

Food & Beverage Iowa Business

Quarterly

Celebrating The Industry's Award Winners



Inside: 2019 State Legislative Preview



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Food & Beverage Iowa Business Quarterly

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Hometown Chef Makes Eastern Iowa a Culinary Hot Spot

2018 Restaurateur of the Year Benjamin Smart always knew he was not cut out for a desk job. The now executive chef and partner in several of Iowa's hottest restaurants including Big Grove Brewery, Pullman Bar & Diner and St. Burch Tavern in Iowa City earned his geoscience degree from the University of Iowa with that thought in mind.

From the time he was a child, he loved cooking and had a fascination with the chefs on television (Specifically "Great Chefs Great Cities" on PBS). "I found their drive and creativity absolutely inspirational," said Smart. He just couldn't deny his draw to the restaurant industry.

One night Smart and his wife Emily were out for the evening and she "opened his eyes" when she suggested that he "Go cook." She told him, "You are not stuck on one path."

It was the nudge he needed. From that moment Smart charted a culinary path for himself that, while not always easy, has defined his style and career.

The Iowa City native earned his culinary degree from Kirkwood in Cedar Rapids. He worked in several local restaurants—meeting many of his future business partners. But first, he spent time in Kansas City working with James Beard Winner Chef Celina Tio in the fine dining American Restaurant. He became fascinated with the farm-to-food movement and headed for Washington state where he spent five years at The Herbfarm, a five-diamond restaurant with a working farm outside of Seattle.

A surprise call in 2013 from Big Grove Partner Doug Goettsch brought Smart back to Iowa. Goettsch wanted an Iowa chef to help open his new restaurant in Solon. Smart made the leap and helped establish the small-town brew pub as a culinary destination. His menu hallmark is the ability to make upscale food approachable. It even earned him a place on Plate Magazine's "30 Chefs to Watch" list in 2016.

Chef Smart and his Big Grove partners were just getting started with their Solon location. Smart soon made the leap to owner/partner working with another Big Grove Partner Matthew Swift, as well as Nate Kaeding creating Pullman Bar & Diner, and a second Big Grove Brewery in Iowa City. They have also recently opened the St. Burch Tavern.

Even as an owner, Chef Smart is never far from a kitchen. He is still honing his craft and encourages his team to do the same. "It is important to invest in yourself and look for ways to be better," said Smart. "I do that every day by surrounding myself with the best people."



Chef Benjamin Smart

**Big Grove Brewery/Pullman Bar & Diner/St. Burch Tavern
Iowa City | Solon**

"Chef Ben has definitely impacted the dining scene in a positive way and has pushed others to reimagine what can be done."

- Douglas Goettsch, Owner/Partner, Big Grove Brewery



Congrats Holly Hintz
GM of Crème Cupcake + Dessert,
on your sweet success as
“Emerging hospitality leader of the year award”

2018 Emerging Hospitality Leader of the Year
Holly Hintz
General Manager | Crémé Cupcake + Dessert




Congrats Iowa Restaurant Association
Employee of the Year Shayna Watts!
From your friends & colleagues at:
Fresh Mediterranean Express

2018 Employee of the Year
Shayna Watts
Assistant Manager | Fresh Mediterranean Express



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Self-Taught Chef Credits Mentors for Culinary Success

2018 Chef of the Year, Aaron Holt, is proof that you don't need a culinary degree to be an award-winning chef. He started working in restaurants at age 15—but at the time, it didn't occur to him that he could make a career in the industry.

In college he pursued an architecture degree, but continued to work in restaurants. During his sophomore year, at age 21, something happened that changed the course of his life—he was promoted to executive chef at a local restaurant where he was working. “I like to say, being a chef found me,” remembers Holt. He left college to dedicate his time and energy to being the best chef he could be.

He worked several front-of-the-house and chef positions—gleaning everything he could from every restaurant and role. In 2007 he earned his fine dining stripes working for his mentor and friend, award-winning Chef Andrew Meek. “I actually went to Andrew and said I will work for free I just want to learn,” said Holt. “He paid me of course, but I took so much more than money away from that experience.” Holt used every lesson Chef Andrew taught him when helping open RoCA, a shared plates, craft cocktail and wine bar in Des Moines.

As the Executive Chef at RoCA, Holt has been instrumental in creating and building the menu as well as helping create the ambiance RoCA tries to deliver to guests night after night.

He loves to use local and seasonal ingredients in his dishes, including produce that he grows on his family farm.

Holt is committed to continually improving the customer experience at RoCA, as well as serving as a teacher and mentor to aspiring chefs.

In his own words, “It will always be trendy to do the right thing” says Holt. “Keep it fresh and keep it simple.”



Chef Aaron Holt
RoCA
Des Moines

“RoCA wouldn't be the hot spot it continues to be if it wasn't for Chef Aaron's influence. He is amazing at what he does and we are proud to have him as a part of our team.”

- Todd Millang, Owner, RoCA



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Award-Winning Chef “Writes His Own Story”

2018 American Dream Award Winner, Chef Aman Razdan, remembers arriving in the United States on a wintry day in 1998. He landed in Chicago, looked at the snow covered landscape and thought about the promise the fresh white snow offered his soul. Says Razdan, “I knew instantly I was in a place where I could write my own story. I could do anything.”

“Anything” for Razdan was the dream of owning his own restaurant. As a teenager at his family’s restaurants in Mumbai, India he had worked in every non-cooking role—from dishwasher to general manager. He understood that central to his hope for success in a new country and culture was the need to learn the culinary side of the restaurant business.

He enrolled in the Culinary Arts Program at Scott Community College and landed a position at Le Figaro in Rock Island. Always looking for ways to do and learn more, he took culinary positions at several commercial kitchens, as well as in restaurants such as the Red Crow Grille in Bettendorf. It was at the Red Crow that Razdan met and worked with several wonderful mentors including Chef Lynn Pritchard, a previous Iowa Restaurateur of the Year award winner.

In 2015, Razdan was in a position to buy the restaurant which he then rebranded Hemispheres Bistro.

Hemispheres Bistro has a staff of two dozen and seats 110 people. It is a global fusion concept with a Middle Eastern, Mediterranean and Latin flair with French finishings. Razdan notes, “Our mission is to offer global cuisine.”

They have certainly accomplished this goal but Razdan is quick to point to the profound influence a long list of mentor chefs have had on his menu development, as well as the role his employees have played in his success.

“I simply would not be the chef or business owner I am without the help of the people I have worked for as well as those who work for me,” notes Aman. “They are all like family to me.”



**Chef Aman Razdan
Hemispheres Bistro
Bettendorf**

“He plates every dish like it is one-of-a-kind. He treats his staff and guests like his family.”

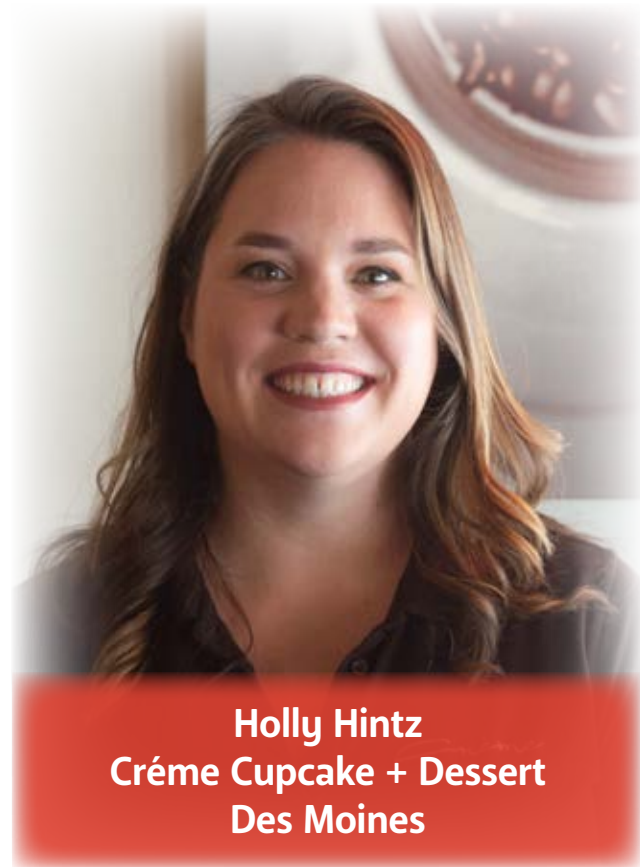
- Emily Hudson, General Manager, Hemispheres Bistro



Chef Aman with Family & Friends at Hemispheres Bistro’s Opening



Chef Aman on a Local Cooking Television Show



Holly Hintz
Crème Cupcake + Dessert
Des Moines

A Passion For People and Pastries

From the days of her first job as a Soda Jerk at Stella's Blue Sky Diner in Urbandale, Holly Hintz knew she wanted to work in the hospitality industry. "Having a culinary career was the only thing I ever wanted to do," says Hintz.

She earned a degree in Baking and Pastry from the prestigious Culinary Institute of America in New York and then worked in several East Coast boutique hotels before returning to Des Moines to continue her culinary career. In 2011, while organizing a fundraiser to help Tsunami Victims, she met Christina Moffatt, Owner of Crème Cupcake. According to Moffatt, the two had an instant connection with a shared passion for both gourmet baked goods and helping others.

Hintz joined and became a key member of the Crème Cupcake team and was instrumental in helping take the now iconic

Des Moines bakery from a tiny catering operation to the standard-bearer dessert lounge it is today.

As the general manager at Crème Cupcake, Hintz leads daily operations, as well as donates her time to help a variety of non-profit organizations including 4-H, Winefest and BRAVO. Everyone who works with her is struck by her positive outlook, willingness to roll up her sleeves and pitch in, do anything, natural leadership skills and creativity.

Hintz takes it all in stride. Her unyielding passion for her community is contagious and her selection as the 2018 Emerging Hospitality Leader of the Year made sense to all who know her.

"We're in the hospitality business," said Hintz. "Helping create moments for people is what we do."

Iowa Restaurant Association | 2018 Employee of the Year

Care for Customers is Always First

The restaurant industry has always been a "happy place" for 2018 Restaurant Employee of the Year Shayna Watts. She remembers being 5-years-old and accompanying her stepfather to the Sonic Drive-in he managed in Texas. Watts recalls feeling as though everyone truly wanted to be helpful. "Being raised in that environment you quickly learn the value of just being nice and smiling," she recalls. "Taking care of customers was always the priority and you could feel it."

That commitment to customer care stuck with Watts, who took that same positive attitude with her to work in restaurants in Texas, Arizona, and finally Iowa. In 2014, Shayna started with Fresh Mediterranean Express in Waukee. She was quickly promoted to Team Lead and then to Assistant Manager.

According to Owner Hassan Atarmal, Watts is an integral part of the restaurant's success. "She goes

above and beyond what is expected," says Atarmal, "She is one of the most reliable, dependable and honest employees we have ever had."

Watts is a natural leader and is always challenging coworkers to be the best they can be. Even the restaurants' owners credit her for pushing them to improve and seek new ways to positively impact the restaurant's success.

She loves hospitality but also hopes to pursue other ways she can influence people's growth and development. "The end goal is to become a teacher," said Watts.

Perhaps she will find her way into a ProStart classroom where she can pass on her hospitality skills, but if not, says Watts, "I will always appreciate the joy I get from working in the restaurant industry."



Shayna Watts
Fresh Mediterranean Express
Waukee

A Career Dedicated to Bridging the Gap Between Agriculture & Hospitality

When Linda Funk pursued a degree in Home Economics Education she was committed to the idea of teaching future generations essential skills to improve their health and well-being. She accomplished this goal— but in unexpected ways.

Upon graduation, she skipped the classroom and took a County Extension Home Economist position in Wisconsin. “It was before the Internet,” jokes Funk. “We answered food questions by phone—the most common being ‘What happened?’” She also provided classroom education, oversaw 4-H programming and created an elderly food delivery program.

She landed one “dream job” after another—designing the test kitchen for Ambrosia Chocolate, as well as working in Public Relations for Pepsi—but it was her work with the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board that centered her connection to the culinary world.

At the request of a friend, Linda met with Iowa Soybean Association CEO Kirk Leeds about starting a new organization called “The Soyfoods Council.” She couldn’t resist the challenge she was afforded to build awareness of an often misunderstood, but nutritious product. “This organization brought together everything I am passionate about; chefs, nutrition, cuisine and Midwest agriculture,” says Funk.

For 18 years, she has done much to inform chefs, consumers and students about soy. She has developed culinary competitions and educational seminars with the Iowa Restaurant Association and the Iowa Beef Industry Council to show that “Soy doesn’t have to stand alone, it can complement anything and be part of a healthy lifestyle.” She has worked with the World Food Prize and traveled to Asia and Africa to help expand people’s knowledge of soyfoods.

Funk is proud of how far soyfoods have come, but she is quick to give credit to Kirk Leeds and the farmers who had the foresight to see the need to expand thinking about plant-based proteins. Funk continues to be an ambassador for one of Iowa’s most important commodities working across industries to further solidify soy’s place in restaurants across the state and nation.

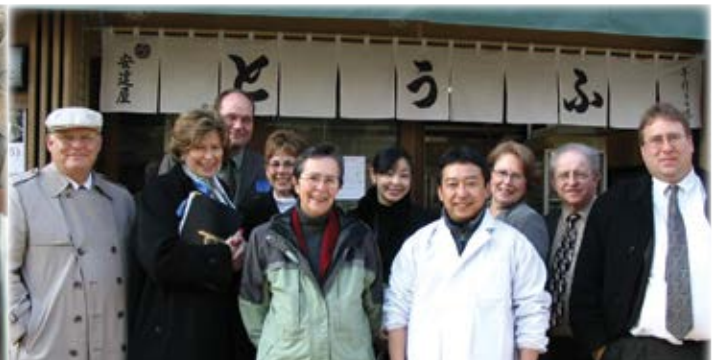


Linda Funk
The Soyfoods Council
Ankeny

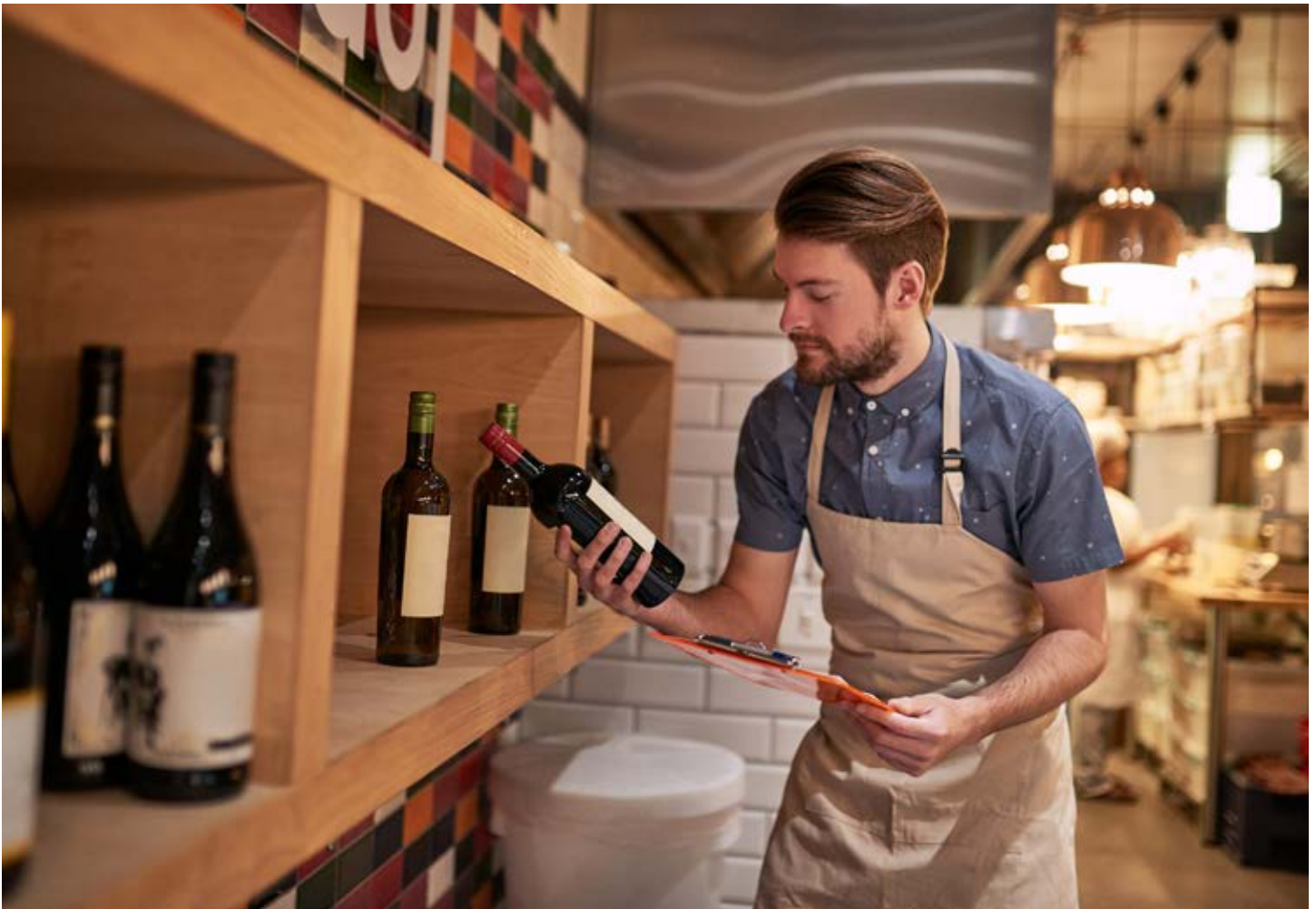
“This organization brought together everything I am passionate about; chefs, nutrition, cuisine and Midwest agriculture” - Linda Funk



Iowa Soybean Association President/CEO Kirk Leeds and Linda Funk



The Soyfoods Council Meeting with Restaurant Owners in Asia



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Kris Kay
Go Fish Marina Bar & Grill
Princeton

The Power of “Showing Up and Speaking Up”

If you’re ever going to battle, there’s one hospitality champion you want in your corner—Kris Kay. Kris and husband John own Go Fish, a restaurant, bar and marina on the bank of the Mississippi River in Princeton.

Kay is a firm believer in the power of showing up, particularly when it comes to getting changes made by the state legislature. Over the past two years, the Kays have made multiple trips to Des Moines to meet with legislators to help pass changes to Iowa’s DRAM laws.

Kay also engaged other Eastern Iowa operators in the efforts to bring about reform. She joined the Iowa Restaurant Association Board of Directors and hosted a legislative forum in her establishment, inviting Democratic and Republican legislators, as well as other business owners. “Our legislators have to hear from us,” says Kay. “They don’t know our businesses like we do.”

Kay has never presumed things will come easy for hospitality businesses. She spent her formative years living and working in

her parent’s remote hunting and fishing resort in Canada. The family’s life was equal parts rewarding and grueling recalls Kay. She has memories of traveling by boat to purchase the supplies they needed for guests and chasing down guides to help fishermen navigate and portage the fishing lakes. Upon high school graduation, she returned to the continental US and worked for two decades as a legal assistant and in commercial and residential real estate development.

A call from a friend in need of someone to run a campground and bar-and-grill brought her back to her hospitality and recreation roots. The Kays ran Bobbers in Coralville for years before buying Go Fish. The couple thinks it’s imperative for border operators to stay connected and provide “in person” feedback to legislators and regulatory agencies. “They can’t know what we don’t tell them,” says Kay. Her willingness to show up and speak up earned her the Iowa Restaurant Association’s Champion Award.

Iowa Restaurant Association | 2018 Small Community Philanthropy Award

A Large Commitment to a Small Community

Growing up in a small town in Northern Iowa, 2018 Small Business Restaurant Neighbor Philanthropist of the Year Jessica Baldus learned by watching the people around her that helping your neighbor is quite simply, “what you do.” Today, the now owner of Taste. by Unc’s Cheesecakes, has made community support an integral part of her restaurant. Her favorite cause? Providing reading incentives to children through the Accelerated Reading Program at Osage’s Lincoln Elementary School.

Always an entrepreneur, Baldus got her start making desserts for Des Moines area restaurants while she studied entrepreneurship at DMACC in Ankeny. Before long, her company had grown so big she no longer had time to balance school and work. She opted to move back to her hometown of Osage and open a brick and mortar bakery called Taste. by Unc’s Cheesecakes.

90% of restaurants and bars give

time and money to their local communities so it was no surprise that organizations quickly started asking her for donations for their various causes. “At first, I tried to help as many as I could,” said Baldus “But after a while I decided it was better to have a real impact on just one or two organizations.”

A reading program was an obvious choice. As a child, she was not an avid reader until she was introduced to the “Book-It” program. Today, she’s thrilled to be on the other side; offering incentives. “I love seeing the kids’ faces light up when they look at all the desserts they can choose from, it really brightens my day,” beams Baldus.

Aside from “Book-It” Baldus also provides tasty treats for events held by Bridges Mentoring Program, an organization that pairs children with mentors in the county. “I love programs that benefit kids,” concludes Baldus. “What could be better?”



Jessica Baldus
Taste. By Unc’s Cheesecakes
Osage

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Those Who Have, Should Help Those Who Do Not

Gusto Pizza in Des Moines is a textbook example of what it means to be a great restaurant neighbor. They continually inspire people with their dedication to Joppa, an organization which strives to alleviate hunger and help the homeless of Central Iowa in any way possible.

On the 4th Sunday of the month-- no matter if it's Christmas Day or the Super Bowl – you will find Owners Joe McConville, Josh Holderness and Tony Lemmo preparing anywhere from 125 to 150 hot meals to the homeless. Beyond the monthly meal program, Gusto holds an annual “Take a Slice out of Hunger” Golf Outing, that last year yielded \$30K in donations and looks to continue to grow each year.

Like 90% of restaurants in Iowa, Gusto is committed to being visible in their support for the community, but they found little satisfaction in aimlessly giving to every organization that asked.

“Just donating a meal or gift-card to an auction was not truly helping people,” says Co-Owner Joe McConville.



Josh Holderness, Tony Lemmo & Joe McConville
Gusto Pizza Co.
Greater Des Moines Area



Poster for Gusto's Annual "Take a Slice Out of Hunger" Golf Outing.



A Gusto employee volunteers his time to Deliver pizza to the homeless

“We wanted to have real impact somewhere and we wanted it to be hands on.”

Eventually the three owners decided they could do this by donating both meals and time to Joppa. “Joppa is the real deal,” says McConville. “They are touching people every day.”

The three put countless hours into helping Joppa anyway they can.

What motivates them? An inherent sense that those who have, should help those who do not. It is an ideology they have always believed in and done their best to live by.

There are many restaurants helping their communities in numerous ways, but Gusto's elevated level of commitment to fighting hunger was the reason for their selection for the 2018 Large Community Restaurant Neighbor Philanthropy Award.

“We are continually inspired by Gusto Pizza Co's. dedication to alleviating hunger in Central Iowa... They have a passion for kids and families who experience food insecurities and work hard to find ways to contribute.”

- Melanie Guanci, Marketing Director, Joppa



Senator Michael Breitbach
28th District
Strawberry Point

Bringing Common Sense Back to Government

When Iowa's restaurant and insurance industries collaborated to bring about changes to Iowa's liquor liability insurance laws, the choice for a floor manager and issue champion in the Iowa Senate was self-evident. Senator Mike Breitbach understood both sides of the issue because he grew up in the hospitality business and later became an insurance agent.

His parents owned "The Hub" a tavern in Colesburg which they both ran and lived above. "We were a family operation," says Breitbach, who remembers Friday nights when the high school sports bus dropped students off at the tavern, so they could come in and use the phone and wait for their parents to pick them up. It was a different time, but Breitbach still believes locally owned restaurants and taverns are "the hub" of many Iowa small towns.

Breitbach has now been an insurance agent for more than 30 years, becoming a partner in Smith Insurance LLC in 1992.

When the IRA needed assistance, he was well versed on DRAM Shop insurance, as well as frustrated by the lack of options available

to Iowa business owners.

"It seemed odd to me that Iowa would be so far outside the norm in terms of options and price," said Breitbach.

As Vice Chair of the Senate Commerce Committee and member of the subcommittee which moved the Association's proposed DRAM legislation, as well as the Senate floor leader, Breitbach passionately argued for the need of restaurant and tavern owners to have access to affordable insurance and be held to reasonable standards for liability.

The final DRAM legislation hit all tenants of Breitbach's personal commitment to bring common sense back to the government by updating outdated regulations, reducing unnecessary costs to business owners and increasing personal responsibility.

In April, the reform legislation was passed and signed by Governor Kim Reynolds. "We need to see rates decrease now," says Breitbach, "or we'll have to go back and do even more." For the instrumental role he played in passing the bill, Senator Breitbach was awarded State Senator of the Year by the IRA.

Iowa Restaurant Association | 2018 Iowa House Legislator of the Year

Making Reasonably Priced Insurance Available

2018 Iowa House Legislator of the Year Representative Brian Best is passionate about ensuring the interests of Western Iowa be heard, weighed and whenever possible acted upon at the State Capitol. That's why the second term representative took a lead role on an issue as difficult as DRAM reform. "Strong main streets are the key to survival for rural communities and strong hospitality establishments are at the heart of a healthy main street," says Best. "We had to make it possible for operators to get reasonably priced insurance."

Last legislative session, Best sponsored and floor led a DRAM reform bill that he and others hoped would accomplish that goal. "When I looked at the antiquated standards to which restaurants and bars were being held, I knew change was long overdue," says Best. "I also saw the huge disadvantage Western Iowa hospitality operators were working under when compared to bordering states. It was time to take steps towards evening the playing field."

Best had the added benefit of special insight on the challenges facing restaurant

and tavern operators because his step-daughter Amy and her husband Andy Walsh own Mickey's Irish Pub in Waukee. "Being able to spend significant time diving deeply into the struggles of an Iowa hospitality establishment really equipped me to advocate for change," notes Best.

The final bill brought several significant changes to Iowa law including shifting more personal responsibility to consumers and creating a defensible standard for alcohol servers and business owners. Best was pleased that the bill also increased potential consumer protections by requiring per person, rather than per incident, minimums.

Best, an entrepreneur himself, hopes to continue to help Iowa be an even more small business friendly state. "Small businesses don't just create jobs," asserts Best. "They create community. I go to work to fight for them every day."

Because of his willingness to advocate for Iowa's restaurant industry, the Iowa Restaurant Association was honored to recognize Representative Brian Best as its Iowa House Legislator of the Year.



Representative Brian Best
12th District
Glidden



Drew Beck
Reinhart Foodservice
Cedar Rapids

Investing in Future Industry Leaders

When 2018 ProStart Mentor of the Year winner Drew Beck of Reinhart Foodservice was a boy, one of his favorite activities was collecting menus from the restaurants his family visited. Restaurants were a special treat. "I'm one of eight children. We did not eat out very often, so going out was a big deal," remembers Beck. "Even then, I knew I wanted to be in the restaurant business."

He attended Eastern Illinois University, but there was no culinary program, so he opted to study business. His interest in the restaurant industry held and upon graduation he landed a job as an assistant manager for the national chain, Bennigan's. He still looks back and marvels that at age 22 he was able to help open, operate a lead an one million dollar business in Peoria, Illinois. "What other industry gives you an opportunity for that much leadership, at such a young age?"

asks Beck.

He eventually moved to the distribution side of the food industry working at Hawkeye Foods, US Foods and finally at Reinhart Foodservice. It was in his current role that he became engaged with Cedar Rapids Washington High School and began to mentor their ProStart students. ProStart is a high school program focused on culinary and restaurant management skill development.

As a ProStart mentor, Beck sees the time he gives as an investment in our industry "Year-in and year-out our industry's biggest problem is labor: not enough, not well trained, and not seeing ourselves as a long term career path. I believe in and support the ProStart program because it is proactively addressing our industry's need to develop future leaders," concludes Beck. "That's worth spending time on."

Iowa Restaurant Association | 2018 ProStart Educator of Excellence

Helping Students See All the Possibilities

Cedar Rapids Washington High School Family and Consumer Sciences Teacher Joan Stekl knows how impactful a teacher can be in the life of a student. Joan opted to pursue a FCS teaching degree in large part because of her deep admiration for her own high school FCS teacher Sherry Petrik. "A great teacher helps you see possibilities," says Stekl.

That drive to inspire is why she has worked so hard to build the ProStart program at Cedar Rapids Washington. She has gone above and beyond traditional classroom teaching methods, forging relationships with industry professionals as mentors and finding unique hands-on culinary experiences for her students.

This is not her first foray into creating a quality ProStart program from the ground up. She worked with the culinary and restaurant management curriculum in a South Dakota high school where she also taught FCS. "I needed to find ways

to show students how viable the career paths are in the food service industry," said Stekl. ProStart, with its emphasis on management and culinary, competitions, required work experience, and connection to industry, filled the bill.


She has made strong connections with major food service distributors and award-winning chefs. Her students have collaborated with a Cedar Rapids chef to prepare the hors d'oeuvres at fundraising events, attended professional seminars, and competed in competitions.

She truly strives every day to bring out the best in her students and helps them to realize the talent and confidence they have within.

This year the Iowa Restaurant Association Education Foundation and Nation Foundation honored Stekl for her passion in her work, as well as her care and concern for her students.




Joan Stekl
Cedar Rapids Community Schools
Cedar Rapids



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Stay in Compliance - Certify Multiple Team Members

The current Iowa Food Code requires every food service establishment have a Certified Food Protection Manager (CFPM) on staff. Are you in compliance?

ServSafe has long been the standard for training and certifying food protection managers in the hospitality industry. This one day food safety and sanitation certification class fulfills Iowa's CFPM requirement. Classes are available weekly at the Iowa Restaurant Association Office in West Des Moines as well as throughout the month at ISU Extension offices across the state.

Certified Food Protection Manager Requirement

- All establishments must have 1 Certified Food Protection Manager
- New establishments must comply within 6 months of licensure
- Existing establishments who lose their CFPM must comply within 6 months
- Any establishment with a food borne illness risk factor or public health intervention must comply with 6 months



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The generous support provided by donors, sponsors and volunteers is essential to the Iowa Restaurant Association Education Foundation's work to build Iowa's hospitality workforce through the Iowa ProStart program.

SPONSOR

The 2019 Iowa ProStart Invitational: Your support of the Iowa ProStart Invitational is a great opportunity to be recognized as an industry leader and build relationships with competing students. Competitors may well be your next talented employees. This is a great opportunity for visibility of educational institutions, industry operators and suppliers. Secure your spot now! Sponsor levels range from \$250 to \$5,000.



Team Waterloo West feeling the heat at the 2017 Iowa ProStart Invitational.



GIVE

A Personal or Corporate Donation: Your **100% Tax Deductible Donation** makes it possible for students to pursue their dreams of careers in the restaurant and hospitality industry.

IRAEF Endow Iowa Fund: Another way to make a donation to the IRAEF is through the Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines. The IRAEF Endow Iowa fund allows you to contribute to the future of the Iowa hospitality industry and receive 25% of the amount donated as a state tax credit. Learn more at: www.restaurantiowa.com/donate.



Allow us to introduce you to the 2018 10th placed National ProStart Invitational Restaurant Management team. From Des Moines Central Campus High School (L to R) Tyler Scar, Josh Thompson, Mason Bolser & Max Dixon.

Scholarship Sponsorship: The IRAEF strives to make college accessible to individuals committed to a future in Iowa's restaurant industry. Scholarships are awarded annually to graduating Iowa high school seniors, undergraduate and graduate students to further their culinary and hospitality education.

For More Information Contact:
IRAEF Executive Director May Schaben at (515) 419-1863 or
via email at mschaben@restaurantiowa.com

2019 Legislative Preview

The Iowa and National Restaurant Association lobbying teams advocate for the adoption and loosening of laws and regulations to positively impact your operations. Here's what we're expecting in the coming months.

Sports Betting Tops 2019 Issues

Two powerful groups—Casinos and the Iowa Lottery—are battling for the support of Iowa lawmakers for their varying approaches to legalized sports betting. The Iowa Restaurant Association Board of Directors met with representatives of both groups to hear their proposals.

Casinos

Iowa Casinos are proposing legalization of full sports betting in their facilities, as well as a mobile app for remote betting. The mobile app would be tied to an account physically set up at one of the state's 17 casinos, allowing patrons to place bets from anywhere in the state via mobile device.

Lottery

The Iowa Lottery supports full sports betting in casinos but would rather see limited off-site sports betting made available through the lottery retail ticket sales system. This would allow the casual bettor to place limited types of sports bets anywhere lottery tickets are sold. Any Iowa restaurant or bar could become a Lottery Retailer.

Association Position

The IRA supports the Lottery's proposal as it affords member establishments to directly offer patrons a mechanism for casual sports betting, while reserving full sports betting for the Casinos. Lottery retailers also receive a commission for sales, providing a supplemental revenue source for those hospitality operators who participate.

Also on the Radar

1. Tax Reform

We expect to see efforts to "clean up" the state and federal tax bills passed in 2018 particularly related to property and business taxes.

2. Alcohol Regulation

The Association is closely watching alcohol regulatory proposals and practices related to highly allocated products, delivery methods, the role of ABD inspectors and the Place of Last Drink pilot program.

3. Horizontal Drivers Licenses

The Iowa Restaurant Association has started conversations with the Iowa DOT about requiring drivers license holders to be issued a horizontal format license, within 90 days of their 21st birthdays. This would significantly and positively impact retailers' ability to ensure age compliance with the sale and service of alcohol.

Join Us for Iowa Hospitality Day at the State Capitol



Iowa's Hospitality Community will be meeting with lawmakers to discuss our concerns. All Iowa restaurant and tavern owners are encouraged to attend. There's nothing more impactful than your presence at the Capitol. We have all the materials you need to meet with your lawmakers. Questions? Contact Jessica Dunker at jdunker@restaurantiowa.com or 515-276-1454

Tuesday January 29th

11 a.m. Luncheon and Issue Training
Iowa Tap Room Des Moines

1 p.m. Meetings with Legislators

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THINKING





400 Hospitality Industry Pros Convene at Annual Expo

Nearly 400 Iowa Hospitality industry professionals, purveyors, award winners and future culinary talent attended the inaugural Iowa Hospitality Convention and Expo in October at the Des Moines Marriott Downtown. Attendees spent the day exploring 40+ vendor booths on the Expo floor and attending education sessions on topics ranging from menu costing to credit card service fees. The day was capped off by a night of celebration with the annual hospitality awards ceremony and the Grand Tasting Gala! Thank you to our sponsors, as well as all of our attendees and vendors.



Marriott Chef Wins Annual Culinary Competition

Chef Andrew Cardillo from the Marriott Des Moines earned top honors in the Annual Beef and Soy Culinary Competition sponsored by the Iowa Restaurant Association, the Iowa Beef Industry Council and The Soyfoods Council. The two-part competition challenged top chefs across Iowa to create an entrée featuring a bottom round flat steak and a soy-based side dish or sauce. A team of professional judges visited each restaurant to evaluate the chef's competition dish. The 10 chefs showcased their creations in sample portions at a Celebratory Gala held in conjunction with Iowa Hospitality Expo. Hundreds of event attendees then voted for a People's Choice winner.



1st Place: Chef Andrew Cardillo, The Marriott, Des Moines

2nd Place: Chef Aaron Holt, RoCA, Des Moines

People's Choice Chef Oscar Hernandez, 713 Eat + Drink, Council Bluffs

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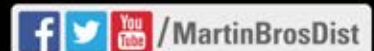
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