

# TR A CTI O N

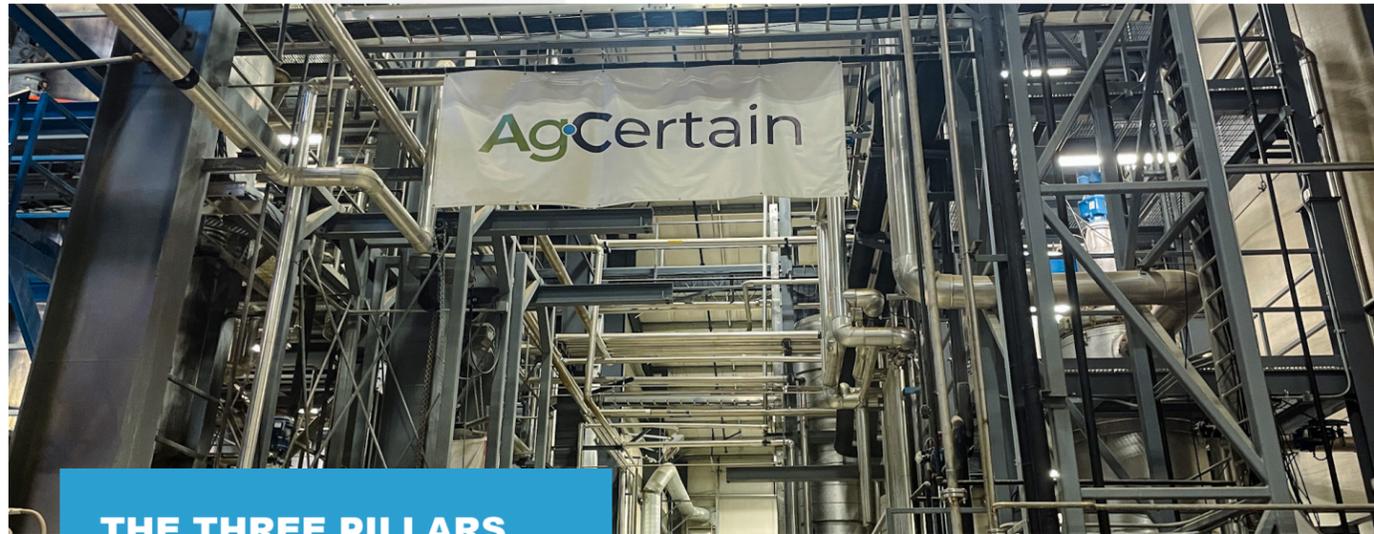
A MAGAZINE FROM THE AMES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Winter 2022-2023  
Issue 01



# Certain

**ABOUT INVESTING IN BOONE  
AND STORY COUNTY**



**THE THREE PILLARS  
THAT WILL LEAD OUR  
WORK WILL BE:**

LEADERSHIP  
ENGAGEMENT  
ADVOCACY



**Dan Culhane**  
President & CEO,  
Ames Chamber of Commerce

Welcome to *Traction*, a new quarterly publication from the Ames Chamber of Commerce. We are excited about this opportunity to help educate and inform our communities about the incredible things that are happening across our region.

Our organization not only serves member businesses through the Ames Chamber of Commerce but leads economic development across the Ames metropolitan statistical area (MSA). The Ames Economic Development Commission not only serves Ames, but all of Story County and Boone County.

A metropolitan statistical area is an official term from the U.S. Census Bureau and describes a population area that has a "high degree of economic and social integration." The Ames MSA is over 126,000 people and it is essential that the neighboring communities to Ames succeed because we all contribute to the vibrancy of our community.

Additionally, our organization serves as a liaison to Ames Main Street, providing services and programming to Downtown Ames. We lead the Ames Farmers' Market, provide leadership to FUEL, the young professionals organization, and the Ames Seed Capital, LLC, StartUp Ames, and 1 Million Cups support and engage entrepreneurs and start-ups in a variety of ways.

One of the things that excites me the most about this publication is that we will have an expanded opportunity to tell more stories. There are amazing people and incredible businesses across the Ames MSA, and we hope that these stories encourage you to invest your money locally and it builds pride in the community that we have chosen to call home.

**What is Traction?**

The **Ames Chamber of Commerce** and affiliate organizations help create traction in our community. We drive business and community vitality in the Ames MSA by being connectors. We lead, engage, and advocate for the betterment of our communities. We help get projects off the ground or help move them forward, and we are undeterred in our purpose, cause, and passion. A great idea often needs a little bit of progress and momentum, and we help provide that **traction** to move it forward.

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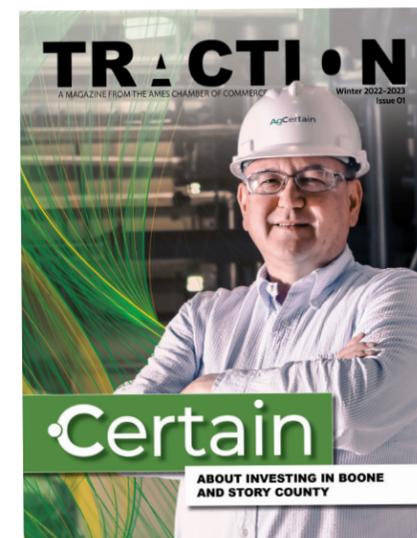
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**On the Cover**

Daniel Oh is the President & CEO of AgCertain, a food, agricultural, and bio-based manufacturing company, located in Boone, Iowa. For a company that could locate anywhere, Oh chose to invest in Boone and Story County, and recently announced their expansion in the Boone Industrial Park. Learn more about AgCertain and their investment in the feature article of *Traction*.



**304 Main St.  
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Centrally and conveniently located in the heart of the Midwest and Iowa, Ames is known for its healthy, stable economy, flourishing cultural environment, and the world-renowned Iowa State University.

[AmesChamber.com](http://AmesChamber.com)

**TRACTI • N INVESTORS**



For this first edition of *Traction*, we are featuring our Inner Circle Sponsors. With over 700 members, the Ames Chamber of Commerce strives to make Ames a better place to live, work, and do business by strengthening the economic vitality and the quality of life in the Ames community.



**ABOUT INVESTING IN BOONE AND STORY COUNTY**

**Daniel J. Oh**  
President & CEO, AgCertain

“Operating a productive and profitable business is one of the most important things one can do. Over time, profitable business activity is the base of our community through the direct and indirect funding of our families, communities, and society. Business is also an excellent way to channel individual and collective innovative, creative and entrepreneurial energy and effort.”

This is the grounding philosophy of Daniel Oh, President & CEO of AgCertain Industries, Inc., a food, agricultural, and bio-based manufacturing company, located in Ames, Boone, and Newton, Iowa.

The company is only three years old, yet Oh and his AgCertain team announced their expansion in the Boone Industrial Park in October 2022. For a company that could locate anywhere, he has again chosen Boone and Story counties to grow AgCertain.

As President & CEO, Oh believes profitability in a company is important and he spends much of his time focused on building AgCertain into an efficient company. But for Oh, operating a profitable business is also a way to contribute and give back. “Business can be a force for good, and Central Iowa has a growing and ever more connected business ecosystem that supports and sustains growing companies. As a community and region, we need to continue to grow highly engaged and profitable businesses to increase the stability that brings to our families and to create career opportunities that support employees being able to stay in the area as they seek greater responsibilities and roles.”

Oh views his work and company as one piece of a broader system. A community relies on businesses just as much as businesses rely on the community in which they reside. In every way, a business can only be as successful as those who are part of it. So, helping our communities grow in other

ways including quality of life, interesting places to live and work, access to a strong educational and healthcare system, a healthy environment, all with economic vitality, is essential. The communities where AgCertain operates are all very focused in this manner.

This philosophy is long-tenured and dates back to the early beginnings of his business career. Oh grew up in Bloomington, Indiana, in an entrepreneurial family. His parents owned and operated a food focused retail store and wholesale business. He remembers growing up on the second floor above the store and working within the family business from an early age. After high school, Oh attended college at the United States Military Academy at West Point.

“I thought I should serve,” said Oh, reflecting on the decision and the sense of responsibility he felt. Oh’s father emigrated from Korea to attend college and met his mother while attending college in Illinois. “At the time I felt as though it was my responsibility as a citizen to give back to the country that had embraced my family.”

“The United States Army was my first exposure as an adult into the business world,” said Oh who pointed out that the military is essentially a large, self-sustaining organization.

He was an active-duty service member for fifteen years and reached the rank of major. He served overseas during Operation Desert Storm and was exposed to logistics, supply chain management, human resources, and operations during his time in the military. “I really enjoyed serving in the U.S. Army and learned many valuable life lessons; it felt like our efforts had a higher purpose.”

“Even before joining the Army, I knew that I wanted to be an entrepreneur, but as a young person, I did not really understand

what being an entrepreneur really entailed.” At the age of 33, Oh stepped away from the military and attended the University of Chicago to pursue a Master of Business Administration degree. While at West Point, one of his key areas of study was economics, along with the typical required math, science, and engineering classes. At Chicago, he focused on finance, accounting and business strategy to be more prepared for a career in business.

Oh prefers to be involved in companies that provide essential goods and services in support of agriculture, life sciences and renewable energy, improving our environment, and supporting our communities. After graduation from the University of Chicago Graduate School of Business, he worked at a large management consulting firm with a focus on pharmaceuticals, at Eli Lilly & Company with a focus on finance and mergers and acquisitions, and at an agriculturally aligned consulting firm called Agri Business Group (ABG); all to learn more about how companies are built and operated while also assisting them to grow and improve their operations.

As part of ABG, he worked with one particular client in Iowa. In 2005, Oh assisted West Central Cooperative, now Landus, as they built a business plan for establishing a separate and independent Renewable Energy Group (REG), a company that would become a global producer and supplier of bio-based diesel, headquartered in Ames, Iowa.

After the spin-out was initially funded, Oh was offered a position to join the new company. He and his wife Lori moved their family across the Midwest where he joined REG in 2006 as Chief Financial Officer. After a year, he became Chief Operating Officer, then later the President and eventually the Chief

Executive Officer, a position he would hold until his departure in 2017. “I really loved the experience, and the Team accomplished a lot,” said Oh.

“At my core, I am a builder, and immediately went to work building another business while hoping we would determine that the ideal location for our home office was to again be based in Ames.” That business became AgCertain Industries, Inc.; conceptualized in 2017, organized in 2018, and operational and delivering products and services in 2019. The company has been growing with the assistance of a strong local team and investment from Midwest Growth Partners, the Kemery family and the Oh family.

The base production asset came from a company known as KemX Global, a glycerin and vegetable oil refining company located in Boone, Iowa. In 2019, AgCertain purchased certain assets and hired some employees from the prior company and began operating as AgCertain Boone, LLC. Since then, a tremendous amount of improvement and investment has happened.

There is a growing need to know where goods come from and how they are specifically handled along the way. AgCertain is doing this within the food, agricultural and bio-systems space on a more integrated basis in terms of markets, traceability, production, logistics and supply chain management. Delivering agricultural certainty so people can be sure that what they are receiving is what they wanted and is as expected - in terms of food, feed, oleochemicals and related products - that is what AgCertain does.

Located in the Cultivation Corridor, AgCertain is at the center of



AgCertain announced and celebrated their expansion in the Boone Industrial Park at an event on October 19, 2022. Those in attendance included Iowa Secretary of Agriculture, Mike Naig and Iowa Economic Development Authority Director Debi Durham. **Watch the presentation on YouTube.**

agricultural innovation where science and technology converge to impact our nation. Local logistics are excellent with access to the Union Pacific railroad via the Boone & Scenic Valley Railroad, Iowa Highway 30, Interstate 35, local warehousing and local packaging. The local education system, including area high schools, DMACC, and Iowa State University generate a well-trained community from which to hire. The business mind-set in the region is quick, efficient, no-nonsense, and focused in the right manner. Local government is supportive of growth that AgCertain strives to accomplish. And, the knowledge base in the region is ideal in terms of food, agricultural and bio-based systems activities.

AgCertain notes that the Boone refinery is "one of the most adaptable edible oil refiners in the industry producing Non-GMO, organic, high performance and conventional oils." They are USDA Organic and Non-GMO verified and hold Kosher, Halal and Safe Quality Food (SQF) certifications.

The Boone facility's adaptability and flexibility enhances its ability to support traceability for a wide variety of products that become ingredients for larger manufacturers, consumer packaged goods companies, and food producers. The process includes documenting the production, processing, and distribution of finished products and ingredients. This is particularly important for food products, and in AgCertain's case, glycerin and edible oils such as vegetable, fruit and nut oils.

Expansion was always part of the plan for Oh, both in Boone and within the food, agricultural, and bio-based product industries. In June 2022, AgCertain announced its acquisition of Maytag Dairy Farms located in Newton, IA; the artisanal manufacturer and marketer of world-famous Maytag Blue Cheese, and other specialty food and beverage products.

In the press release, Oh said, "by combining

our two Iowa-based companies, we are able to create deeper branding opportunities and expanded product sales opportunities for both organizations." He also recognized their ability to leverage the talent of leadership and staff in both organizations to "provide a quicker growth trajectory," an operational business mindset that was developed early on at West Point.

In October 2022, AgCertain celebrated their expansion in the Boone Industrial Park at an open-house event. Currently, in Boone, AgCertain occupies 120 acres of land, a footprint that could grow over time if the right conditions emerge. AgCertain has had an intern program every summer since its inception, and in 2023 plans to host another 20-25 interns across locations. Overall, AgCertain currently employs approximately 75 people.

In many ways, Oh has only been in business since 2000, but his entrepreneurial upbringing and sense of responsibility to community has formed his career trajectory from the beginning. Oh says that his ability to build and grow "AgCertain is a result of many people who have invested in me through their teaching, and worked together to build business that matters."

Oh also owns and operates property in Ames and Bloomington, Indiana, through a business now known as OEI (Oh Enterprises & Investments). OEI was formed by the Oh Family back in 1996 to acquire and improve historic properties in Bloomington. In 2018, OEI expanded into Ames, IA. A large effort of OEI seeks to preserve history while turning historic properties into viable economic assets that support thriving downtown areas. Through business, OEI serves its communities in a manner



likely to support entrepreneurs, local business, and downtown living.

The cycle of an economy is something that Oh often thinks about. By investing time, effort and capital in the community in which he lives, he and his family contribute to the vibrancy and economic development of that community. Dan and Lori raised their four children in Ames and enjoy being part of a college-town community.

For Oh, giving back to the community is a concept that has no end. It is a concept that was instilled in him from his parents early on and was reinforced during his training as a soldier. The profitability of a company is important as it provides stability, but defining and building a business that matters is equally as important.

He is a builder at heart, and this is something that he tries to do in many beneficial ways for his teams and communities, and that is never done alone. "The journey is building things that matter and serving people along the way."



AgCertain team members provided guided tours of the AgCertain Boone facility at the October 2022 event. Pictured is Jim Blickensdorf, Business Unit Leader, Maytag Dairy Farms, leading one of those tours. In all, over 150 people attended the event.

### Ashley Redeker from Modern Dress

Ashley Redeker is the owner of Modern Dress, a bridal and boutique store in downtown Boone. Modern Dress celebrated 10 years in August 2022 and is one of the premier bridal stores in Central Iowa.

"I've always been interested in the bridal industry," said Redeker when she presented at 1 Million Cups Ames in October. In high school, she worked at the bridal store that she eventually bought, but she did not jump into being an entrepreneur right away. After graduating from college, she worked for a production company that required a lot of travel. Although she enjoyed the experience, she ultimately wanted a career in Boone and purchased the bridal store.

Redeker understood early on that businesses evolve over time, so she rebranded the business Modern Dress to be able to include a diverse range of dress options. "I always had the vision that we would expand beyond bridal dresses, and I wanted the name to allow for that from the beginning." Today, the business includes a full range of bridal and bridesmaid dresses, while also being a vibrant boutique store.

"The experience is really important to me and has been from the beginning. We are not high-pressure. We want people to make good decisions, feel good about it, and have it be a fun experience." As a result, Redeker and her team of ten employees place an emphasis on quality over quantity of sales.

Part of that experience includes leveraging excitement through social media. The purchase of a wedding dress is a buzz-worthy moment for a bride with her family and friends. When a dress is purchased, each bride takes a picture at Modern Dress (without the dress, of course) and the Instagram post launches the celebration online.

On the boutique side of Modern Dress, Redeker and members of her team go live on Facebook each Wednesday as a way to build community and promote what is available on their Shopify store. Moving online was a pivot that Redeker had to embrace for Modern Dress in 2020 as the pandemic impacted the entire retail industry. Each week, with a casual drink in hand, her team goes live and uses it to reach potential customers. As a result, Redeker has become an incredible fashion resource for not only Boone, but beyond.

Modern Dress is located at 701 Story Street in Boone.



### Other 1MC Presenters



Mitchell Hora - Continuum Ag



Tom Straw - Twister's Cafe



Eric Abrams - Duckworth Wearing

Every Wednesday, 1 MILLION CUPS provides a supportive, inclusive space for entrepreneurs and their communities to gather and connect, where they can work through business challenges and identify opportunities.

Building and growing a business can be hard. We believe in the value of community to make it easier. Originally organized in 2012, Ames is one of over 100 in the nation. Every presentation is open to the public and can be attended in-person at the Ames Chamber of Commerce office or live on the [1 Million Cups - Ames Facebook page](#).



## TRACTI • N EVENTS



### Senator Ernst Visit

**DATE: October 4, 2022**

Senator Joni Ernst visited Ames and was part of the Executive Business Roundtable, hosted by the Ames Chamber of Commerce and Workiva. The conversation focused on growing Iowa business talent, technology, and childcare.

### Back to School Bash

**DATE: September 29, 2022**

Back to School Bash was an event in Campustown to celebrate the new school year! This free event was open to all ages, featured a beer garden and live music from Jake Doty and The Nadas.

There are great things happening in Campustown for the whole community to enjoy. Next year, this event is transitioning back to a summer, family-friendly event in Campustown.



### State of Healthcare

**DATE: September 23, 2022**

Brian Dieter, President & CEO of Mary Greeley Medical Center, spoke at our State of Healthcare event. He talked about the current status of the healthcare industry while focusing on the local impact.

### Symposium on Building Inclusive Organizations

**DATE: November 1, 2022**

This year was the fifth consecutive Symposium on Building Inclusive Organizations, a partnership between the Ames Chamber of Commerce, City of Ames, Iowa State University, and Story County. This year, the keynote speaker was Joshua Barr, an Emmy and national award-winning leader on human rights, diversity, equity, and inclusion issues. Breakout speakers included Anita Rollins, Max Mowitz, Marvin DeJear, Audrey Kennis, and Isaiah McGee.



### Upcoming Events

The **Ames Chamber of Commerce** hosts events year-round that appeal to both members and non-members alike. Interested in attending an event? Check out the calendar and register online at [AmesChamber.com](https://www.AmesChamber.com)

## TRACTI • N EVENTS

### Manufacturing Breakfast

**DATE: October 7, 2022**

Steve Sukup, President and CEO of Sukup Manufacturing, was the keynote speaker at the Ames Chamber of Commerce Manufacturing Breakfast. Sukup Manufacturing is one of Iowa's premier legacy manufacturers and he shared insights to a captive audience on the industry. He also shared details of some of the amazing things that his company is currently doing across the world.



### Steve Sukup

President & CEO, Sukup Manufacturing  
Keynote address at the Manufacturing Breakfast

# DID YOU KNOW?

Manufacturers in Iowa account for

# 17%

of the total output in the state, employing 15% of the workforce.

The average wage of a manufacturing employee in Story County is

# \$69,901

The statewide average is \$58,366.

There are 216K statewide manufacturing employees, including

# 5,529

in Story County and

# 528

in Boone County.

MANUFACTURING WEEK - OCTOBER 7-14, 2022



**Watch Manufacturing Spotlight Videos on YouTube.**

**Video 1 • ALMACO**

**Video 2 • Mid-States Companies**

**Video 3 • Danfoss Power Solution**

**Video 4 • Burke Corporation**



## TR:CTI•N EMPLOYER DANFOSS

The Danfoss Ames campus employs over 1,200 people and is the largest manufacturing employer in Story County. As a family-owned company with exceptional benefits, Danfoss has been included on Forbes World's Best Employers award list. They operate two sites in Ames with the East 13th Street location opening in 1971. The average years of service for full-time employees is 9 years and their core job areas include Innovation, Sales and Marketing, Supply Chain, Business, Production and Technical. Danfoss consistently invests in our community and they are a strong partner with local organizations such as United Way of Story County, Iowa State University, Mary Greeley Medical Center, and others.

# WORK in AMES.com

## 149,430

People reached on Work in Ames Facebook page

## 101,594

searches on WorkinAmes.com

Numbers compiled from October 1, 2021 - September 30, 2022

COMMUNITY  
PLAZA in DOWNTOWN AMES



Steven L. Schinker Plaza



Renderings by Confluence

Construction began in September 2022 on the new Steven L. Schinker Plaza, located in Downtown Ames across from City Hall. The Ames City Council made redeveloping the municipal parking lot into an interactive open space a priority as part of their goal to create a fun, vibrant community that attracts and retains residents.

This proposed community gathering space will include a mix of elements designed to enhance the Downtown experience, such as interactive water features, landscaped green space, public art, shade structures, open gathering areas, benches, restrooms, and winter ice skating.

The concept was first unveiled to the public in January 2021. After receiving public input, the City engaged nationally recognized landscape architecture firm Confluence to design a year-round public gathering space that includes a water feature for warm weather and ice skating when temperatures fall. Henkel Construction has been hired to build the new plaza.

The proposed Downtown Plaza is intended to be an amenity and attraction to Downtown for a wide range of ages, people, and activities. The proposed Plaza is unique in its focus on a place for fun and interesting experiences to a broad range of ages and flexible for a wide range of activities throughout the year. With the focus on public art, small gatherings, interactive features, and activities, the plaza will complement Downtown businesses and other public spaces such as Bandshell Park and Tom Evans Plaza.

# WHAT IS PLACEMAKING?

A TRACTI • N WORD DEFINED BY



What is your favorite place in a city anywhere in the World? Take a (mental) walk there right now. What do you see? What do you like about it? Is it easy to get there? How do you feel when you are there? Why do you feel comfortable when you are there? Are you the only one there or are others enjoying it too? Do you like to meet your friends there?

These questions and others like them are critical when considering how to make a space where people want to go, spend time, and spend money. A place that is accessible, comfortable, useful, and sociable. The process of creating public space like this is called Placemaking. According to Susanna Moreira, "Placemaking means creating places and focuses on transforming public spaces to strengthen the connections between people and these places."

What makes a great place? The Project for Public Spaces has identified four primary attributes:

1. They are accessible and well connected to other important places in the area.
2. They are comfortable and project a good image.
3. They attract people to participate in activities there.
4. They are sociable environments in which people want to gather and visit again and again.

How do we make great locations? The Project for Public Spaces has identified Eleven Principles of great Placemaking:

1. The Community is The Expert
2. Create a Place, Not a Design
3. Look for Partners
4. They Always Say "It Can't Be Done."
5. Have a Vision
6. You Can See a Lot Just By Observing
7. Form Supports Function
8. Triangulate
9. Experiment: Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper
10. Money Is Not The Issue
11. You Are Never Finished



Sam Stagg  
Principal - AIA

Submitted photo

## 10Fold Architecture + Engineering

10Fold's team of 21 professional staff functions interactively within a context of research, dialogue, and exploration enabling unique design solutions for every project. Over the company's 35-year history, the full-service architecture, structural engineering, and interior design firm has completed a range of project types including all types of commercial spaces, industrial, K-12 schools, higher education, retail, and residential projects.

10Fold Architecture + Engineering firmly believes that design is a participatory process centered around its clients with the ultimate success of any project depending upon the contribution of everyone involved.

## TRAC TION EVENTS

### Ribbon Cutting Events

The **Ames Chamber of Commerce** provides Ribbon Cutting services to member businesses as a way to help them gain traction in the community. If your business has completed a major remodeling project, moved to a new location, or changed ownership, we want to help celebrate this event. Here are some of the businesses in the Ames MSA who are gaining traction.



### Ribbon Cutting Events

- [In Spyrit Metaphysical](#)
- [Farrell's eXtreme BodyShaping](#)
- [Crumb! Cookie](#)
- [Varsity Carwash](#)
- [Ames Christian Schools](#)
- [ISU Memorial Union](#)
- [U.S. Cellular Advantage](#)
- [The Community Academy](#)
- [Cookies, Etc.](#)
- [Copper Spaces](#)
- [S7 Wellness](#)
- [Windsor Oaks](#)
- [Simply Mae's Café](#)
- [Heaven's Best Cleaning](#)
- [Story County Community Foundation](#)
- [The Film Silo Productions](#)
- [RenuYou Aesthetics & MedSpa](#)
- [Independence Village](#)



Follow the Ames Chamber of Commerce on social media



# ONLINE MEMBER DIRECTORY

Looking for a local business? Consider one of our over 700 Ames Chamber of Commerce members through our online directory. Visit our website at:

[AmesChamber.com](https://AmesChamber.com)



A little bit of success may be all a business needs to gain **TRAC TION**

### New Members

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Celeya Tex-Mex</a>                      | <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Crumb! Cookies</a>                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">DMACC, Boone Campus</a>                 | <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Else Construction</a>                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Heart of Iowa Regional Transit</a>      | <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Heaven's Best Carpet</a>                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Jen Rieck with Prudential</a>           | <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">KandE Productions</a>                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Leonessa LLC Properties</a>             | <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Zook's Look, Inc.</a>                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Ortho2</a>                              | <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">S7 Wellness</a>                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Sam's Place</a>                         | <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">The Film Silo Productions</a>            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Trilogy Physical Therapy</a>            | <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">ADi Group</a>                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">CFO Systems LLC</a>                     | <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Berdex USA</a>                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">RenuYou Aesthetics &amp; MedSpa</a>     | <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">LifeChoices at Bethany</a>               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">BlueMoon Holistic Wellness</a>          | <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Cylosoft, Inc.</a>                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Nebullam, Inc. (DBA, Clayton Farms)</a> | <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Heartland Roofing, Siding, and Solar</a> |



Scan the QR code to access our online directory to search for some of the businesses gaining traction. The directory can be searched by keyword or use the drop down categories to browse. If you are looking for a specific business, do an advanced search to locate them by name.

# the Salon

For 37 years, Frank Randall was a prominent figure in the Iowa State Athletics Department. Today, he is the owner of The Salon, a full-service hair salon located in the heart of Downtown Ames.

Randall arrived in Ames in 1970 as Iowa State University's head athletic trainer where he worked with every athletic team. At the time, he had a host of responsibilities that included strength and conditioning testing, gameday treatments, and organizing travel plans. He was a pioneer in athletic injury prevention and helped develop a bilateral knee brace to help reduce injury that continues to be used by many schools. Additionally, Randall helped change the football helmet to a more rounded contour, which disperses the outside force rather than absorbing the force, helping to reduce head injuries.

In 1998, Randall transitioned away from the day-to-day responsibilities of athletic training when he became an assistant athletics director for operations, a title that he held until his retirement in 2007. He is a member of the Iowa State University Athletics Hall of Fame (2008) and continues to be honored within the athletics department. Each year, the Frank Randall Distinguished Athletic Training Student Award is given to the ISU athletic training student who exemplifies "dedication, work ethic, accountability and excellence in the field of athletic training."

The transition to The Salon occurred in 2011 after his son, Alan Randall, graduated from cosmetology school. Frank and his wife purchased The Salon where they offer a full range of services that include haircuts and styling for all ages, coloring, and extensions. The Salon currently employs nine individuals including six stylists and three front desk receptionists.

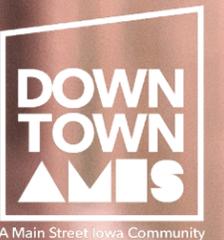
The Salon is a social outlet for Frank, who admittedly does not get involved in the hair styling. His son, Alan, continues to be the creative director of the business, even while working in a salon in Colorado. "I just enjoy being around people because that's all I've ever done." He has full faith in his staff, including stylist Brandi Mcclish, who graduated from PCI Academy in Ames and started her career with The Salon. "Working at The Salon feels like family. We are all in it together to give our clients our best. We are all focused on the same thing and that just feels good!"

**The Salon is located at 323 Main Street.**

**Frank Randall**  
Owner, The Salon



[AmesDowntown.org](http://AmesDowntown.org)





**Beth DeVries**  
Owner, Della Viti

# Della Viti

Nearly every night, you'll find Della Viti, the Downtown Ames wine bar, full of both seasoned and novice wine connoisseurs. By its nature, understanding wine can be a bit complicated. Since 2014, owner Beth DeVries has made it her purpose to make wine accessible to understand and enjoy. As a result, she has built a loyal customer base for her business that is continuing to expand.

DeVries' path to wine is not traditional. In fact, she admits that she knew very little about wine when she took over Della Viti. She is a trained research scientist with a degree in genetics from Iowa State University. For 13 years, she worked in product development of proteins and helped scale her research for business application. She was laid off during a corporate restructuring in 2013, which eventually launched her ownership in Della Viti. Today, she takes her scientific background and applies it to wine.

Della Viti is a self-service wine bar, an anomaly in the hospitality industry. The business model is convenient for customers as it allows them to sample smaller portions at a time in order to develop their palate. "My customers are able to experiment with different types of wine. They don't need to purchase a full glass and this allows them to understand what they really like," said DeVries.

DeVries works with eight distributors that bring in wine from across the world. On average, she estimates that she tastes fifteen to thirty different wines a week, which equates to sampling over 10,000 different wines over the past eight years. Like a scientist, she takes detailed notes of each one, and these notes help make purchasing decisions. She brings in over 500 cases a year.

When the wine enters Della Viti, they are organized for the customer by taste profile. For the consumer, when they find a profile that they enjoy; a California cabernet, for example, a similarly profiled wine is placed in the rack next to it, helping the customer with their next tasting.

"I think our customers enjoy finding out what they like and then they are equipped to branch out and explore." When they do find the wine they love, a bottle can be purchased and taken home for enjoyment with family and friends.

Through her business, DeVries is always seeking ways to give back to the community that has supported her. Earlier this year, the Iowa Restaurant Association honored DeVries with the Restaurant Neighbor Philanthropy award, an honor that recognizes her charitable giving and volunteering. DeVries has donated wine to the Mary Greeley Medical Center's Hope Gala, put together gift packages for the annual Boys & Girls Clubs gala, organized 5K charity runs, and regularly offers Della Viti as a meeting location to 100 Women Who Care, a local philanthropy group.

As her business evolved, DeVries has always had the ability to adjust. The pandemic was a prime example of this flexibility when she quickly pivoted to an online retail store. She continually embraces social media trends and has expanded her offerings at Della Viti to include food options. Her next venture will expand her presence on Main Street as she is preparing to open another business.

**Della Viti is located at 323 Main Street.**



**Sue Cunningham**  
VP, Supply Chain/Human Resources

**Matt Nims**  
VP, Sales & Marketing

**Chris Nims**  
VP, Demand Planner/  
E-Commerce Strategist

**Elizabeth Brink**  
VP, Order Fulfillment

**Nyle Nims**  
Chief Operating Officer



[www.cyclefg.com](http://www.cyclefg.com)

# CYCLE FORCE

If you have ever purchased a bicycle, bicycle parts, or accessories online, it is highly possible that the order was processed by Cycle Force Group in Ames, Iowa. Founded in 1998, Cycle Force Group (CF) is a national distributor of bicycles, parts, accessories and so much more.

As of January 1, 2022, Cycle Force Group was purchased by Messingschlager GmbH, Europe's leading supplier of bicycle parts and accessories. That acquisition established Messingschlager USA LLC (dba Cycle Force), headquartered in Ames. CF is now positioned to better compete in the United States cycling world with new European brands that will soon be part of the CF portfolio.

In 1998, the company was founded by Nyle Nims and Sue Cunningham in eastern Long Island. Like many small companies, the center of operations during the early years of the company was at a kitchen table. Their first customer was Sears & Roebuck whom they had a solid relationship with at their former company. That buyer left and went to an unknown company at the time, and asked Nyle and Sue if they would sell him bicycles, another unknown category for them. That unknown company was Amazon and began a decades long relationship as they continue to be their number one customer.

As the internet boomed, they expanded their distribution further online. Increased orders required additional shipping, and Nims and Cunningham quickly saw the challenges of shipping from the east coast to west coast. They eventually made the decision to relocate their company to Ames.

Nims is an Ames native and got his early entrepreneurial education from his father Daryl. Nims' Sportsman was founded

in 1951 and was a Downtown Ames staple, selling a wide assortment of sporting goods. In 1969, the business expanded beyond hunting and fishing to include Schwinn bicycles. The father/son team traveled Europe in search of manufacturing partners. Eventually, Nyle Nims went onto become president of Ross Bicycles, one of the largest bicycle companies in the United States before eventually starting CFG with Cunningham, who began her cycling career at Ross in New York.

With the recent acquisition by Messingschlager, Pat Cunnane was announced as the new Chief Executive Officer in November 2022, with Nims, Cunningham and Nyle's three children, Matt, Chris, and Elizabeth, focusing on the operations in Ames. Cunnane is a recognized leader in the bicycle industry with decades of CEO experience.

Cycle Force Group offers a range of products that includes entry-level bikes for children, and most recently e-bikes. One of the areas they have always been interested in is high-end performance bicycles. Cycling is an international sport that is incredibly popular in Europe. It was recently announced that North America Cycles (a division of Cycle Force handling the independent bicycle dealer network) was awarded the exclusive U.S. distributor of a line of KTM Bicycles, a premium global cycling brand from Austria.

When thinking of bicycle companies in Ames, Cycle Force may not be one that immediately comes to mind. They have never been a public-facing company with a showroom for customers, yet their revenue is annually eight-figures. The customer base includes e-commerce fulfillment, big-box retail, independent bicycle retailers, large multi-sport retailers, consumer direct, premium, and promotional clients.

Through the years, the CF business model has evolved as quickly as the internet has. Just like Nyle followed his father, CF has grown into the next generation with his children. Matt Nims is tasked with sales and marketing, Chris Nims with navigating an ever-changing e-commerce market, and Elizabeth Brink with order fulfillment. They make up the CF management team along with Nyle and Sue who report to Pat.

In 2020, CF experienced an influx in orders due to the pandemic when normal life shifted to activities at home and outdoors. During that time, they were processing over 3,000 orders a day and in April 2020, the company saw more than 40,000 orders. That year, they processed approximately half a million orders in all.

They are currently in the next evolution of bicycles: e-bikes. For a company that handled half a million orders, the move to e-bikes means less orders, but at higher prices, allowing the company to maintain the same revenue. One of their premier bicycle brands is HEAD, famous for gold medals in ski and grand slam tennis titles.

Whatever is next in bicycles, Messingschlager USA, dba Cycle Force, will be ready with the infrastructure they have in place. Growth has been in their DNA for almost 25 years and will continue to turn their wheels year after year allowing their employees the opportunity to flourish working in Ames, Iowa.

# CYCLE FORCE

## Company Timeline

**1951**

Nims' Sportsman is established in Ames, Iowa. With a customer-centric philosophy and wide assortment of sporting goods, Nims' was the go-to for sportsmen.

**1969**

Nims' expands beyond traditional sports, fishing, and hunting. It becomes a Schwinn Concept Store, offering bicycles for the first time.

**1972**

The "bicycle boom" begins. Daryl Nims, and son Nyle, travel to Europe to find the latest and greatest bringing back Puch, Peugeot, and Austro-Daimler bicycles.

**1988**

With the purchase of Ross Bicycles by Rand International of New York, Nyle is named president of one of the largest bicycle companies in America.

**1993**

Ross Bicycles begins assembling and manufacturing both Ross Signature and Race products in Hauppauge, New York.

**1998**

Nyle, and colleague Sue Cunningham, leave Ross Bicycles to establish Cycle Source Group.

**2001**

Cycle Source begins to offer bicycles to a website upstart, Amazon.com, beginning a long relationship and shift in the traditional bicycle wholesale business.

**2007**

With the internet age in full swing, Cycle Source relocates to Ames, Iowa, where shipping rates and delivery time is reduced.

**2008**

Cycle Source establishes a partnership with one of its largest customers, Cycle Force UK, to establish Cycle Force Group.

**2012**

Nyle's son, Matthew, re-establishes North America Cycles with the objective to expand sales beyond internet and mass market into the Independent Retail sector.

**2022**

Cycle Force Group is purchased by Messingschlager, the world's largest importer/manufacture of bicycle parts.

Cycling enthusiasts looking for employment opportunities, contact Sue Cunningham ([suec@cyclefg.com](mailto:suec@cyclefg.com))



Pioneer Property Management and the City of Boone Celebrate the Groundbreaking of a  
**\$19 MILLION**  
 New Construction Investment

Pioneer Property Management and the City of Boone celebrated the groundbreaking of The Villas at Fox Pointe, located at the northwest corner of 22nd Street and P Avenue in Boone, Iowa, on Thursday, October 6, 2022.

This groundbreaking ceremony marked the beginning of a two-phase, \$19 million investment in Boone. The first phase is an \$11 million, 40-unit new construction project. Thirty-six of those units will be identified as affordable housing while four units will be unrestricted and can be listed based on the market rate. The second phase is a \$7.6 million new construction senior housing project that includes 30 total units, all two-bedroom, for community members 55+ years of age. This phase was approved in fall 2022 by the Iowa Finance Authority.

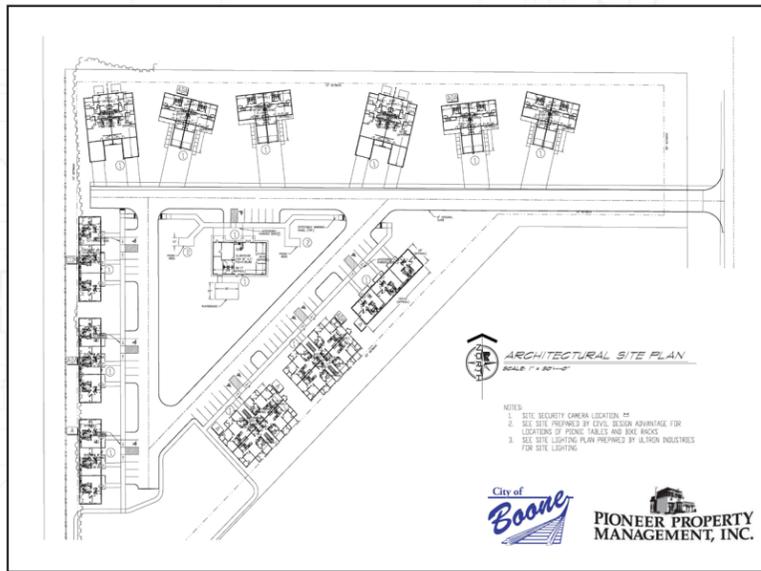
In 2021, the Iowa Finance Authority Board of Directors awarded more than \$13.2 million in federal housing tax credits to support the construction of new rental homes, including this project in Boone. "Housing is a leading driver of upward economic mobility for families and economic growth for our communities," said Iowa Finance Authority Executive Director Debi Durham at the time of the announcement. "The tax credit awards announced today will provide hundreds of Iowa families and seniors with homes in which they can thrive."

The Internal Revenue Service makes an annual per capita allocation of federal tax credits to each state for the Federal Housing Tax Credit program. The Iowa Finance Authority is charged with allocating those credits to affordable housing developers.

Brian Fritz, owner of Pioneer Property Management, Inc. said, "We are incredibly excited to break ground on this project. Thank you to the Iowa Finance Authority for approving our application so that we can continue to bring affordable housing to our community."

The groundbreaking ceremony included opening remarks from Dan Culhane, President & CEO, Ames Economic Development Commission, as well as comments from City of Boone Mayor, John Slight, and Iowa Finance Authority Executive Director Debi Durham. Brian Fritz provided an overview of the project at the ceremony.

Construction for the entire housing project is scheduled to begin this fall and conclude in summer 2024.



Debi Durham, Director of the Iowa Finance Authority, spoke at the groundbreaking event in Boone.

 **Watch a recap video of this event on YouTube.**

**TRACTI•N NEWS**

**Wyffels Hybrids** (October 28, 2022)

Wyffels Hybrids announced plans for a new site based in Ames, Iowa. The new facility, located on approximately 150 acres near Interstate 35 and Highway 30 in the Prairie View Industrial Center, will ensure that Wyffels' growing customer base continues to enjoy industry leading products and support throughout the growing season. The first phase of construction includes a new warehouse and distribution center to bring seed closer to customers in Iowa, southern South Dakota and southern Minnesota. Wyffels fully expects that future expansion will include seed corn production capabilities, enhanced research and corn breeding functions, agronomic demonstration opportunities, as well as meeting and training resources for employees and customers. Wyffels Hybrids plans to begin shipping from the Iowa site in spring 2024.



**Prairie View Industrial Center** (November 10, 2022)

The first phase of extending utilities into the new Prairie View Industrial Center is nearly complete. Prairie View is the City's largest area for industrial development and the Phase 1 project opens hundreds of acres of land east of Interstate 35 along East Lincoln Way for development. This first phase represents a \$6.1 million investment, which includes a federal Economic Development Agency grant and local utility funding. Prairie View is a State of Iowa certified site for economic development. The City of Ames has worked in tandem with Alliant Energy and the Ames Economic Development Commission (AEDC) to bring this 1,200-acre area online for industrial development.



**Pivot Bio** (November 11, 2022)

The Iowa State University Research Park (ISURP) announced the groundbreaking of a 36,000 square foot single tenant building to accommodate the growth of agricultural startup Pivot Bio. Pivot Bio is a nitrogen company with deep Iowa roots. Opening its first Customer Success Center at the ISURP in 2019, the company's new facility will house approximately 50 local employees, including a dedicated customer service team, and provides facilities for sales training and customer interactions. Pivot Bio provides farmers with a reliable source of nitrogen for their corn, wheat, sorghum and other small grain crops.



**TRACTI•N**  
*Contributions*

**Additional Contributions**

- |                |                    |
|----------------|--------------------|
| Daniel Oh      | Mitch McDermott    |
| Abbie Miller   | Sharon Brooks      |
| Frank Randall  | Susan Gwasda       |
| Beth DeVries   | Alison Doyle       |
| Bill Skare     | Sue Cunningham     |
| Brian Fritz    | Nyle Nims          |
| Sam Stagg      |                    |
| Kelsey Buenz   | ... and the entire |
| Jill Carlson   | Ames Chamber of    |
| Ashley Redeker | Commerce team!     |

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**Final Comments from the Editor:**



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Thank you for reading the first issue of *Traction*, a quarterly publication from the Ames Chamber of Commerce. As an organization, we support businesses across the Ames MSA, lead economic development, and provide entrepreneurial and leadership programming, among many other things. As a result, our team is well-positioned to hear a lot of amazing stories from member businesses.

During each conversation, I find myself asking, "how can we help share this story so that everyone knows about it?" The answer, in part, is this publication. Social media is great, but it can never have the appeal that a collection of stories in print can offer.

Through this publication, we are committing to being a storytelling organization. We will share stories from across the Ames MSA so that our community is informed about notable projects, amazing businesses, and we hope that some of the information will surprise you in great ways. That awareness can create pride, and traction, in the communities that we are all building together.



**304 Main St.  
Ames, Iowa 50010**

