, you have to put a lot of time in outside of the stage," Brown says. "As a physician, you have to make commitments to continuing education, to keep your skills up. Both of these things keep you feeling younger."



THE COOK

BICK CARFRAE, M.D.

*Anesthesiologist
MercyOne*

When Bick Carfrae was 3 or 4 years old, she absorbed the essence of Vietnamese cooking as her mother, grandmother and aunts worked at the kitchen table.

She remembers them “cleaving away at beef bones and pork knuckles and even chicken drumsticks,” Carfrae, 47, says. “I remember this rhythmic striking of the butcher blade coming down ... and to a little girl it was kind of scary. It felt like thunder rolling through the kitchen floor, vibrating up through my bones.

“I remember gazing up at these whirling towers of steam, coming out of this enormous sterile steel vat of soup. Only later in life did I appreciate that this industrial-size stock pot was necessary to feed everybody in my family.”

Now a cook in her own kitchen, Carfrae pays homage to her Vietnamese heritage through the rich history of its food. In general, she explains, Vietnamese food is simple, relying on achieving five distinctive flavors (salty, sweet, sour, bitter and umami) by adjusting a few ingredients and adding for color and texture. Seasonings like ginger, tamarind, lemongrass and fish sauce help create her favorite dishes. One of those is banh xeo, a crispy crepe stuffed with pork belly, shrimp and bean sprouts.

Today, she still cooks with her mother. “Cooking allows us to be together as family,” Carfrae says, “and with our busy lifestyle, why not eat and gather at the same time?” ■





Is Where The Health Is



What have you been most proud of about how your team has handled the pandemic situation?

Food access became a critical issue for millions of Americans during the pandemic, especially for those already living with special nutrition requirements for conditions like diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and kidney failure. They needed to eat, and eat right for their conditions — a challenge when you're social distancing and immunosuppressed. We are tremendously proud of our team's determination and compassion during this time. We all worked together to adapt and overcome the day-by-day challenges of COVID-19, knowing we had to do our part to deliver millions of meals to food insecure individuals across the U.S. — many for the first time.

How does your area of care specifically help our community in this unprecedented time?

We provide home-delivered meals primarily to individuals through Medicaid, Medicare, and community organizations like Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs). Many individuals in these groups also

struggle with social determinants of health (SDOH), which are non-medical factors that can impact health, such as socioeconomic status, geographic place of residence, and transportation access, for example. The pandemic magnified the impact SDOH has on the health of individuals, and has made it more difficult for some populations to safely and reliably access food, let alone food that's appropriate for chronic health needs like diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, or kidney disease.

By delivering meals specifically designed for chronic conditions directly to the home, we've been able to help protect the food and nutrition security of thousands of people who are most vulnerable to the physical and social challenges of COVID-19.

Learn more at
momsmeals.com



A close-up photograph of a female doctor with curly hair, wearing a white lab coat and a blue stethoscope. She is smiling warmly at a young girl with curly hair who is looking up at her. The background is softly blurred, showing another person's face in the upper right corner.

HEALTHCARE EXPERTS

PROFILES HIGHLIGHTING
THE METRO'S BEST
HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS



UNITYPOINT CLINIC

Pictured L-R: Kelly Brozek, Danelle Perkins, Anesa Buchanan, Ronda Montgomery, Sadie Forey, Jill Wilkins, Shelli Herdliska

Q: HOW DOES YOUR AREA OF CARE SPECIFICALLY HELP OUR COMMUNITY IN THIS UNPRECEDENTED TIME?

A: UnityPoint Clinic is proud to be part of the communities in which we reside. To us, patient care is more than treating injuries and illnesses; it's about heart. Whether it was quickly adapting to safely provide care in new ways, acting as a source of truth and educating our communities, or giving up time with our own families to vaccinate yours at vaccine clinics throughout Central Iowa, our team put a lot of heart into caring for the community during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Q: WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN MOST PROUD OF ABOUT HOW YOUR TEAM HAS HANDLED THE PANDEMIC SITUATION?

A: Even when worried about their own health, our teams continued to care for patients without a moment's hesitation. It was, as always, a privilege to be able to help our community stay safe.

Q: IS THERE A TEAM MEMBER YOU WANT TO SHOWCASE FOR EXEMPLARY PERFORMANCE IN THIS ENVIRONMENT?

A: Our clinic administrators (some pictured above), kept positive attitudes while leading health care facilities during the constant change and demand of a pandemic. Along with a passionate group of health care providers, these teams provided COVID-19 vaccinations and education to patient populations who may not have otherwise had access to care.

The proof is in the numbers. One clinic, UnityPoint Clinic Urgent Care—Urbandale, was able to administer upward of 50,000 vaccines—sometimes giving as many as 1,000 vaccines a day, while still maintaining regular urgent care operations.



WWW.UNITYPOINT.ORG



MERCYONE DES MOINES STROKE EXPERTS

Q: WHAT SETS MERCYONE APART FROM THE COMPETITION?

A: MercyOne is central Iowa's only hospital to receive the Gold Seal of Approval™ and Primary Stroke Center certification from The Joint Commission, the nation's predominant standards-setting and accrediting body in health care – an honor held since 2007.

We are also one of two hospitals in Iowa to perform thrombectomy – an interventional procedure for ischemic stroke patients. (87% of all strokes are ischemic strokes.)

Additionally, our Stroke Team is proud to be lead under the expertise of a stroke coordinator who follows every stroke case and by a vascular neurologist who has completed a fellowship in stroke.

Q: WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF A STROKE?

A: If you start to experience any of these symptoms, call 911 immediately.

- A sudden, severe headache with no apparent cause.
- Sudden blurred vision, or decreased vision, in one or both eyes.
- Sudden weakness or numbness in your face, arm or leg on one side of your body.
- Trouble speaking or understanding simple statements.
- Sudden dizziness, or loss of balance or coordination.

Q: HOW MANY STROKE PATIENTS DOES MERCYONE TREAT ANNUALLY?

A: Our Stroke Center treats the most stroke patients in Iowa, with 17 percent of the statewide inpatient stroke population treated annually – resulting in more than 1,000 total strokes.

Q: WHAT ARE SOME GUIDING PRINCIPLES THE STROKE TEAM ADHERES TO?

A: It's simple! We care about our patients and want the absolute best for them, which is why we strive to treat all stroke patients quickly and with personalized care as all strokes are different – not one is the same. Ultimately, this team is guided by one mission – to improve our patients' quality of life by reducing disability and death from stroke through a multidisciplinary circle of care.

Q: WHAT IS THE ONE THING CONSUMERS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT STROKE?

A: Time equals brain! A stroke can happen to anyone, regardless of age, at any time. It's the leading cause of disability, as two million brain cells are lost for each minute blood flow is delayed to the brain. However, a stroke can be treated successfully when recognized early.



WWW.MERCYONE.ORG/DESMOINESNEURO

*Ben Vallier, MBA,
CEO, The Iowa Clinic*

THE IOWA CLINIC

Q: WHAT SETS YOU APART FROM YOUR COMPETITION?

A: The way we approach care is truly unique. From our inception, we were designed to be led by physicians, and that continues to be our model today. The people that lead our organization wear white coats—not suits—and come to work armed with stethoscopes—not calculators. Being physician-led means doing what is right for patients is always at the forefront. At The Iowa Clinic, patients are not numbers—they are our friends, neighbors and family.

Q: WHAT'S IT LIKE TO WORK AT THE IOWA CLINIC?

A: It's very much about a culture of teamwork. We have amazingly dedicated individuals, each of whom contribute to our patients and their care experience in unique ways. Our patients expect highly personalized and efficient healthcare which requires a great deal of cross-departmental collaboration throughout our 40 specialty service areas.

Q: WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE NEW "NORMAL" IN HEALTHCARE?

A: If the last year has taught us anything, it's that we need to be flexible and proactive in how we care for people. For us, that means connecting patients with the right physician or service as conveniently as possible, including same day or next day appointments. Also, we know telemedicine is here to stay, and we believe we've come a long way in delivering care virtually. When our patients book an eVisit, they consult with a local doctor. Not an outsourced physician or call center thousands of miles away. In a constantly changing healthcare environment, we're able to stay ahead by putting the evolving needs of our patients first and delivering on our promise – 'Care how you want it.'



**THE IOWA
CLINIC®**

WWW.IOWACLINIC.COM



*Helen Eddy,
Director, Polk County
Health Department*

POLK COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Q: WHAT DREW YOU TO YOUR CAREER?

A: Like most health care professionals, I have a desire to help people. My degree is in pharmacy and throughout my career, I have had opportunities to learn about what determines a person's health, beyond the healthcare system. This drew me to public health and fueled my desire to have an impact in my community.

Q: WHAT ARE THE TOP THREE THINGS CONSUMERS SHOULD CONSIDER WHEN SELECTING HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS?

A: You need to be able to have open and honest relationships with your health care professionals. Make sure their expertise meets your needs. Ask for referrals from friends, family, and other health care professionals. Finally, meet them face-to-face and have a conversation. Make sure that you are on the same page.

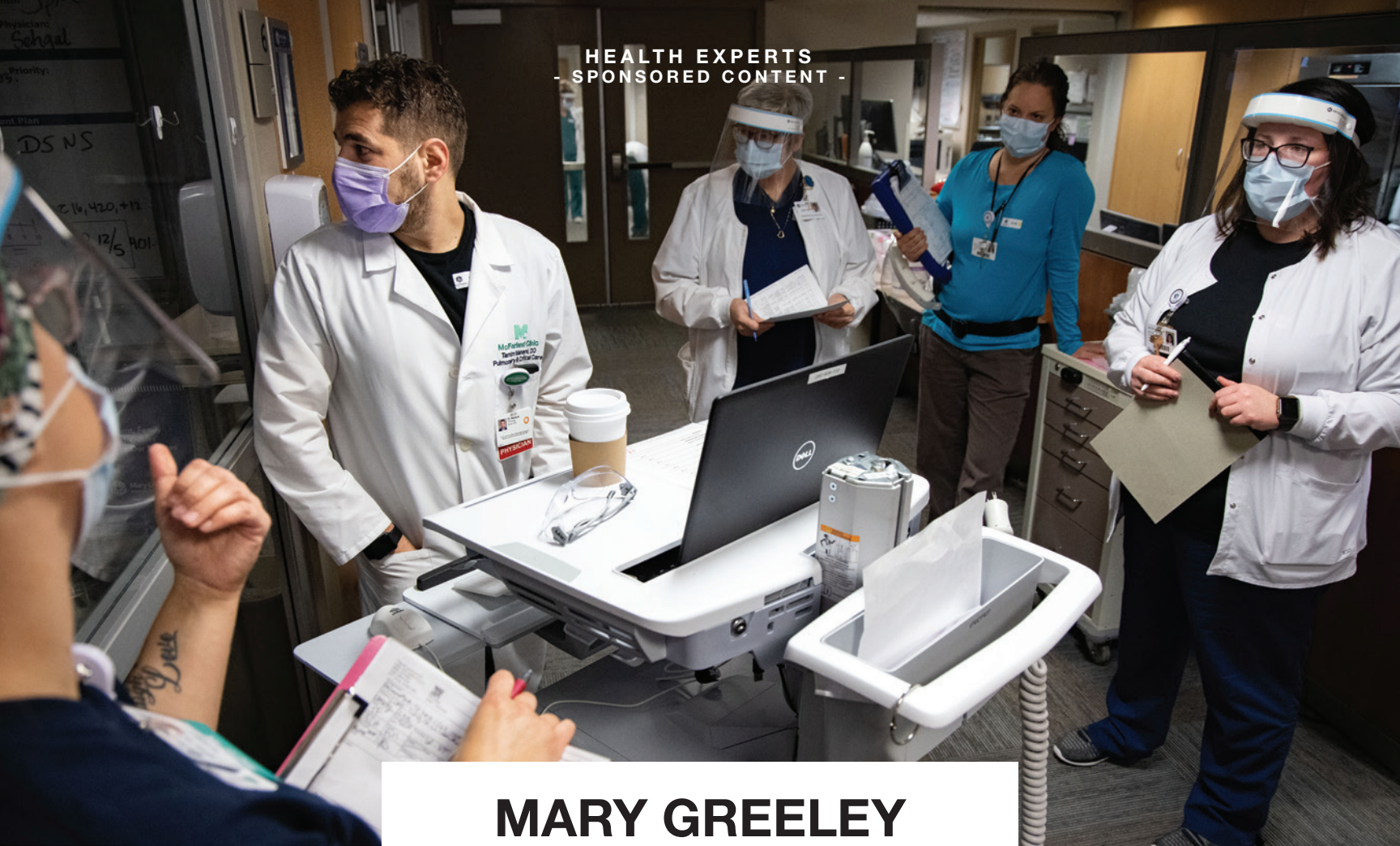
Q: WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN MOST PROUD OF ABOUT HOW YOUR TEAM HAS HANDLED THE PANDEMIC?

A: The Polk County Health Department and Emergency Management teams continue to work tirelessly to protect our community. They have sacrificed time with family, friends and loved ones to serve our citizens. Our community is healthier and safer because of their dedication. They are heroes.

Q: HOW DOES YOUR AREA OF CARE SPECIFICALLY HELP OUR COMMUNITY IN THIS UNPRECEDENTED TIME?

A: Public health relies on collaboration and community relationships to effectively respond to public health issues. I am proud of how our community has come together during the COVID-19 pandemic to protect our citizens and begin to address issues of health equity.





MARY GREELEY

Q: WHAT SETS YOU APART FROM YOUR COMPETITION?

A: Mary Greeley employees are highly engaged in our efforts to continually improve the quality of care we provide patients. It's a central component of our culture. As a result, Mary Greeley is one of only 12 hospitals in the country with both Magnet Designation, which recognizes outstanding nursing care, and a Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, which recognizes quality improvement and innovation. Our quality commitment ensures staff have the skills and tools they need to do their jobs, that our patient care processes are the most effective, and that our facility provides the most comfortable and advanced healing environment possible.

We can provide a range of healthcare services thanks to our longstanding partnerships with MFarland Clinic in Ames, and other area healthcare organizations. Finally, we have recently improved our salary program for inpatient nurses, which makes us competitive with the Des Moines market.

Q: WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN MOST PROUD OF ABOUT HOW YOUR TEAM HAS HANDLED THE PANDEMIC SITUATION?

A: The pandemic caused significant financial stress for hospitals, as well as emotional stress for staff. Through it all we were able to sustain our focus on providing outstanding care for our patients and doing it without having to layoff or furlough employees. This demonstrates the commitment Mary Greeley has to our staff, our patients and the communities we serve. Our response to the pandemic was detailed in a multi-part series in The Des Moines Register, which will serve as a historic account of what patients, families and healthcare workers faced during this incredible time.



Mary Greeley
MEDICAL CENTER

WWW.MGMC.ORG



BROADLAWNS MEDICAL CENTER

Q: WHAT SETS YOU APART FROM YOUR COMPETITION?

A: Broadlawns ensures that high-quality health care is accessible to everyone by providing the most affordable health care with an exceptional medical staff.

Q: HOW ARE YOU DELIVERING TELEHEALTH SERVICES?

A: Telehealth has been an extremely effective method of providing care during the pandemic, especially mental healthcare. Broadlawns uses a combination of audio and video services for patient services. Ensuring that our patients have access to phones, tablets and broadband is something we have to address, but our appointment show rates are much higher with telehealth as barriers such as access to transportation are eliminated.

Q: WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN MOST PROUD OF ABOUT HOW YOUR TEAM HAS HANDLED THE PANDEMIC SITUATION?

A: The staff at Broadlawns has demonstrated tremendous agility and resilience throughout the pandemic. Our staff rose to the challenges and assisted wherever and however they were needed to meet the needs of our patients. They have faced the intensity of the pandemic with grace and grit.

Q: HOW DOES YOUR AREA OF CARE SPECIFICALLY HELP OUR COMMUNITY IN THIS UNPRECEDENTED TIME?

A: This is the first pandemic in the 97-year history of Broadlawns. As the community's hospital, there has never been a greater need for access to high-quality health care. Broadlawns has worked collaboratively with the Polk County Health Department and all of the metro hospitals and clinics to ensure that patients have access to testing, vaccinations and precautionary measures related to COVID-19. The pandemic has illustrated how effectively our healthcare organizations can work in tandem to meet the needs of our community.



WWW.BROADLAWNS.ORG

A history of innovation



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dsm magazine is seeking submissions from organizations within the home industry for our 2nd annual *dsm* Home Design Awards, taking place in March, 2022.

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September 28, 2021**

**Link to submit:
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FITNESS AND FELLOWSHIP

FRIENDS WHO SWEAT TOGETHER
STAY TOGETHER.

WRITER: KARLA WALSH

PHOTOGRAPHER: DUANE TINKEY



Members of Des Moines Rowing juniors team paddle the Des Moines River. The club helps build fitness as well as collaboration among youths ages 13 to 18. Pictured, stern to bow: Ellie Chungath, Maya Owens, Aria Delara, Claire Willey.

When you think of joining a club, chances are a book club or dinner club comes to mind.

But more and more “fit clubs” are emerging across Central Iowa, and members vow that these groups not only strengthen their muscles but also forges bonds among members.

That’s because unlike other clubs, members overcome similar struggles—running in the rain, say, or traversing rough terrain on a hike—to conquer the same goal. Whether members are involved in a team sport or an individual pursuit with the same finish line, they form lifelong friendships in the process, according to three local fit clubs we spoke to.

“There’s something very powerful about putting yourself out there and discovering you have a safety net of people like you who want to see you succeed and thrive,” says Kerri Sorrel, co-owner of the outdoor adventure group Wander Women. “Many times, the things people are looking for are the same things someone else is looking for too, and there’s power in those mutual goals.

“And nature itself is already a community-builder,” she adds. “Being outdoors shows us that we are part of something bigger, and that feeling drives a desire for connection.”

WANDER
WOMEN

WANDER WOMEN

Founded in 2018 by Jenn Riggs, who now co-owns the organization with Kerri Sorrell, Wander Women (wanderwomeniowa.com) aims to empower females to feel confident adventuring in nature. With guides leading day hikes, weekend trips, mother-daughter adventures and more, Wander Women seeks to remove some of the common barriers to entry for women interested in getting into the wild, but who may worry about details such as how to cook over a campfire, go to the bathroom in the woods or sleep comfortably in a tent.

“The beauty of Wander Women trips is that they’re designed to foster deep connections,” Sorrell says. “We have fire circles on every trip where we invite participants to dig deep and offer a bit of themselves to the group. I’ve seen—and shed—a lot of tears at those fire circles because it’s a space where others can help you shoulder the load you’re carrying.”

First-time campers, seasoned adventure experts, young professionals, new moms, grandmothers, those looking for an active weekend or just to take a relaxing breath—anyone who identifies as a woman is welcome.

“It’s amazing how many times these trips are a ‘reset’ for our participants. They come looking for permission to be real, to relax, to learn new skills, to let their leg hair fly free—and we give them that permission,” Sorrell explains.

Kirsten Plowman first attended a trip in 2019 and is now a guide for the 2021 season. “I’m normally a solo hiker and camper and was looking to make connections with other women who enjoy the outdoors, too,” Plowman says. “It’s fun learning how to use a map and compass, identify flowers, search for agates and stomp through creeks. Being sweaty, dirty and exhausted together really creates a distinct shared memory.”

Each trip includes a diverse mix of participants who all add their uniqueness to the vibe. Whether sharing

advice, planning future trips or offering tips about “where to find the best gas station coffee,” Plowman says, each woman finds a home within the group—even if they’re not so close to home.

“What happens after the connections are formed is the coolest part, though,” Sorrell adds. “I saw in our Facebook group that two former participants who met on their trip are each driving three hours to go camping together. That’s exactly what we hoped would happen through Wander Women.”

FLEET FEET

Marathon pacers, first-time 5K-ers and those simply trying out a new pair of sneakers—there’s a run group for all at Fleet Feet (521 E. Locust St.). If you love beer and are trying to find a similar love for running, for example, the Third Thursday Pub Runs will be just your speed.

Join one of the running groups (fleetfeet.com/s/desmoines/weekly-runs) that fits your speed and goals, and you’ll be met by folks on your level to stride beside you step by step. Coaches and mentors provide training, pacing and step-up strategies to help you surpass your limits. Each spring, summer and fall series lasts 10 weeks and culminates with a race.

“Five years ago, I was driving by the store when I saw info about an Altra shoe demo run. It was a brand I was interested in, so I stopped in. What a lucky day that was,” says Kevin Fitzpatrick, a West Des Moines-based member who is now a mentor for the 5K, 10K and half-marathon Fleet Feet running programs.

“Not only did I find a new running shoe, I found a new family: a running family,” he adds. “Prior to that I had always just run solo because I didn’t want to embarrass myself running with a group that would leave me in the dust. With Fleet Feet, I found that was not the case.”

The people are positive, accepting and welcoming of newbies, “truly a second family,” adds Mischa Andersen, a regular attendee of Fleet Feet social runs and a half-marathon training mentor.

Newcomers join as transplants to the city or as fresh feet in the sport of running (or jogging, or even speed walking), and through participating with a group, they build bonds.

“My favorite part of running with the club is the camaraderie,” Fitzpatrick says. “Everyone has a unique story and their own strengths and weaknesses. We are all ready to cheer each other on, to listen to challenges and help each other up.”

DES MOINES ROWING JUNIORS TEAM

Since 1983, the nonprofit organization Des Moines Rowing has supported recreational and competitive rowers along the Des Moines River. Headquartered at Birdland Marina (1800 Pennsylvania Ave.), Des Moines Rowing’s younger sibling, the Youth Program, is for those ages 13 to 18 (facebook.com/desmoinesyouthrowing).

High schoolers join the club for team-building, fitness and hopefully “to fall in love with an activity they can continue for the rest of their lives,” says Allison Cook, youth



OTHER WAYS TO MEET YOUR SWEAT SQUAD

If running, hiking or rowing doesn't appeal to you, consider these community-minded, physically active options.

Glohemian Yoga

Join host/instructor Emily Griggs and fellow yogis to flow through the most scenic sun salutations you'll ever perform. Each Wednesday evening as the sun sets at the Judicial Branch Building (1111 E. Court Ave.), you can join Sunset Yoga for BLM. Classes are free, but donations are suggested to benefit a social justice-related cause, such as Urban Dreams, the Supply Hive, Des Moines BLM Rent Relief or Movement 515. Follow Glohemian Yoga on Facebook (facebook.com/glohemianyoga) to stay up to date about meetups and how to donate.

Des Moines Cycle Club

Whether you're racing for time or riding RAGBRAI for the pie, you'll find your community with this local bicycling club. Find out more about group rides and how to get involved at dmcycleclub.com or facebook.com/desmoines.cycleclub.

Love Life Collective

To try tribal dance-inspired Buti yoga, Latin dance, burlesque and more, head to Mainframe Studios (900 Keosauqua Way) to find a variety of eclectic and active "movement medicine" classes. Some even involve gatherings, such as brunch, for additional fellowship time after class. Visit facebook.com/lovelifecollectivestudios to discover upcoming events.

rowing head coach and director for Des Moines Rowing. "Some of our youth members will go on to row in college or even return to Des Moines Rowing to row as adults.

"It also fosters a great sense of community, mentorship and support when the adult members are able to work with the youth rowers," she adds.

Rowing is a stellar community-building activity, Cook adds, because the boat physically won't move without everyone working together.

"You learn how to improve not only as an individual, but also as a crew [to] move the boat as efficiently as possible," she says. "Even though the kids are from all different schools throughout Central Iowa, they enjoy getting together to hang out, study and get to know one another both on and off the water.

"In many team sports, it's easy to correct others instead of focusing on our own faults," she adds. "Rowing, though, teaches you to work together and work on your own technique before trying to help or critique others. Everyone in the boat has something to contribute and is critical to the success of the crew."

Maya Owens, a Des Moines-based member of the Des Moines Rowing juniors team, joined about three years ago as she was recovering from a knee injury and wanted a sport that would allow her to stay active without risking re-injury.

"The teammates and coach can make or break the experience as a whole, and we've got a really good group here," Owens says. "The regattas in particular are incredible for team bonding, and we have a lot of laughs when talking about falling into the water."

And in a reversing of the roles, the kids often teach the adults a thing or two. "Many of the parents have also joined in the sport after their kids began rowing," Cook says. "It's so fun to watch the kids be in charge and show their parents something new, and then be able to share their love and expertise of the sport with them." ■



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SHINING A LIGHT

DAWN MARTINEZ OROPEZA
HAS LAUNCHED THE LATINX PROJECT,
WITH THE GOAL TO MAKE IOWA A
HEALTHIER, MORE EQUITABLE STATE.

WRITER: RACHEL VOGEL QUINN
PHOTOGRAPHER: DUANE TINKEY



THE CORONAVIRUS ITSELF

doesn't discriminate. But its passage through society has affected people of color at higher rates than whites. Hispanics and Latinos were 1.7 times more likely to contract COVID-19, 4.1 times more likely to be hospitalized, and 2.8 times more likely to die

from the virus, according to March 2021 data from the Center for American Progress.

These statistics aren't a shock to Dawn Martinez Oropeza, executive director of *Al Éxito*, the only statewide nonprofit focused on Latino youths. As the pandemic ramped up in 2020, many of the youths in *Al Éxito* programs told her about the lack of personal protective equipment and safety protocols at their jobs.

"It really was evident to me that no one in power cared about our community," she says.

Oropeza, 54, has spent much of her life advocating for the Latino community and immigration reform. She is a Mid-Iowa Health Foundation HealthConnect Fellow and an alumna of the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses program. She says discrimination, hate speech and deportation fears have caused many Latinos to take a step back from society. Oropeza wants to change that.

"The Latinx community has become really good at being willfully hidden over the past eight years—and probably longer," she says. People outside the community "need to know who we are and what we do and how we're living."

One in five Polk County residents will be Hispanic by 2050, according to projections by the State Data Center of

Iowa. But minimal data is available about the Latino population in Iowa. Oropeza believes more reliable information could shine a light on the challenges her community faces.

Inspired by the local One Economy Report from the Director's Council—which offers in-depth data about disparities among Polk County's Black residents—Oropeza has launched the Latinx Project to gather data about the economic status, housing, education and health of Latino Iowans. She hopes to have the initial results by the end of 2021.

The data could help local communities and organizations pursue greater health equity, a cause close to Oropeza's heart. Earlier this year, both Oropeza and her husband were diagnosed with diabetes. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Hispanic/Latino Americans have a more than 50% chance of developing diabetes, compared with 40% for all U.S. adults. And nearly 17% of Hispanic Americans are uninsured, a higher rate than any other group, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

EARLY LESSONS

Growing up, Oropeza's own ethnic identity often went unseen, she says. At school, she was frequently mistaken for mixed-race or Black.

"Looking like I did, people couldn't figure out what I was," Oropeza says. "They didn't know what to do with me."

Born and raised in Des Moines, Oropeza is the daughter of a Jewish mother and a Mexican Catholic father. Her Jewish grandparents came to the United States to escape persecution in Europe, and her Mexican grandparents came to escape poverty. Hearing stories from

both sides of her family (such as how her Mexican grandmother temporarily lost her eyesight from exposure to pesticides as a farmworker), Oropeza came to understand oppression from a young age.

But she also saw how immigrant families like hers could thrive, as long as they had support. After earning an MFA in Mesoamerican art history from the University of California in San Diego, she worked at the Cesar Chavez Foundation, the Mexican Heritage Corp. and the Iowa Arts Council, often creating after-school programming for youths. She has served as the executive director of *Al Éxito* since 2013.

“I love watching the kids light up inside as they discover their power and their ability,” Oropeza says. “I want them each to have the skills and the knowledge they need to fulfill their dreams.”

MENTAL HEALTH

Meaning “Toward Success” in Spanish, *Al Éxito* serves about 800 middle and high school students in 33 schools, preparing them for college, careers and leadership roles. Results show that they outperform both their Latino and non-Latino peers in attendance rates, grade-point averages and credits earned. But Oropeza has often heard them worry that their loved ones would be deported. Then several teenagers in *Al Éxito* programs attempted suicide.

Convinced that Latino youths were experiencing undiagnosed trauma, Oropeza organized a 2018 study of the mental health and well-being of Latino youths in *Al Éxito* programs statewide. More than 200 middle and high school students participated, 80% of whom were born in the United States.

The study found that 40% of students felt stressed about the potential deportation of themselves, a family member or a caregiver almost every day. More than 70 percent reported being called offensive names or slurs. Nearly 60% regularly experienced “fear, anger or uncertainty due to anti-immigration sentiment.”

In response to the study, Oropeza created a student-led mental health task force, which developed a series of recommendations for schools, including anti-bullying policies, more bilingual and culturally competent school counselors, increased access to technology, and professional development for teachers about issues facing Latino students.

Although the students presented to Iowa school districts, the Iowa Department of Education and national conferences, none of the recommendations were implemented. That experience only confirmed Oropeza’s belief that health inequity would never be addressed until Latino people became more visible. She says real change won’t happen without a statewide network of Latino leaders who can advocate for policy changes, and she hopes some of those leaders come from *Al Éxito* programs.

“Dawn has inspired people like me to continue to lift up the voice of the Latinx community in all spaces, even if it makes others uncomfortable,” says Maria Corona, Ph.D., executive director of the Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

BELONGING HERE

With much of her focus on launching the Latinx Project this year, Oropeza still finds time to care for her own mental health. She is a Kriya Yoga initiate, does Hawaiian hula dancing, and relies on a network of “comadres”—female colleagues, mentors and friends. She’s also returned to her artistic roots, creating installations and murals she hopes will draw attention to the challenges—and the beauty—of the Latino community in Iowa.

Oropeza says everyone without Native ancestry is an immigrant to Iowa. And she teaches *Al Éxito* youths that Latino people belong here just as much as anyone else. She cites research showing that the language of the Aztecs, Nahuatl, originated in the Southwestern United States.

“We’ve walked here forever,” Oropeza says of her Latin American compatriots. “We are not immigrants here.” ■

“THE LATINX
COMMUNITY
HAS
BECOME
REALLY
GOOD AT
BEING
WILLFULLY
HIDDEN.”

DAWN MARTINEZ OROPEZA





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SPECIAL ADVERTISING SECTION

WOMEN LEADERS

2021

Three women are standing outdoors on a paved path, smiling at the camera. The woman on the left is wearing a bright coral blazer over a striped top and a black skirt. The woman in the middle is wearing a dark navy blazer over a white top and maroon trousers. The woman on the right is wearing a dark navy blazer over a magenta top and a black skirt. They are all dressed in professional business attire. The background consists of lush green trees and foliage.

“Our classes and executive coaching experiences allow participants a safe environment of collegiality.”

*Tero International, pictured L-R:
Deborah Rinner, Vice President, Chief Learning Officer
Liz Cooney, Director of Training
Rowena Crosbie, President & Owner*

TERO INTERNATIONAL

Rowena Crosbie, Deborah Rinner and Liz Cooney

Q: WHAT CHALLENGES DO WOMEN LEADERS FACE AND HOW CAN THEY OVERCOME THEM?

A: Whether it is the Imposter Syndrome, building alliances across gender groups, trusting our voice or advocating on our own behalf, women leaders face challenges. They affect our ability to effectively execute in leadership and to advance ourselves and our organizations.

These challenges do not have to determine our degree of success. Women leaders can use interpersonal tools and skills to face these challenges without fear and exuding confidence.

Q: HOW DOES TERO INTERNATIONAL HELP ADVANCE WOMEN LEADERS?

A: At Tero International, we impart leadership strategies to everyone who chooses to engage in our learning experiences. Our classes and executive coaching experiences allow participants a safe environment of collegiality in order to learn and identify better ways to communicate, present themselves, negotiate, delegate and inspire.

Q: HOW WAS WOMEN LEADERSHIP KEPT IN MIND WHEN CREATING TERO INTERNATIONAL?

A: Tero was founded by and is led by Rowena Crosbie. Under Ro's leadership, Tero has stood the test of time for 28 years, growing from a local training company to a worldwide leader in interpersonal skills research, design and training. Joined by Deborah Rinner, Chief Learning Officer, and Liz Cooney, Director of Training, Tero's executive team of women understand and hold deep respect for the interpersonal tools and strategies women leaders need to succeed and thrive. Our executive team is never prouder than when we see the tools learned at Tero used by women leaders to reach their full potential authentically and skillfully.





“Don’t try to
be perfect.
Show your
vulnerability
and just be
human.”

Marta Codina

WELLS FARGO

Marta Codina | Regional Bank President

Q: HOW DID YOU GET STARTED IN YOUR CAREER?

A: I started my banking career in 1978 as a 16-year-old teller. I was in high school and attended college. I never stopped to think that I would still be in banking 40+ years later! I joined Wells Fargo 20 years ago, right after my son was born. The company's diverse culture enabled me to focus on family first!

Q: WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT YOUR CAREER?

A: I have had the privilege to be part of an evolving industry where I can leverage my strengths to help people succeed financially. My father was a professor who I learned a lot from and admired. This influenced the way I viewed myself as a contributing individual in society. I love being part of learning and teaching.

Q: WHAT SETS YOU APART FROM YOUR PEERS?

A: Being a refugee, I learned resiliency at an early age. I had to adapt quickly to change personally and professionally. I have had the opportunity to work for several organizations in various parts of the country, which has provided me diverse experiences. These experiences have brought different perspectives to the table and have made me stronger. I am proud of my Hispanic culture and my ongoing goal is to serve as a role model for Latinas in the workforce.

Q: WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR YOUNG WOMEN JUST ENTERING THE WORKFORCE?

A: Don't try to be perfect. Show your vulnerability and just be human. Don't ever stop learning. Above all: lift each other up! I'll leave you with a favorite quote of mine that has grounded me throughout my career. "One person can make a difference, and everyone should try." – John F. Kennedy



WOMEN LEADERS
- SPONSORED CONTENT -



*L-R: Susan Hatten, Chief Marketing Officer;
Lindsay Chase, Chief Financial Officer;
Ellen Willadsen, Chief Innovation Officer*



Women Optimizing Women (WOW)

HOLMES MURPHY

Women Optimizing Women (WOW)

Q: WHAT HAS HOLMES MURPHY DONE TO ELEVATE THE EXPERIENCE FOR WOMEN?

A: Holmes Murphy is committed to ensuring opportunities are equal for all, and embracing and celebrating the success of others in our company and the industry as a whole. We have a long history of standing for just cause dating back to our founding partners. As part of this, we created a Women Optimizing Women (WOW) diversity, equity and inclusion (DE&I) program.

Q: WHAT IS WOW?

A: WOW was purposefully created to engage, empower and elevate women. The goal with WOW is simple—to assure that Holmes Murphy is “best in class” as it pertains to embracing the success of women who have or will join us and to care for and advance the unique potential of all of our female employees.

Q: WHAT LEADERSHIP POSITIONS DO WOMEN HOLD AT HOLMES MURPHY?

A: Holmes Murphy is proud to have many women in leadership roles, including two on our Executive Committee. Most recently, we propelled three into new and advanced positions. Ellen Willadsen became our Chief Innovation Officer after being the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) for the past 10 years. Lindsay Chase assumed the role of CFO, and Susan Hatten was named Chief Marketing Officer.

Q: WHAT ARE HOLMES MURPHY’S GUIDING PRINCIPLES WHEN IT COMES TO DE&I?

A: We believe it’s important to leverage the talents of all our employees, and we will continue to stand for just cause on issues that impact them. With that in mind, Holmes Murphy has a DE&I strategy that focuses on embracing and caring for differences with intentionality. Our efforts are designed with authenticity, aligned to our purpose, and employee-led, with our leadership teams fully engaged. We believe there’s a role for everyone in creating and sustaining a culture where we can all reach our unique potential.





GREENSTATE CREDIT UNION

Laura Meeker | Senior Vice President/Regional Manager

Q: HOW DID YOU GET STARTED IN YOUR CAREER?

A: After college, I moved to Iowa. Although my education was in the medical field, I knew that wasn't where my heart was. Someone introduced me to banking, where I started as a teller, and I knew that's where I wanted to be. I never looked back!

Q: WHAT ARE YOUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES?

A: I began working in my family's business at an early age and was expected to be on time, work hard, be helpful and honest, and treat people with respect. I still regard these as valuable principles for myself as well as anyone in the workplace.

Q: WHAT ARE SOME CHALLENGES YOU HAVE FACED IN YOUR CAREER?

A: I have been blessed with amazing companies giving me opportunities I never imagined. With those opportunities there is pressure to be great at everything, which I know is impossible but it's hard to convince yourself of that!

Q: WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR YOUNG WOMEN ENTERING THE WORKFORCE?

A: Work hard to achieve your goals. Do not let others tell you where you need to be in life or what you need to be successful. Everyone's dreams are their own. It's OK for each person to decide when they have reached them.





PRAIRIE NATURAL MEATS & SEAFOOD

Ale Vidal Soler | President-Owner

Q: HOW DID YOU GET STARTED IN YOUR CAREER?

A: I grew up in Argentina. My family worked in agribusiness for many generations. While in the industry myself, Argentina opened the border to bring natural beef—grass fed and hormone free—to the United States. I moved to Miami, without knowing English, and started from scratch, introducing this product. There were lots of rejections and frustrations, but I kept going. I started bringing air shipments from Argentina—3,000 pounds at the time. Now we are selling over 1 million pounds per week, including out of a small retail store in Des Moines to offer the community products from all over the world at wholesale prices.

Q: WHAT SETS YOU APART FROM YOUR PEERS?

A: I started my company from the ground up, doing and learning every position myself. I never once gave up when

it was difficult or doors were shut in my face. I did not waver from my dream.

Q: WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART OF MENTORING FUTURE LEADERS?

A: I believe I can transmit the passion I have for the business and industry to inspire anyone if they have interest in learning, challenging themselves and working hard.

Q: WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR YOUNG WOMEN JUST ENTERING THE WORKFORCE?

A: Work very hard, invest lots of hours and never give up. Practice communication instead of frustration. Ask for help and listen to other opinions. But always follow your gut—that way you won't regret it.



WWW.PRAIRIENATURALMEATS.COM

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Left: Bianca Rowland
Right: Deniz Franke

FRANKE MILLER GROUP

Deniz Franke, Private Wealth Advisor

Q: HOW DID YOU GET STARTED IN YOUR CAREER?

A: After I graduated from the University of Memphis in marketing and finance, I was looking for a career that inspired me to help others in financial adversity. I knew by applying to Ameriprise, IDS way back then, I wanted to be a financial advisor who could help people reach their financial goals and objectives.

Q: WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT YOUR CAREER?

A: What I love most is helping people navigate through the ups and downs of their financial situations, big or small. It brings me such joy when I can help them find solutions and help them feel at ease with retirement.

Q. WHAT ARE YOUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES?

A: My guiding principles are to not only act in a financial steward capacity but to build a strong and trusting relationship with my clients. By having a vision, mission statement and core values we follow at the Franke Miller Group, we can continue to be a leading financial planning practice in Iowa.

Q: WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR YOUNG WOMEN ENTERING THE INDUSTRY?

A: Do not be afraid because you are a woman entering into a majority-male profession. Grab your fear by the horns and have it fuel your strength to overcome obstacles. That's how I survived and showed other women they can make it in this business.



Franke Miller Group
Ameriprise Private Wealth Advisory Practice

WWW.AMERIPRISEADVISORS.COM/TEAM/FRANKE-MILLER-GROUP/

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JOHN DEERE

Legendary company ***new voices and ideas***

Johane Domersant is passionate about celebrating diversity in all forms because she knows what makes us different makes us stronger. As the new John Deere Global Director, Talent Supply and Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, Johane will further enhance our legendary company by helping to cultivate a culture where diverse voices thrive, equity is championed, and inclusivity flourishes so every employee can fully contribute as their true selves. At Deere, we are committed to driving sustainable change because we know that when we run together, we can ensure life leaps forward for everyone.

[Deere.com/Diversity](https://www.Deere.com/Diversity)



Left: Megan Snyder
Right: Raphaëlle Azria

PROOF

Megan Snyder, Chef De Patisserie

I grew up in Clarinda and always wanted to cook when I got older. I went to Kirkwood and got my culinary and patisserie degree and immediately moved to Des Moines. As Proof's Chef de Patisserie, I craft all the desserts served at the restaurant.

I love the way food brings people together. Whether you're strangers or old friends, food always connects people.

Raphaëlle Azria, Bar and Cocktail Manager

I spent the first 20 years of my life in France. When I was 20, I moved to Prague, where I was introduced to the restaurant industry. Working and traveling has since then been my new reality.

Everything that we do in life is art. Creating drinks, making infusions, giving life to liquors is another way to bring art into our lives, and to create a unique experience for our guests.



WWW.PROOFDSM.COM



DLL DES MOINES

Amy Ventling Hester | General Manager

Q: WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT YOUR CAREER?

A: My career has been focused in providing financial services to agricultural producers and manufacturers. I am passionate about the value of agriculture and being able to support our customers in feeding the world. I love the relationships I've built over the years.

Q: WHAT ARE YOUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES?

A: Respect and understanding. Everyone has a story. If we take time to listen and understand what drives people, or what holds them back, we build better relationships that will lead to success individually and in business.

Q: WHAT CHALLENGES HAVE YOU FACED IN YOUR CAREER?

A: Being a woman in a male-dominated field has often meant being undervalued for who I am or simply being left out. As I have grown both personally and professionally, I've realized that my perspective as a woman adds value in a different and much-needed way.



WWW.DLLGROUP.COM

Trixies Salon



TRIXIES SALON & SPA

Tricia Rivas | Owner

Q: WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT YOUR CAREER?

A: Being a hairdresser was a dream come true for me. What I didn't imagine was all of the opportunities that this amazing career opened for me. I've been listening and cheering on my guests to have the most amazing lives. What I quickly learned was they were listening and taking my advice.

Q: WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART OF MENTORING FUTURE LEADERS?

A: Being a mentor is what lights my soul on fire. I've had the honor of being mentored by some of the most amazing humans. I now try to share those gifts with others. Seeing someone you mentor crush their goals and achieve their dreams is nothing short of magical. I truly feel honored to be on the journey with them.

Trixies Salon & Spa 

WWW.TRIXIESSALON.COM



DES MOINES UNIVERSITY

Angela Franklin, Ph.D. | President & CEO

During my career in academic leadership, a primary theme has been to build teams that share a solid foundation of trust. To develop a thriving culture of innovation there has to be genuine respect that permits experimentation and the prospect of healthy debate.

Leaders of high-performing organizations often emulate the orchestra conductor, ensuring all members know their critical roles, facilitating the separate and distinct contributions to blend well to a successful outcome of "making beautiful music together."

In my case, measures of success and breakthrough thinking are concrete: DMU's cohesive team of leaders made it possible to think big and build a new campus; and we can grow while enhancing innovations in teaching with new emerging technologies. We preserved quality in teaching through COVID-19 and now embrace the future with a renewed sense of ingenuity and collaboration.

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WWW.DMU.EDU



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We know our strength lies in each other. And as we've undergone transformative growth, it's not just about increasing our numbers. It's why we've cultivated a culture where new perspectives are integrated, reshaping and expanding our own thinking, conversations, and actions.

Together, our diverse and talented team members drive innovation and our success. All people deserve respect without bounds, and at American Equity, we are One Team, challenging ourselves to take that respect to new levels."

— Jennifer Bryant, Chief Human Resources Officer
American Equity Investment Life Insurance Company



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LEAD LIKE A WOMAN

At EMC Insurance Companies, we believe success is directly connected to the unique identities of our team. We embrace diversity in everything we do, creating an inclusive culture where women—and all team members—feel valued, respected and empowered.

And with more than 200 women in leadership roles, we're taking steps to cultivate balanced and inclusive leadership.



EMC is proud to be presenting sponsor of the 2021 Central Iowa Women Lead Change Conference. Learn more at www.wlcglobal.org/events.





BUILDING A DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE IN DSM USA

The Greater Des Moines Partnership is dedicated to supporting the Greater Des Moines (DSM) business community in strengthening diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) strategies across the region. The Partnership has created several resources and educational opportunities to enable DSM companies in effectively leading DEI.

DEI RESOURCES:

INCLUSION SUMMIT

An annual event that brings together DEI thought leaders and experts from across the country to share best practices.

UNTAPPED TALENT TOOLKIT

A toolkit designed to help hiring managers better understand untapped talent from diverse backgrounds and connect with them to solve their talent needs.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STRATEGY TOOLKIT

This toolkit provides guidance on identifying the business case and implementing a DEI strategy within an organization.

DIVERSITY CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS

These programs encourage DEI professionals, organization leaders and managers to dig deeper into DEI topics. This comprehensive learning experience will cultivate the skills for each participant to be able to lead DEI effectively and authentically.

INVESTOR DIVERSITY CONSULTING SERVICES

A tailored coaching session offered exclusively to Partnership Investors with the goal of identifying the business case for DEI, garnering stakeholder buy-in, creating a DEI plan and measuring outcomes.

To access these resources and find more information, visit DSMpartnership.com/inclusion.

#DSMUSA

#globalDSM



GREATER DES MOINES
PARTNERSHIP



FRK ARCHITECTS + ENGINEERS

Rachelle Hines, AIA | President

Q: HOW DID YOU GET STARTED IN YOUR CAREER?

A: My interest for architecture and design started at a young age. As I learned more about the profession in high school and college through education and internships, it grew into a passion.

Q: WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT YOUR CAREER?

A: As a business owner and architect, there are many hats to wear. I really enjoy the variety. My day often includes walking a construction site, evaluating the firm's financials, planning marketing materials, collaborating with our team members and project stakeholders, and troubleshooting whatever issues may arise.

Q: WHAT ARE YOUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES?

A: I believe that education never stops, and it's imperative to cultivate your curiosities and learn something new every day.

Q: WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR YOUNG WOMEN JUST ENTERING THE WORKFORCE?

A: Be your own advocate and never be afraid to ask for what you want. Trust your instincts and yourself.

frk architects + engineers

WWW.FRK-AE.COM



L-R: Jodi Peterman, Meredith Young, Abi Reiland

Women in Construction & Real Estate

*Jodi Peterman, Elizabeth Erin Designs,
CEO*

What sets you apart from your peers?

We believe our clients don't fall into one specific interior design style. Our designers are trained to pull out information to achieve your vision and find your overall aesthetic.

Meredith Young, JLL, Senior Associate

What do you love most about your career?

This industry offers a heightened level of excitement. We help individuals and businesses find a space that aligns with their visions and makes them excited to come to work each day.

Abi Reiland, JLL, Senior Associate

What sets you apart from your peers?

My experience as a business owner and my involvement in the central Iowa community over the past 20 years has given me a unique perspective that benefits my clients.

LEACHMAN LUMBER

*Jennifer Leachman | President and
Chief Financial Officer*

It never occurred to Jennifer Leachman when she graduated from college to join the family business.

With her brother and cousin firmly representing the incoming generation of leadership, she headed off to Chicago as an auditor at Chicago Title. Eventually she found herself drawn back to Des Moines to be closer to family. But it took several more years and the departure of the long-time assistant controller to realize she had a skillset that no one else in the family had—an accounting and financial background.

It was time.

Coupling her deep knowledge of Central Iowa from her time at the Greater Des Moines Partnership and her accounting background, she joined the executive team at Leachman Lumber. She eventually became chief financial officer and president. With Jack overseeing sales and Mark in charge of inventory, the third generation of Leachmans have found their niche as the company celebrates 100 years this August.

While she is often asked it is difficult to be a female in a male-dominated industry, Jennifer said the family dynamic is more notable.

“There is a fair amount of credibility that comes when you understand the numbers regardless of whether you are male or female, and I understood the numbers day one,” she said. “However, navigating the family dynamics in the workplace took a little long to figure out. You can’t use the ‘sister’ or ‘cousin’ voice. You need to maintain respect to keep the lines of communication open— otherwise Thanksgiving isn’t a whole lot of fun.”



CELEBRATING
100
years

LEACHMAN LUMBER

WWW.LEACHMANLUMBER.COM





L-R: Megan Carey O'Leary, Brenda Olson, Jo Dorenkamp, Robin von Gillern, Julie Baudler

COLDWELL BANKER

Megan Carey O'Leary

Q: WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR YOUNG WOMEN ENTERING THE WORKFORCE?

A: Be willing to be uncomfortable. It's about trial and error and stepping out of your comfort zone. What you put in, is what you get out.

Contact 515.371.9744

Brenda Olson

Q: WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT YOUR CAREER?

A: What I love most about my career is the interaction with people and the fact that every day is new and different. The market is always changing.

Contact 515.988.7658

Jo Dorenkamp

Q: WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT YOUR CAREER?

A: What I love most about my real estate career is helping people find a home that makes their dreams come true!

Contact 515.205.1691

Robin von Gillern

Q: WHAT ARE YOUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES?

A: To provide exemplary service that exceeds client expectations. Treat everyone equally. Never stop learning. Be thankful.

Contact 515.240.0500

Julie Baudler

Q: WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT YOUR CAREER?

A: I love that no two days or transactions are the same. Real estate is driven by personal stories from both buyers and sellers. I feel honored to be part of this time in my clients' lives.

Contact 515.689.7370



COLDWELL BANKER
MID-AMERICA

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Building connections, creating cutting-edge innovation, and fulfilling your dreams.

We're the top-performing women of Iowa Realty. Let us turn your dream home into a reality. Trust our high-quality local expertise, exclusive resources, and client-focused vision to lead you home.

Together, we are Iowa Realty.



Front Row: Tiffini DeHaan, Lucrezia Moore, JoAnn Manning, Melanee Stanbrough, Karey Bishop, Olivia Bates, Saatchi Kalra, Kim Bakey, Kathy Davis, Marcia Wanamaker, Kate Carlson, Darla Willett-Rohrsen, Joanne Stevens

Back Row: Erica Turner, Joey Plummer, Michelle Greene, Annie Leonard, Shawntel Cooney, Kristina Sharp, Shannon Gausman, Barb McMurry, Anita Nemmers, Stephanie Wright, Kim O'Connor

Not Pictured: Cathie Beals, Lori Hodges, Lora Knapp, Teresa Knox, Lori Kommes, Lacie Sibley, Marisa Stout

HOME TEAM IOWA

WOMEN LEADERS
SPONSORED CONTENT -

HECKART & ASSOCIATES



HOME TEAM IOWA

Tammy Heckart | Realtor

Q: HOW DID YOU GET STARTED IN YOUR CAREER?

A: I wanted to sell real estate for as long as I can remember, but I was scared because it was commission only. At the time, I had a great job. My grandmother had passed and left me a small amount of cash. I quit my job and went for it. Looking back, it was enough to buy a laptop computer and maybe enough to cover a few months of house payments.

Q: WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT YOUR CAREER?

A: I am fortunate to get to do what I LOVE every day. I have fun working with people and finding them a home, whether it be their first home or their 20th home. Twenty years into this, and I still enjoy looking at homes. I always use my realtor app whenever I travel to see prices and styles in the area.

Q: WHAT SETS YOU APART FROM YOUR PEERS?

A: I am always learning. I strive to learn new things all the time. I not only want to be the BEST in residential real estate and new construction, but I also want to know all about commercial, land and vacation homes.

Q: WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART OF MENTORING FUTURE LEADERS?

A: I believe in working hard and everything else comes. My team has the best tools available and I'm surrounded by the BEST in the business!



WWW.HOMETEAMIOWA.COM



IOWA REALTY

Kim O'Connor | Realtor

Q: HOW DID YOU GET STARTED IN YOUR CAREER?

A: I was encouraged by many people in the industry to get involved in real estate—namely, the Knapps, Grubbs and others that I met at 7Flags.

Q: WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT YOUR JOB?

A: I love the opportunity to meet people from all walks of life. Everyone has a different story to tell. We all share similarities. You just have to seek them out sometimes.

Q: WHAT DO I LIKE BEST ABOUT MENTORING?

A: I love to get new agents in my car to experience a whole day of real estate. It's multi-faceted. Sometimes, you get to show big beautiful homes, but most of the time, you have to find homes to suit your client's needs, then go through paperwork, negotiations, scheduling, contracts and inspections. And your phone is constantly ringing. You have to be able to multitask!



WWW.KIMOCONNOR.IOWAREALTY.COM

Courageous. Fearless. Powerful.

These are just a few words that describe Greater Des Moines' women leaders. The individuals and businesses in this section are making our city a better place to live, work and play.

GOLD: INCLUSION CHAMPIONS



SILVER: INCLUSION CHAMPION



BRONZE: INCLUSION CHAMPIONS



INCLUSION ADVOCATES





L-R: Blaire Massa, Sherry Gupta, Sherri Nielsen, Kelly Huntsman, Melissa Vine,

Incredible Nonprofits and

*Blaire Massa, Ballet Des Moines,
Executive Director*

What do you love most about your career? Artists embody the courage and creativity that drives change and progress. Helping channel that energy to inspire others to connect and grow is a daily inspiration to me.

*Sherry Gupta, CultureALL,
Founder/Executive Director*

What do you love most about your career? It's a pleasure to see people from a wide range of experiences feel valued at work and school. CultureALL Ambassadors become celebrities, and the people they meet feel like they've made new friends for life.

*Sherri Nielsen, Easterseals Iowa,
President/CEO*

What are your guiding principles? Start and end each day with gratitude. Do the right thing every day, the results will eventually follow. Be positive. Be transparent and build relationships. Be humble. Lift up others' talents.

*Kelly Huntsman, Primary Health Care,
Chief Executive Officer*

Why do you love your career? Passion for PHC's mission has fueled my 30-year career. It feels good knowing your work, along with countless others, touches so many lives and changes communities for the better.

*Melissa Vine MA, LMHC, The Beacon,
Executive Director*

What advice do you have for young women? I didn't get here because of success but because of failure - that is, the willingness to sit in the shame that accompanied those failures and learn hard things about myself and the world around me.



L-R: Kimberly Hansen, Kim Perez, Brenda Miller, Kristin Littlejohn, Christine Irvine

the Women Behind Them

Kimberly Hansen, Rebuilding Together, Executive Director

Share your favorite quote or words to live by: "Work for a cause, not for applause. Live life to express, not to impress. Don't strive to make your presence noticed, just make your absence felt." - Unknown

Kim Perez, Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden, President & CEO

What are your guiding principles? It is important to lead with kindness and actively listen to those around you, seeking to understand varying perspectives. Both principles lead to stronger decisions.

Brenda Miller, RMHC Central Iowa, Executive Director

What do you love most about your career? The privilege to serve an organization that is deeply committed to serving children and families at a time when they truly need it most. Our dedicated staff, volunteers and community partners are working to advance the RMHC mission each and every day, ultimately reducing the stress and financial burden families must face when they have a sick child.

Kristin Littlejohn, Oakridge Neighborhood, VP Development

What advice do you have for young women just entering the workforce? Have integrity and own your truth. Doing the right thing when no one is watching will go a long way in building trust and dependability with your colleagues.

Christine Irvine, Oakridge Neighborhood, VP Communications

What do you love most about your career? I love being able to share the important success stories of Oakridge Neighborhood, our residents and clients with the community. Our quality housing coupled with supportive programs and services impacts hundreds of people daily.



L-R: Deb Pulver, Renee Hardman, Jennifer Pearson, Emily Price, Dr. Teri Wahlig

Incredible Nonprofits and

*Deb Pulver, Strands of Strength,
President/Founder*

What drives you to do what you do every day? When I receive a note from a woman who has received one of our wigs, I am reminded how important our nonprofit is to her battle. We are giving her a piece of normalcy and adding strength to her fight.

Renee Hardman, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Chief Executive Officer

What is your favorite part of mentoring future leaders? As CEO of the nation's most premiere mentoring organization, mentoring is one of my greatest passions. Mentoring allows you to lift up another person and fiercely defend their

greatest potential – all it takes is being present with another and meeting them where they are at. Life is about serving others along their journey and being there for all the interesting detours. Help someone realize that no matter what, they are ENOUGH!

Jennifer Pearson, UCS Healthcare, CEO

What do you love most about your career? I love working with a team of people who are so passionate about what they do. We do offer amazing benefits and opportunities for growth, but we are a nonprofit. That means our team members truly believe in our mission, and it's often personal for them.

*Emily Price, Healthy Birth Day, Inc.,
Executive Director*

What do you love most about your career? Count the Kicks is saving 1 in 3 at-risk babies in Iowa and the stories behind that statistic are what I love most.

*Dr. Teri Wahlig, ChildServe,
Chief Executive Officer*

What do you love most about your career? Throughout my career as a physician and now CEO at ChildServe, I love caring for children. My role at ChildServe is truly the best blend of my head, my heart and soul.



L-R: Mary Sellers, Sheri McMichael, Dr. Kelli Hill, Leisha Barcus, Pamela Carmichael

the Women Behind Them

Mary Sellers, United Way of Central Iowa, President

What do you love most about your career? I love that I've spent it in nonprofit, where I'm fortunate to work with others to create bigger impact than I could alone.

Sheri McMichael, Variety, Executive Director

What do you love most about your career? The impact that my commitments make on the lives of children. These children provide me with the inspiration to continue Variety's efforts and to make a positive impact.

Dr. Kelli Hill, Des Moines Pastoral Counseling Center, Director of Clinical Services, Licensed Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychologist

What do you love most about your career? "I love to help young people discover their innate sense of play, curiosity, strength, and compassion – even in trauma, loss or sadness.

Leisha Barcus, YMCA, President/CEO

What do you love most about your career? My career is full of meaningful projects that have connected me to an amazing network of lasting personal and professional relationships.

Pamela Carmichael, Home, Inc., Executive Director Emeritus

What are your guiding principles? I have dedicated my 41-year career at HOME, Inc. to affordable housing. My goal has always been to ensure that all families have quality, affordable housing, regardless of income.



L-R: Myrna Johnson, Mindi Callison & Mose, Tammy Hoyman, Courtney Reyes,

Incredible Nonprofits and the Women Behind Them

*Myrna Johnson, Iowa Public Radio,
Executive Director*

What do you love most about your career? Working with immensely creative people for a common purpose: making our community more vibrant and our lives more rich and engaged.

*Mindi Callison, Bailing Out Benji,
Executive Director and Founder*

How did you get started in your career?

At 21, I founded Bailing Out Benji after unknowingly buying a puppy mill puppy and learning the truth. I turned my experience into a national nonprofit to protect citizens and animals from this cruel industry.

*Tammy Hoyman, Employee & Family
Resources, CEO*

What advice do you have for young women just entering the workforce?

- 1) Give yourself grace—there is a lesson in every mistake.
- 2) Be mindful and stay in the moment—sometimes opportunities present themselves in mysterious ways.
- 3) Have fun.

*Courtney Reyes, Onelowa, Executive
Director*

How is your leadership style unique? I lead with the motto of “I cry at work.” This is unsettling for some people, but I want them to know we are real humans fighting for LGBTQ equality.

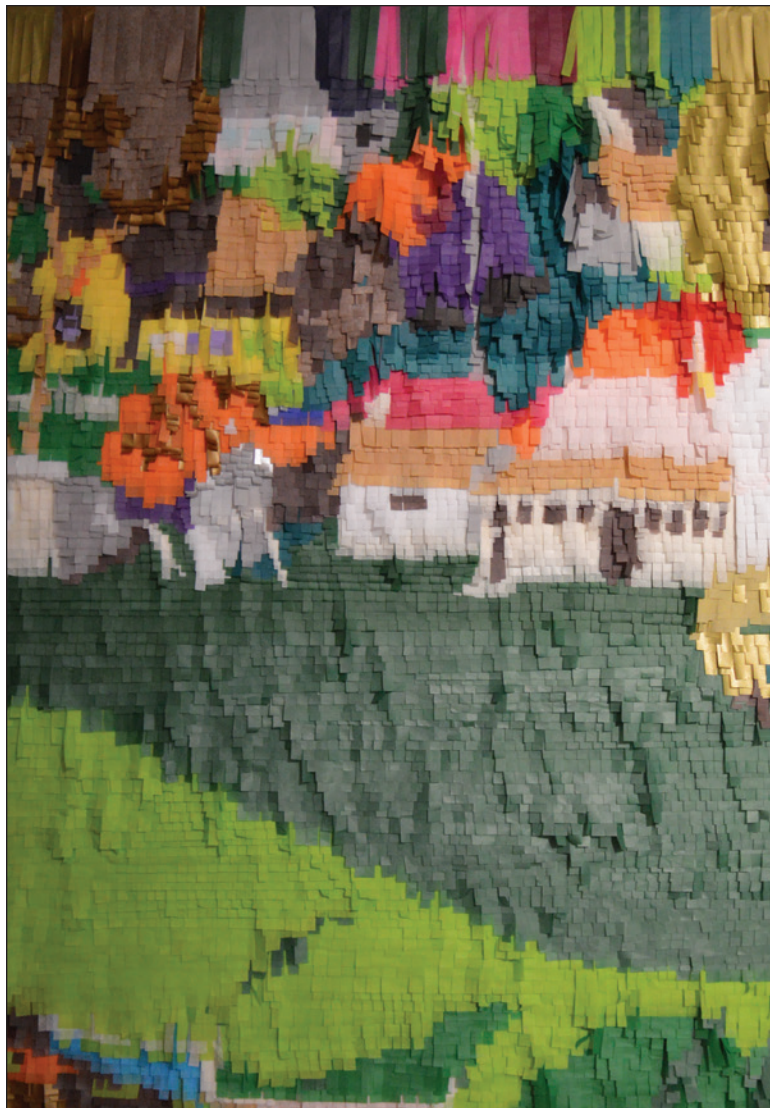


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Detail from *Central American*, 2021 (in progress)
Paper and glue / Courtesy of the artist

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Welcome back!

Join us at the Civic Center for our 2021-22 Masterworks Season.
dmsymphony.org

ISVIP



The Boys & Girls Club of Central Iowa held their annual golf fundraiser at Des Moines Golf and Country Club. See page 172.

How to Submit Party Photos

Want your event pics in *dsm*? You'll find submission details on our website, dsmMagazine.com. But remember, we need your accurate input. For example, please make sure to provide the proper spellings of the names of all the people pictured. And please provide a phone number and an email address of a contact person in case we get confused. It happens.

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RSVP



Luke and Jen Faeth



Natasha Sayles, Kelly Sparks



April Ziskovsky, Adam Bartelt



Lisa Marie-Wright, Carrie and Don Boelens

WINEFEST DES MOINES 2021

Organization: Des Moines Winefest Foundation

Date: June 1-12, 2021

Venue: Various locations around the city as well as virtual events

Main Attraction: A celebration of wine and food that included a community tasting featuring Ballet Des Moines, the annual Lawn Party, prima dinners and more.

Photography: Christopher Maharry Photography



Holmes Murphy team



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Tony Dickinson, Dalton Olson, Mikayla Olson, Julie and Mike Davidson, Mike Ensley



Mike and Deniz Franke



Golfers making their way out to the course



Mark Martin, Lori Koop



Volunteers from Northwest Bank

GREAT FUTURES GOLF TOURNAMENT

Organization: Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Iowa

Date: June 14, 2021

Venue: Des Moines Golf and Country Club

Main Attraction: As one of the city's top charitable tournaments, this annual golf event helps the Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Iowa support 2,600 kids and teens in achieving success. Golfers enjoyed hole contests, beverages on the course, lunch and an upscale gift package.

Photography: Kyle Stoutenberg

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Queer/ Dialogue

September 7 —
December 12, 2021

Louis Fratino
Jordan King
Jeremy Laing
Doron Langberg
Catherine Opie
Christina Quarles
Paul Mpagi Sepuya
Devan Shimoyama

This exhibition presents eight artists whose works enable dialogue at the intersections of identity expression: race, gender, individuality and otherness, equity within differences, with a focus on the body as expressive terrain.



To visit the exhibition viewing room, scan the code

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Free admission
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RSVP



Jacqueline Thompson



Cheryl Critelli, Rick Ballinger



Vicki Waters, Lori Nicolet



Melissa Daniels, Jane Daniels

THE GARDEN PARTY

Host: Salisbury House & Gardens

Date: May 23, 2021

Venue: Salisbury House & Gardens

Main Attraction: Highlights included garden lounges styled by White Willow Events; classic yard games including croquet, bocce ball and bags; a photo booth; entertainment by the Dueling Fiddles; and brunch and a mimosa bar.

Photography: Dan Welk of Click! Photography



Natalie Davis, Nicole Henrick



Jaime Nicolet-Rutan, Keshia Meissner, Lynn Halldorson



Melissa Dunagan, Jana Jongewaard, Lynn Steele, Nita Lovejoy

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THURSDAY, NOV. 11th

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- Wine and Beer
- Hors d'oeuvres
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- All Welcome
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Nicole Gerdin, Deb Pulver, Jim Kabel, Carma Herring, Andy Flynn, Sherry Wilkinson



Lisa Bianco, Crissy Westendorf, Brooke Michelson



Mary Brooks, Gretta Geneser

ANNUAL SPRING LUNCHEON

Organization: Strands of Strength

Date: May 19, 2021

Venue: Glen Oaks Country Club

Main Attraction: Now in its ninth year, this annual luncheon raises funds for hair wigs that are donated to Iowa cancer patients in need. This year's event raised more money than any other luncheon to date.

Photography: Amy Allen



Jerilynn Mickelson, Candy Elwell, Dr. Susan Beck, Carolyn Bodin, Sheri Horner, Helen Sinclair, Cindy Rasmussen



Diane Proctor, Lynn Flynn, Olga Sparks



Mara White, Olivia Kennedy, Karen Kennedy, Paul White, Megan Meyers



Dr. Dan Kollmorgen, Karen Kollmorgen, Marilyn Kollmorgen, Dr. Robert Kollmorgen

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UNTIL
NEXT TIME



DSM MAGAZINE JULY/AUGUST ISSUE UNVEILING

And we're back! On July 1, *dsm* held its first in-person unveiling in over a year. Hosted by Exec 1 Aviation in Ankeny, the event featured Veggie Thumper, Top Bun and Charlotte's Kitchen food trucks, as well as live music from Des Moines-based band Ducharme-Jones. We all had a wonderful time reconnecting, celebrating the issue, and kicking off the Fourth of July weekend in a fun and festive way.

SAVE THE DATE



**Join us in recognizing these eight community leaders for
their civic contributions and lifetime of generosity.**

LINDA CARTER-LEWIS

PAST PRESIDENT OF NAACP DES MOINES AND A CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVIST

HARLAN “BUD” HOCKENBERG

ATTORNEY

TRUDY HOLMAN HURD

COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER AND PHILANTHROPIST

DWIGHT JACKSON

COMMUNITY AND BUSINESS RELATIONS SPECIALIST AT THE EVELYN K. DAVIS CENTER FOR WORKING FAMILIES

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