2017 Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Women in Ag Leadership Conference

November 27-28, 2017 • Iowa State University
Scheman Building • 1805 Center Drive • Ames • Iowa 50011

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
Extension and Outreach
Women in Ag
Welcome

Hello Friends!

On behalf of the conference advisory committee and my extension colleagues, I would like to welcome all students, women farmers, women in agribusiness and everyone else to the Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Women in Ag Leadership Conference. We’re glad you’re here!

I’m excited by the more than thirty incredible speakers presenting during the three intensive leadership workshops on Monday evening as well as the full day conference on Tuesday. The conference activities are sure to replenish your spirit, help you rediscover your passions, and deepen your aspirations to communicate, advocate, and lead within your family and across the global agricultural industry.

The amazing women serving on the Women in Ag Leadership Conference Advisory Committee and my extension colleagues designed this event around three major goals. We hope you will take home and carry with you:

1. A belief in yourself and the power of life-long learning
2. Connections with other women that inspire and encourage your leadership journey
3. New skills that enhance your leadership on the farm and off the farm

Women are stepping up to changing roles in agriculture every day and taking on new leadership positions. Whether you are leading the transition of the family farm to a new generation, volunteering for a local watershed, or leading the adoption of new technology in an agribusiness, we hope you will experience empowering wisdom and lasting friendships.

Enjoy the conference!

Madeline Schultz
Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Women in Ag Program Manager
Conference Agenda

Monday, November 27, 2017

2:00 p.m. Onsite check-in begins
3:00 p.m. Iowa State University campus tour
4:30 p.m. Networking and refreshments
5:30 p.m. Concurrent Session A - Intensive Workshops
   Attendees will participate in one of the following workshops:
   1. Become a Cooperative Board Influencer. Keri Jacobs, Iowa State assistant professor of economics and extension cooperatives specialist, Sue Tronchetti, Landus Cooperative board member, and Susan Voss, Farm Credit Services of America board member
   3. Bring Out the Leader in You. Mary Foley Balvanz, Iowa Farm Bureau Federation leadership training manager, and Heather Lilienthal, Iowa Soybean Association director of producer services
6:45 p.m. A casual supper will be served with each workshop
8:30 p.m. Workshops conclude
8:30 p.m. Networking and refreshments at the Best Western Plus University Park Inn & Suites

Tuesday, November 28, 2017

7:30 a.m. Onsite check-in begins
7:30 a.m. Networking and refreshments
8:30 a.m. General Session One
   • Opening remarks
   • Keynote Address: Explaining Agriculture to Eaters: Three Simple Steps – Roxi Beck, Center for Food Integrity director and Look East vice president
   • There Are No Glass Ceilings – Diane Young, director of technical services and owner, Foundation Analytical Laboratories
   • Women Impacting Agriculture Recognition – Madeline Schultz and Lisa Scarbrough, ISU Extension and Outreach Women in Ag program
10:30 a.m. Networking and refreshments
10:45 a.m. Concurrent Session B
   1. Explaining Agriculture to Eaters: Making It Real – Roxi Beck
   2. Making a Difference Through Public Service – Dianne Bystrom, director of the Carrie Chapman-Catt Center, Iowa State University
   3. The Scoop on Rural Entrepreneurship – Panel discussion moderated by Zoami Calles, Crooked Creek Farm, and Jennifer Bentley, ISU Extension and Outreach. Guests include Debbie Takes and Josie Rozum, Dan and Debbie’s Creamery, and Heather Laubenthal, USDA Farm Service Agency.
   4. Customer Service for Ag Clientele – Panel discussion moderated by Sue Tronchetti, Pioneer Seed sales owner. Guests include Ashley Johnston, Home State Bank ag lender, Denise Schwab, ISU Extension and Outreach beef specialist, and Janette Smith, Landus Cooperative grain marketing advisor.
5. **Start Your Own Networking Group** – Panel discussion moderated by Jade Hargrafen, ISU Extension and Outreach Delaware County, and Katie Williams, ISU Extension and Outreach Story County. Guests include Lexi Merek, FarmHer communications and marketing coordinator, Kayla Koether, ISU Extension and Outreach Winneshiek County, and Mekenze Cortum, Nationwide sales analyst.

11:45 a.m. **Networking Luncheon and General Session Two**
- Lunch
- Welcome Remarks. John Lawrence, interim vice president for ISU Extension and Outreach

1:00 p.m. **Concurrent Session C**
1. **Discover the Benefits of Mentoring** – Erin Cumings, Nationwide associate vice president of agribusiness underwriting
2. **Becoming a Servant Leader** – Alyssa Johnston, Iowa Corn Growers Association leadership training manager
3. **Your Personal Marketing Plan** – Joni Erwin and Laura Cunningham, Latham Hi-Tech Seeds marketing team
4. **Leading Through Change** – Stephanie Liska, president and CEO, Beck Ag
5. **Map Your Leadership Journey** – Shannon Hauf, Monsanto Company, global technology lead, cotton, wheat, and specialty crops

1:30 p.m. Networking and refreshments

1:45 p.m. **Concurrent Session D**
- Session C workshops will be repeated

2:15 p.m. Networking and refreshments

2:30 p.m. **General Session Three**
- **Balancing Roles in the Family, on the Farm, off the Farm and in the Community** – Panel discussion moderated by Cynthia Bartel, Iowa State graduate student in agronomy. Guests include Amy Tlach, Mid-Iowa Seeds, ISU Extension Council and beef farmer, Nancy Bohl Bormann, Maschhoff Environmental, Inc. and grain farmer; and Pam Bolin, Midwest Dairy Association and dairy farmer
- **Capstone Address. How Remarkable Women Lead with Confidence** – Jeanne Bernick, K•Coe Isom manager
- Closing Remarks

4:30 p.m. Closing

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Iowa State University College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and the Department of Economics and the Iowa Institute for Cooperatives Economics Endowment.

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4 2017 Women in Ag Leadership Conference
SESSION A—MONDAY EVENING INTENSIVE WORKSHOPS

Becoming a Cooperative Board Influencer

Did you know Iowa cooperatives generate more than $9 billion in revenue? Agriculture, mutual insurance, and utility cooperatives have extremely low levels of participation by women on their respective boards. Across the nation, agriculture cooperatives have only three percent board representation by women. The good news is cooperatives in Iowa are seeking more women leaders. This intensive workshop highlights the governance role in cooperatives, what it is, how it is accomplished, and explores ways in which women can provide leadership in the cooperative and impact its sustainability. If you are thinking about serving on a cooperative or other board, or in the midst of being the best board member you can be, this workshop is for you. Experienced presenters will guide workshop participants in understanding the unique aspects of cooperative businesses, the role of the board of directors and how to be an effective and influential board member.

Discover Your Ag Leadership Strengths

Women are taking on more leadership. One in four Iowa farmers is a woman and women are the principal operators on 13 percent of Iowa farms according to the USDA 2012 Census of Agriculture. Taking a look at agribusiness, nearly 90 percent of women feel optimistic about their opportunity for advancement in agribusiness, according to the 2014 Gender Roles and Equality in Agribusiness study. This demonstrates the incredible opportunities women in agriculture have today. Learn more about your natural leadership abilities and make connections between these innate talents and your leadership style. Registrants should complete a Strengths Finder online assessment before the workshop. The presenters will then take you through several activities to develop your leadership skills by understanding the strengths you bring to the table. Whether you are taking charge in an agribusiness, in the dairy barn, or around your farm family’s kitchen table, you can use your own personal leadership strengths to the best of your abilities.

Bring Out the Leader in You

In 2015, the American Farm Bureau surveyed nearly 2,000 women. These women said “communicating effectively” was the most important leadership skill; followed by “establishing and achieving goals.” Most survey respondents believed they personally had skills to offer. Yet, only 30 percent indicated women are sufficiently represented in the agricultural industry. There are numerous opportunities for women to channel their leadership skills. Agriculture and our rural communities need people who will follow their passion, build bridges, and create positive change. This session will focus on helping participants understand that everyone has leadership qualities. While there may be barriers or obstacles to putting these skills to work, there are still reasons why you should take steps into leadership. Whether women want to serve on a local school board, advocate for agriculture, start a new business, or lead a work team, this workshop will help them take the next steps to benefit their agricultural communities.
TUESDAY CONFERENCE SESSIONS

Keynote Address  
Explaining Agriculture to Eaters: Three Simple Steps – Roxi Beck

We’re all “eaters.” But that doesn’t mean we all understand agriculture equally. And when we try to share what we know about this amazing industry, especially with eaters who are disconnected from farmers, frustration abounds. Roxi will share how we got in this position and explain how to:

• Stop the terrible mistake of trying to educate people.
• Start using three critical, yet straight-forward, steps that cut out conflict and make conversations with eaters of all types (colleagues, clients, family, neighbors, peers, strangers, etc.) more effective.
• Address complex, even controversial, subjects in a meaningful way.

General Sessions  
There Are No Glass Ceilings – Diane Young

Diane Young does not believe in glass ceilings. With a passionate desire and clear entrepreneurial vision, Diane, a graduate of Iowa State, chose to leave the security of the corporate world and build an analytical laboratory from the ground up in her home community of Cherokee. She will share how the people in her life, her faith, education and background in business, as well as laboratory management and the experiences she gained by working with successful companies, were the foundation of her passion and how her staff is the steam for her vision.

Recognition  
Women Impacting Agriculture

Seven women from across Iowa, who all share a connection with Iowa State University, will be recognized as part of the “Women Impacting Agriculture” award ceremony. The women have been nominated by ISU Extension and Outreach staff and will be recognized for exemplifying community involvement and leadership in agriculture.

Concurrent Session B

Session B1  
Explaining Agriculture to Eaters: Making It Real – Roxi Beck

Now that you know the basics of what to stop doing and what to start doing, Roxi will lead an interactive workshop that gets you thinking about how to do this #IRL (in real life). You’ll laugh, have ah-ha moments, and walk away with immediately usable, practical skills to communicate more effectively than you did when you walked into the room.

Session B2  
Making a Difference Through Public Service – Dianne Bystrom

This presentation will focus on how women can influence public policy and effect change at the local, county, and state level through elected and appointed office. Iowa is the only state in the nation that has gender-balance goals for municipal, county and state boards, and commissions. In terms of elected office, Iowa ranks below the national average for women in the state legislature as well as in most other levels of office. The presentation will include information on the current status of Iowa women in elected and appointed office as well as how they can make a difference through public service.
Session B3  
Panel: *The Scoop on Rural Entrepreneurship* – Debbie Takes, Josie Rozum, and Heather Laubenthal

It is the Takes family’s dream to produce farm-to-table dairy products using high quality milk provided by their 150-head Holstein herd. After several years of renovating a vacant building the Takes family began production of their own dairy products including bottled fluid milk, cheese curds, and handcrafted ice cream. Dan and Debbie Takes led their farm family through a business expansion that included turning a small town lumber yard into a gorgeous and practical new dairy creamery. Without adding more dairy cows, they created new jobs for family members as well as neighbors. Daughter Josie now manages the creamery. Learn how the USDA Farm Service Agency assists rural entrepreneurs like the Takes family through business development and loan programs.

Session B4  
Panel: *Customer Service for Ag Clientele* – Ashley Johnston, Denise Schwab, and Janette Smith

Providing customer service is a part of everyone’s job. It’s all about relationship building and the ability to match resources with individual needs. Customer service dynamics can be challenging when lower commodity prices, shifting responsibilities, or other stressors affect farm families. Join our experienced panel as they share ideas for maintaining good customer relationships through farming’s ups and downs.

Session B5  
Panel: *Start Your Own Networking Group* – Lexi Merek, Kayla Koether, and Mekenze Cortum

Discuss various ways to reach past your traditional networks and move out of your comfort zone, using new and existing community relationships. Hear from a panel of women about how they share their passion with women in agriculture and how networking groups have affected both their personal lives and professional careers.

General Session Two

Welcome  
John Lawrence, interim vice president for ISU Extension and Outreach will welcome attendees to the Women in Ag Leadership Conference while providing a brief update on the implementation of extension programs.

Concurrent Sessions C and D

Session C1/D1  
*Discover the Benefits of Mentoring* – Erin Cumings

Establishing mentorships is an integral part of being successful and inspirational within the world of agriculture. Erin Cumings, vice president of agribusiness underwriting for Nationwide, will show attendees how to both find and become mentors while defining the relationship that is shared between influencers and mentees.

Session C2/D2  
*Becoming a Servant Leader* – Alyssa Johnston

A servant leader focuses primarily on the growth and well-being of people and the communities to which they belong. During this session you will learn the 10 characteristics of a servant leader, see examples of leaders and organizations that are successful at servant leadership, and learn how being a servant leader can positively impact your farm and agriculture industry.

Session C3/D3  
*Your Personal Marketing Plan* – Joni Erwin and Laura Cunningham

Much like business mission statements, personal brands communicate values, shape reputation, and create a vision for the future. In the workshop we will walk through the steps to developing and effectively marketing “Brand YOU” both online and off.
Session Descriptions

Session C4/D4  Leading Through Change – Stephanie Liska
An Iowa farmer’s daughter and Iowa State alumna, Stephanie has been involved in the agriculture industry her entire life. Currently, Stephanie is the president and CEO of Beck Ag, Inc. an organization she helped to start 20 years ago. Prior to Beck Ag, she invested four years with AgriBusiness Group and prior to that held various roles with American Cyanamid. Stephanie has experienced and led significant changes in the ag industry. Her breakout session will be interactive and full of practical applications for being a part of an ever-changing industry.

Session C5/D5  Map Your Leadership Journey – Shannon Hauf
Participate in a reflective and anticipatory experience in defining leadership goals. As a YWCA Leader in the Workplace recipient and an active board member, Shannon will present insight based on her extensive involvement in leadership positions.

General Session Three

General  Panel: Balancing Roles in the Family, on the Farm, off the Farm and in the Community – Amy Tlach, Nancy Bohl Bormann, and Pam Bolin
Everyone needs balance to survive. All these women are involved outside their family farms to work in the community and utilize their leadership skills to balance a variety of roles. Hear from this panel of women on how they prioritize and delegate to accomplish daily tasks. We’ve all admired those devoted women in agriculture who find ways to balance caring for their family, moving their career to the next level, leading community groups, working in the family farm business, and even taking care of themselves. These superstar women make it all look effortless! Yet, we know they’ve made sacrifices. Our humble panel of real women will talk about tough choices, finding supportive mentors, and keeping all those plates spinning. Find out what drives these women and be inspired by their stories of success as well as a failure or two.

Capstone  How Remarkable Women Lead with Confidence – Jeanne Bernick
Jeanne Bernick will share the stories of women in agriculture in order to enhance the confidence of women who are active and involved in the industry. Through her experience, Jeanne has interacted with women who are doing important things in the world of agriculture every day, and will look to inspire women in all aspects of their lives, from becoming a leader on their farm operation and business, to an influencer in their family and community.
MONDAY EVENING SESSION

Become a Cooperative Board Influencer

**Keri Jacobs** is an assistant professor and cooperatives extension economist in the Department of Economics at Iowa State and holds the Iowa Institute for Cooperatives Economics Professorship. She holds a degree in economics and business administration from Coe College and a PhD in economics from North Carolina State University. In her role at Iowa State, Keri is an undergraduate educator, researcher, and extension specialist with a focus on cooperatives. Her current research efforts are in the areas of financial and equity conditions of agricultural cooperatives, agribusiness consolidation, biomass production for biofuels and farm level production decisions under uncertainty. Her extension programming is designed to enhance the effectiveness of cooperative organizations and support their efforts in managing sustainable organizations by building capacity in human capital and providing sector financial analysis.

**Susan Tronchetti** is a business development professional and co-owner of Tronchetti & Tronchetti, Inc., a Greene County corn and soybean farming operation owned by Susan and her husband, Dan. Previously, Susan was a grain merchandiser for West Central Cooperative and an owner of a Pioneer Seed business based in Jefferson. Susan currently serves on the board of directors for several agricultural businesses, including Landus Cooperative, Land O’Lakes Executive Board Council, the Nationwide Insurance Board Council and a director of Home State Bank in Jefferson. She is skilled in risk management, customer service, sales and strategic planning. Susan is a graduate of Iowa State with a degree in agricultural business and farm management.

**Susan Voss** resides in North English where she and her husband have a corn and soybean operation, run a cow-calf herd, and a background feeder operation. Susan is a certified public accountant and senior tax manager with 30 years of experience at TD&T CPAs and Advisors. She specializes in farm operations, agribusiness, and individuals and their closely-held businesses. At TD&T, Susan has been vice president and a member of the firm’s executive committee. Susan’s passion for agriculture led her to her current position as a member of the Board of Directors of Farm Credit Services of America. She is also a member of the Iowa Farm Bureau, Iowa Women in Agriculture, Altrusa International of Oskaloosa, Iowa Society of CPAs, and American Institute of CPAs.

Discover Your Ag Leadership Strengths

**Jennifer Leptien** is the interim director for Iowa State learning communities. In her role, Jen provides central leadership for the learning communities, a program serving over 6,300 undergraduate students, and implements university-wide professional development for faculty, staff and undergraduate peer mentors. In 2008, Jen was introduced to the Gallup Strengths assessment at a teaching conference, which prompted her to incorporate training opportunities within Iowa State’s learning communities. Today, as a Gallup-Certified Strengths Coach, Jen shares her enthusiasm for identifying and embracing individuals’ top five talents and discovering how they can be best employed to enhance performance in academic, professional and personal domains. Over the past nine years, Jen has facilitated a variety of invited sessions on strengths, promoting this positive psychology movement to thousands of Iowa State students, faculty and staff. Jen earned a PhD in human development and family studies from Iowa State.
Guest Speakers

Lora Leigh Chrystal has been committed to increasing the representation of women in the science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) workforce for the past 17 years at Iowa State University. As the director of the Program for Women in Science and Engineering, Lora Leigh has oversight for all outreach, recruitment and retention programs serving over 12,000 students in the state of Iowa each year. She is pursuing a PhD in educational leadership and policy studies at Iowa State with a specific research interest in the retention of STEM women. Prior to her work at Iowa State, Lora Leigh worked as a research technician for the Human Genome Sequencing center at the Baylor College of Medicine.

Bring Out the Leader in You

Mary Foley Balvanz is the leadership training manager for the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation. The Ag Leaders Institute is Farm Bureau’s premier leadership training experience where Mary has developed over 400 leaders for rural Iowa through this program. In addition, Mary manages the Young Farmer program. Prior to joining Farm Bureau, Mary served as a leadership development specialist for ISU Extension and Outreach. She has BS and MS degrees from Iowa State. She and her husband reside in Polk County.

Heather Lilienthal didn’t grow up on a farm, but she has been lucky to spend most of her career working for Iowa farmers. After working in ag communications for several years, she is director of Producer Services at the Iowa Soybean Association and works with an incredible team of women who work to connect soybean farmers to ISA programs and services and identify future leaders for the organization. Heather lives in Polk County with her husband, Brad (who DID grow up on a farm). They have two kids, Luke and Brooke. Heather serves on the Ankeny Chamber board, Kirkendall Library board of trustees, Waldorf University Foundation board and volunteers for the FFA Foundation, Silos & Smokestacks, and Ankeny Women Who Care.

TUESDAY GENERAL SESSION ONE

Keyote Address: Explaining Agriculture to Eaters: Three Simple Steps

Roxi Beck is active on the speaking circuit and is a trusted advisor to food system thought leaders. Roxi helps audiences think differently about earning trust. Her work focuses almost exclusively on directing client strategy and activities for consumer-facing initiatives related to food and agriculture, including helping organizations and companies incorporate trust-earning approaches into their culture. Recently, Roxi was a presenter on the “CRISPR in the Public Eye” panel during CRISPRCon at the University of California, Berkley, addressing how to earn trust in technologies that can be polarizing. Beck received bachelor’s degrees in psychology and public relations from Coe College in Cedar Rapids. She currently serves on the advisory board for Iowa State University’s Agricultural Entrepreneurship Initiative, is a graduate of the Greater Des Moines Leadership Institute, and has served as president of the National Agri-Marketing Association.
General Session Two Speaker: There are No Glass Ceilings

**Diane Young** is the owner and director of Technical Services for Foundation Analytical Laboratory located in Cherokee. She earned a degree in agricultural microbiology and animal/dairy science from Iowa State in 1991. Diane combined her passion for Iowa, agriculture, science, and customer service to create a unique state-of-the-art contract laboratory serving clients in feed, fuel, food, and environmental industries. Her team of highly educated, Iowa farm kids work with food companies, municipalities and over 80 ethanol plants throughout the United States to provide exemplary customer service with scientific excellence. Diane married Nate Young, a 1991 graduate of Iowa State with a degree in fisheries and wildlife biology. The couple has one son, Zane, who will also graduate from Iowa State with a degree in mechanical engineering.

**TUESDAY CONCURRENT SESSIONS**

Making a Difference Through Public Service

**Dianne Bystrom** has served as the director of the Carrie Chapman Catt Center for Women and Politics at Iowa State University since 1996. She established Iowa State’s interdisciplinary undergraduate Leadership Studies Program; has taught courses on leadership, women and politics, and political campaigns; and is a frequent commentator about political and women’s issues for state, national and international media. Dianne is a contributor, co-author or co-editor of 23 books, including *Gender and Elections; Women and Executive Office: Pathways and Performance; Legislative Women: Getting Elected, Getting Ahead; Gender and Candidate Communication; Anticipating Madam President and Women Transforming Congress*. She has also published journal articles on women political candidates, the Iowa caucus and youth voters. She earned a BA in journalism from Kearney State College and an MA in journalism and mass communication and a PhD in communication from the University of Oklahoma.

Panel: The Scoop on Rural Entrepreneurship

**Heather Laubenthal** is a farm loan manager in north central Iowa, covering 10 counties with primary offices located in Algona, Emmetsburg, and Pocahontas. Heather resides in the Wesley area with her husband, David, who currently farms with his family. She grew up on a cattle and row crop farm in eastern Iowa and has been with the USDA Farm Service Agency for over seven years. She started her career as a trainee working in Algona for a year and a half, transferred to Sibley for three years and then to Pocahontas county for almost three years before transferring back to Algona in September. She has worked with a variety of farming operations during her career from traditional row crops to specialty operations such as aronia berries.

**Debbie Takes**, with her daughter Josie Rozum, owns and operates Dan and Debbie’s Creamery, based in Ely. It has been the family’s dream to produce farm-to-table dairy products using high quality milk provided by their 150-head Holstein herd. After several years of renovating a vacant building, the Takes family began production of their own dairy products including bottled fluid milk, cheese curds, and handcrafted ice cream. Debbie grew up on a farm outside of Swisher and has knowledge of swine, sheep, beef, crop and most recently dairy production. Her love and passion for animals began when she was very young, but is most appreciated since the recent production of their own products. With her willingness to work, twice-a-day milkings, and now making varieties of delicious ice creams, Debbie puts in double duty to make sure that customers are delivered a remarkable dairy-eating experience.
Guest Speakers

Josie Rozum is part owner and operator of Dan and Debbie’s Creamery, teaming with her mother, Debbie Takes, and other family members to build and grow the business. Josie oversees the operations, marketing and sales of the creamery. Although she doesn’t spend a large amount of time producing products, she keeps the business running and sales flowing. Josie is a University of Iowa graduate with a degree in communication studies and a minor in marketing and public relations. Josie, along with Debbie, are the sole female family members in the operation and are excited to share the scoop on starting a rural entrepreneurship venture.

Panel: Customer Service for Ag Clientele

Ashley Johnston is an ag lender for Home State Bank of Jefferson, specializing in home loans, personal loans, and crop insurance. Ashley joined the banking industry during high school, and has continued to expand her professional role within the respective trade. She was raised on a farm where her family managed a feedlot operation and oversaw the cultivation of row crops. Today, Ashley and her husband have continued her family’s farming tradition by establishing their own feedlot and corn production operation.

Denise Schwab is the ISU Extension and Outreach beef specialist for sixteen counties in northeast Iowa where she focuses on improving cow herd management, forage and pasture management, environmental protection and feedlot efficiency. She has been employed with ISU Extension and Outreach for 31 years, providing leadership for regional and statewide professional organizations. She and her family farm in Benton County where she is also a 4-H horse club leader.

Janette Smith is currently the senior grain marketing advisor for Landus Cooperative. She has experience originating grain, creating marketing plans for farmers, devising assistance to regions, and has had numerous experiences leading individuals within the agriculture industry. Previously, she was a regional manager, senior marketing specialist, grain operations manager, agronomy sales and marketing manager, location manager, producer marketing specialist and sales and service specialist for West Central Cooperative. Janette earned her certification in the Board of Trade in 1998 to further her knowledge of grain marketing. In 2014 she graduated from the University of Missouri - Columbia, Institute of Cooperative Leadership and in 2003, she was certified by Purdue University in Strategic Agri Marketing. Janette is a graduate of Des Moines Area Community College with an associate’s degree of applied sciences in agbusiness.

Panel: Start Your Own Networking Group

Lexi Merek is the sixth generation on her family’s diversified livestock and grain operation in southeast Iowa. A graduate of Iowa State University, she is now the marketing and communications manager at FarmHer, based in Urbandale. Her daily duties include sharing the stories that FarmHer covers from women across the country through traditional and digital media. The FarmHer TV Show on RFD-TV recently launched a new segment called “The Next Generation,” which Lexi hosts. Lexi also leads the Grow by FarmHer events, which focus on young women in agriculture. She enjoys traveling anywhere and everywhere but the end goal is always to end back on her family’s farm raising pigs and cattle and continuing the future of agriculture.
Kayla Koether is a food systems specialist with ISU Extension and Outreach, specializing in beginning farmer education and outreach. In her role, she works with unique farm operations that have local retail sales or niche marketing components, and helps develop markets for local food in northeast Iowa. Kayla grew up near McGregor on an intensive rotational grazing farm, where her family’s strong land and community ethic shaped her passions for local, healthy food, regenerative farming systems and strong rural economies. She is passionate about keeping farmers on the land and helping beginning farmers overcome the barriers to entering agriculture today. An aspiring farmer herself, Kayla also serves on the board of the Sustainable Iowa Land Trust. When she’s not thinking about food, farming and revitalizing rural Iowa, she’s planning her own livestock operation with her partner, Landon Corlett, or doing yoga, horseback riding, gardening or tackling a building project.

Mekenze Cortum is a senior sales development analyst in the agribusiness division of Nationwide, where she is responsible for operational support of farm focused sales initiatives. Through her 13-year career at Nationwide, she also worked in human resources and executive operations. At Nationwide, she serves on the Leads and Communication Committees of the Women in Ag Associate Resource Group. Through this involvement, one of the initiatives she has had the opportunity to jump-start and lead is the coordination of the central Iowa employer based Women in Ag Group. She is also passionately involved in her community through several organizations. She serves on the Leadership Committee of the Warren County Women Land & Legacy. She is also involved in the Indianola FFA Alumni Chapter and a superintendent of the Warren County Fair Board. Mekenze is an Iowa State graduate. She resides in Warren County with her husband Casey and daughter Kendell. Together they own and operate a small beef operation.

Discover the Benefits of Mentoring

Erin Cumings is an associate vice president of agribusiness underwriting at Nationwide Insurance. In this role, Erin is the national farm underwriting leader, responsible for the profitable growth of Country Choice, AgriChoice and AgriChoice Plus products. Erin is a member of the Norwalk PEO Chapter, a past member of the Nationwide Activities Network Board, and an active member of the Women in Ag Committee at Nationwide. Erin and her husband operate a diversified farming operation outside of Des Moines where they raise cattle, corn, hay, and soybeans and enjoy raising their young daughter. They also operate a full service automotive repair business that resides on the farm. Erin graduated from Iowa State with a degree in agricultural business. She currently holds Chartered Property Casualty Underwriter (CPCU), Agribusiness and Farm Insurance Specialist (AFIS), and Associate in Personal Insurance (API) designations.

Becoming a Servant Leader

Alyssa Johnston grew up on a small farm in east central Nebraska. She attended the University of Nebraska where she earned a bachelor’s degree in agriculture education leadership and master’s degree in leadership education. Alyssa joined the Iowa Corn Growers Association staff in 2014 as the leadership training manager where she coordinates leadership development for the Iowa Corn Organization, including the Iowa Corn Collegiate Advisory team (CAT) and the Iowa Corn Leadership Enhancement and Development (I-LEAD) program. Alyssa is certified in Disc, 5 Cohesions of a Team, and an etiquette consultant. Alyssa is a proud alumna of the Nebraska Lead Program and Leadership Iowa. Alyssa lives in Polk County with her husband and stepdaughter.
Your Personal Marketing Plan

Joni Erwin is a marketing coordinator and the newest member of the Latham Hi-Tech Seeds team after graduating from Iowa State University in May, 2017. At Iowa State, Joni served as the president of the Agricultural Business Club and received the College of Ag and Life Sciences Outstanding Ambassador of Agriculture Award at graduation for her involvement in the industry. Her roots run deep in agriculture, as she grew up on her family's farm in southeast Iowa. She is responsible for expanding Latham’s online presence, coordinating events, and creating marketing content for their seed dealers.

Laura Cunningham is the marketing manager for Latham Hi-Tech Seeds. She also farms with her husband as co-owner of SkyView Farms raising Angus cattle, corn, soybeans, and alfalfa. Her passion for sharing the story of agriculture with others is fulfilled through volunteer roles hosting weekly Ag in the Classroom sessions with elementary students, serving young farmers as part of the Iowa Farm Bureau Young Farmer Advisory Committee and planning farm-to-fork events.

Leading Through Change

Stephanie Liska is the president and CEO of Beck Ag, Inc. in Wayne, Nebraska. Prior to joining Beck Ag, Liska had the opportunity to consult with organizations on their learning strategies and oversaw facilitation and individual coaching through her role with AgriBusiness Group. Liska started her career a number of years ago with American Cyanamid, developing a strong background in sales management. Liska received a degree in public service and administration in agriculture from Iowa State.

Map Your Leadership Journey

Shannon Hauf is the global technology lead of cotton, wheat and specialty crops with Monsanto Company. Shannon and her team have management responsibility in leading the portfolio strategy for these specialty crops to identify needs of farmer customers, define product concepts, ensure successful product development and launch, identify new opportunities, and prioritize resources and investments globally to deliver integrated solutions. She joined Monsanto in 2003 and has held various roles of increasing responsibility within the commercial and technology organizations since. Shannon serves on the board of directors for Innovative Seed Solutions, LLC and the Monsanto Citizenship Fund. She is the executive sponsor for Women in Technology at Monsanto, and sits on the United Way Women’s Leadership Team and Monsanto Women's Network Leadership Team. Shannon participates as a mentor with Global Giveback Circle, with focus on mentoring and development of young women in Africa. She is also active in support of Adopt-A-Family and serves as a 4-H leader. Shannon grew up on a corn, soybean and livestock farm in southern Minnesota. Shannon has a BS from Iowa State, and an MS and PhD from North Dakota State University. Shannon and her family live near St. Louis, Missouri.
TUESDAY GENERAL SESSION THREE

Panel: Balancing Roles in the Family, on the Farm, off the Farm and in the Community

Amy Tlach is a recipient of the 2017 Women Impacting Agriculture award. Amy owns Mid-Iowa Seeds with her husband, where she lives the mission of improving customer yields and delivers top notch customer service. As a past full-time employee and current contract employee of the Iowa Soybean Association, she works to expand opportunities for Iowa’s soybean farmers. She has served her county for over 16 years as a Warren County Extension Council member, the last eight as chairperson. She was instrumental in passing the Warren County Extension and Outreach tax referendum in 2015. As Warren County Fair Board superintendent, Amy positively impacts the youth and general public in Warren County. And as a mom, Amy is a role model for two girls who will be leaders of the next generation of agriculture.

Nancy Bohl Bormann was a recipient of the 2016 Women Impacting the Land award. She was also awarded the Iowa State Outstanding Young Professional Award which honors early to mid-career alumni who have distinguished themselves in their field of study. Nancy farms with her family in north central Iowa and serves as environmental services manager and agronomist for Maschoff Environmental, Inc. She received her bachelor’s degree in environmental science and agriculture and life sciences in 2004 from Iowa State University, and her master’s degree in soil science from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She excels in implementing environmental practices at her home farming operation and works with producers to use nutrients to benefit both Iowa agriculture and water quality. Nancy is a certified crop advisor, serving as an elected Soil and Water District Commissioner for Kossuth County.

Pam Bolin and her husband, Dave, have been dairy farming together for nearly 40 years. They started on Dave’s family farm in 1979, which has been in the Bolin family for 127 years, where they also raised their three sons. Two years ago their son, Dan, and his wife, Lynn, returned to the dairy farm. Dan and Lynn built a new facility and put in a Galaxy robotic milking system. Today the Bolins have 140 milking cows and 145 heifers. Pam served 26 years on the Swiss Valley Farms cooperative board, the last eight as chairman. She currently is on dairy promotion boards at the state, regional and national level. Pam and Dave have served as coaches for both 4-H dairy judging teams and quiz bowl teams. Pam is involved in her church where she has led the children’s sermon for the past 30 years, served as a vacation bible school teacher, and was youth group leader. One of Pam’s favorite ways to spend her time is with her nine grandchildren who are the sixth generation of Bolins to live at the New Day Dairy.

How Remarkable Women Lead with Confidence

Jeanne Bernick is an agricultural consultant and business specialist for national accounting and finance firm K•Coe Isom. Jeanne matches the needs of large commercial producers with K•Coe Isom’s talent and tools to facilitate healthy, growing farm operations that are sustainable for generations to come. Prior to joining K•Coe Isom, Jeanne spent 20 years as an editor with Farm Journal Media, developing long-standing relationships with large commercial ag producers and their families. Over her distinguished career, Jeanne became one of the top editors in ag media, growing Top Producer magazine into a leading industry brand and creating authoritative coverage on key aspects of agriculture. Jeanne established a national ag business conference for women that provides a community for women to find resources and network with like-minded business owners. She also helped create the Top Producer Executive Network™.
Women Impacting Agriculture Honorees

Audrey Brown
Audrey and her family lead a well-run family-owned business. With her husband Steve, and son, Clint, Audrey incorporates value-added agriculture by transforming their home-grown produce into jams and jellies. She demonstrates the essence of producing and purchasing locally! Audrey’s farm also grows a wide variety of vegetables as well as natural beef and locally raised pork. Audrey serves on the Region 5 Local Foods Advisory Committee with ISU Extension and Outreach, providing input for issues involving local food needs in northwest Iowa. She has hosted several farm-to-table dinners at their farm and shares her story about the importance of local foods to agriculture.

Velvet Buckingham
As an environmental specialist with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Velvet serves as the coordinator for the Rathbun Land and Water Alliance Project. She works with landowners to establish and implement conservation practices to help minimize soil erosion and nutrient loss, provides technical support and assists with the cost-share application process. Always willing to promote agriculture, Velvet speaks at local school ag days and area field days. She also assists the ISU Extension and Outreach field agronomists with the Agronomy in the Field program. Velvet also manages a Black Angus herd on her family’s farm. She feeds cattle, monitors feed rations and calf health, and ensures success during calving season. Velvet uses a rotational grazing system and works to make improvements to the grazing system. As a mom, Velvet helps her sons’ 4-H clubs with fundraising events and showing heifers at the Wayne County Fair.

Sheila Dotts Hebenstreit
Sheila is an educator, mentor, speaker and advocate. Among the many contributions Sheila has made to agriculture over the years, she’s helped hundreds of farmers achieve profitability while working to ensure soil and water conservation practices. She serves as a mentor to interns and young agronomists by sharing her vast agronomic knowledge and experiences by speaking at educational meetings and national conferences. Sheila and a team of ISU Extension and Outreach staff traveled to Uganda to participate in a farmer-to-farmer program and advised 180 Ugandan women farmers on soybean production and use, post-harvest crop handling and record keeping. The project resulted in very noticeable improvements in the food availability, health and financial stability of the participating families. The Uganda trip was a long-time personal goal to “pay it forward.”
Women Impacting Agriculture Honorees

Anna MacDonald Golightly

Anna serves as the Badger Creek Lake Watershed project coordinator through the Soil and Water Conservation District in Madison County. Her focus is on conservation practices, and she’s been a champion in the promotion of cover crops in the Badger Creek Lake Watershed. Anna is a leader in her community and represents Madison County in various conservation groups. She is the president-elect of the Iowa Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society and is a member of the Iowa Prairie Network Board. She is working to form a local team for Women, Land & Legacy and acts as a leader and liaison by hosting listening sessions. She takes every possible opportunity to educate people on the importance of conservation practices. Anna holds bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Iowa State. She has continued learning through ISU Extension and Outreach programs including Women Managing Cattle, which has helped her cattle operation. Through work on her farm, in her career and in her community involvement, Anna remains an influential leader impacting natural resource conservation, shepherding in sustainable agriculture solutions and making positive changes in Iowa.

Cheryl and Cassie Johnson

Agriculture often teaches tough lessons – lessons none of us want to learn. Such was the case with Cheryl and Cassie Johnson. Following a tragic accident that took the life of Dan, Cheryl’s husband and Cassie’s father, Cheryl and Cassie were faced with some tough decisions. Would they be able to carry on the farming business, and did they want to? Choosing to keep the family farm and transition the business, Cheryl and Cassie learned to manage the entire farming business. They worked hard to educate themselves, and searched for help anywhere they could find it. Through an 2013 Annie’s Project class offered in Cherokee County, both Cheryl and Cassie found a great resource in ISU Extension and Outreach. With a little help from Annie’s Project and a lot of strength and courage, Cheryl and Cassie took over the reigns of a row crop farming operation, as well as Solutions Genetics, a Red Angus breeding stock business. Cheryl and Cassie continue to evolve with their business and life goals.

Amy Tlach

Amy has most definitely earned a reputation as a woman impacting agriculture. She believes in the agriculture of today and the promise and potential of the industry’s future. With her husband, she owns Mid-Iowa Seeds where she lives the mission of improving customer yields and delivering top notch customer service. As a past full-time employee and current contract employee of the Iowa Soybean Association, she works to expand opportunities for Iowa’s soybean farmers. Amy has served her county for over 16 years as a member of the Warren County Extension Council, the last eight years as chairperson. She was instrumental in passing the Warren County Extension and Outreach tax referendum in 2015. As Warren County Fair Board superintendent, Amy positively impacts the youth and general public in Warren County. And as a mom, Amy is a role model for two girls who will be leaders of the next generation of agriculture.
Cynthia Bartel is a doctoral candidate and endowment fellow at Iowa State University. After finishing her undergraduate education in agronomy, Cynthia’s internship with the Pew Initiative on Food and Biotechnology provided an introduction to the manner in which biotechnology is handled in the public policy forum and by the media. Later, she obtained an agricultural legislative fellowship in the United States Senate, and also worked at the World Bank as an agricultural and rural development consultant on the first Agriculture Investment Sourcebook. She then functioned for seven years as the agriculture, nutrition and trade policy advisor to United States Senator Tim Johnson in Washington, DC. A year-long fellowship with the Robert Bosch Foundation in Germany included placements in the Committee on Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection in the German Parliament and within the global headquarters of Bayer CropScience.

Jennifer Bentley is a dairy specialist for ISU Extension and Outreach. In her current role she develops educational programming with producers in 10 northeast Iowa counties. Jennifer is committed to providing research-based, hands-on dairy education programs. She works closely with dairy producers, providing them with information regarding facility design, calf management, and overall dairy herd management. Jennifer grew up on a dairy farm in north central Iowa, where her family still operates a dairy farm. She earned a bachelor’s degree in dairy science and a Master of Agriculture Degree from Iowa State. Before her extension position, Jennifer worked as an agronomist for The Maschhoffs where she assisted farmers in writing manure management plans for the state. Today, she still writes manure management plans and is a certified technical service provider for the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, writing conservation plans. Kellie has also worked for the Iowa Soybean Association in the Boone River Watershed. Kellie greatly enjoys advocating for agriculture through blogging, social media and other volunteer activities, especially advocating for conservation. She participates in numerous community programs that emphasize agriculture and conservation. Her most important job on the farm is being a parent to her children.

Kellie Blair owns and operates a family farming operation with her husband, AJ, and two children. Their farm is located in north central Iowa. Their diversified crop and livestock operation includes corn, soybeans, pigs and cattle. She graduated from Iowa State in 2006 with a degree in forestry and agronomy. Immediately after college, Kellie worked as an agronomist for The Maschhoffs where she assisted farmers in writing manure management plans for the state. Today, she still writes manure management plans and is a certified technical service provider for the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, writing conservation plans. Kellie has also worked for the Iowa Soybean Association in the Boone River Watershed. Kellie greatly enjoys advocating for agriculture through blogging, social media and other volunteer activities, especially advocating for conservation. She participates in numerous community programs that emphasize agriculture and conservation. Her most important job on the farm is being a parent to her children.

Zoami Calles-Rios Sosa moved to Iowa at age 11 from Veracruz, Mexico. Her family owns and operates Crooked Creek Farm located in rural central Iowa. Together, they produce and sell a variety of fruits and vegetables at farmers markets around Iowa and in Omaha, Nebraska. Zoami and her husband own a small vegetable store in Webster City, HealthyFOODS, where their produce is presently sold. Her family’s fruits and vegetables are also sold at other local grocery stores. Currently, Zoami and four family farm owners and operators are transitioning into wholesale and value-added products. Zoami earned a degree in computer science from Buena Vista University and is constantly searching for ways to incorporate technology into the family farming operation.
Sara Clausen is the director of communications and member relations at Key Cooperative where she represents 19 locations across the state of Iowa serving more than 3,000 grain, agronomy, feed and energy members. Sara grew up on a grain and livestock operation in Zearing and has lived in Story County her entire life. She obtained a journalism and mass communication degree from Iowa State. Sara joined Key Cooperative in 2012 following working as the director at the Nevada Chamber of Commerce. She is highly involved in her community, serving on the economic development council, as a member of the Rotary Club of Nevada and as a cabinet member for the United Way of Story County. Sara is also currently serving on the advisory committee for the Iowa Food and Family Project directed by the Iowa Soybean Association. She lives in Story County with her husband and two children.

Wendi Muir Denham is a County Executive Director and State Outreach Coordinator for Farm Service Agency, based in Mahaska County. While growing up in Illinois, Wendi’s grandparents farmed in Mahaska County. Prior to starting her career with FSA seven years ago, Wendi served on the 2010 Census campaign at the US Census Bureau, providing outreach to Iowa’s hard to count areas. She holds a degree in international relations and French from Drake University and a master’s degree from Purdue University. Outside of work, Wendi enjoys teaching college economics courses, traveling and performing around the Des Moines area with a Scottish Highland Dance group.

Jittaun Floyd grew up in a military family that gave her the opportunity to not only travel, but also live in numerous different countries. After graduating from the University of California, Davis with a degree in economics, Jittaun joined Cargill as a trader. During her career with Cargill, Jittaun had nine corporate transfers and promotions before taking early retirement. Shortly after retirement Jittaun enjoyed nature walks with her dogs on her acreage and supper outings with her friends.

Jade Hargrafen is the county program director for ISU Extension and Outreach in Delaware County where she previously worked as youth coordinator. In her current role she works to increase community educational programming opportunities to fulfill county agriculture needs. She graduated from the University of Iowa with degrees in political science and environmental policy. Jade was born and raised on a beef and swine farm near Delhi, Iowa. Her passion for roles within agriculture grew through her 4-H involvement. She showed cattle, swine and various static exhibits and held leadership roles including Delaware County Pork Princess and Delaware County Fair Queen. After a summer internship with ISU Extension and Outreach, she knew she wanted to pursue a career to help others and give back to a community that helped shape her life.

Melissa O’Rourke is an attorney and farm and agribusiness management specialist and dairy team member for ISU Extension and Outreach. She earned her BS from Illinois State University, her MA from the University of Minnesota, and a JD from the University of South Dakota School of Law. Melissa is admitted to the bar in Iowa, South Dakota and Nebraska. Melissa’s particular areas of interest include farm estate and succession planning, agricultural human resource legal and management issues, farmland leasing and tenure arrangements and working with beginning and transitioning farmers. Melissa has raised and managed a herd of registered Toggenburg dairy goats which she has milked and showed across the country. She has served on the board of American Dairy Goat Association. Melissa’s work with Iowa State combines her background in education, agriculture and law as she informs and advises members of the farm and agribusiness community.
Sara Redmond is a senior at Iowa State majoring in agricultural business and minoring in communication studies. Sara was raised on a family farm in eastern Iowa. The diversified operation includes row crops, a cow-calf herd, and recently entered the swine industry. Sara started the farm's show cattle operation in 2010 and still manages it today. She has had three internships in the agricultural banking industry at Heartland Financial, Farm Credit Services of America and First Citizens Bank. After graduating in May, Sara plans to work within the agriculture lending spectrum in the Midwest. Currently, she is a student assistant to the ISU Extension and Outreach Women in Ag program. She also serves as president of the ISU Sigma Alpha Professional Agriculture Sorority.

Jennie Savits is the enology (winemaking) extension specialist at the Midwest Grape and Wine Industry Institute at Iowa State where she previously worked as a research associate. Her work primarily involves assisting winemakers around Iowa and the Midwest with the best winemaking practices, providing technical information, and improving overall wine quality through education and outreach activities. Jennie earned both a bachelor’s and master’s degree in food science from Iowa State University where she has also served as a lecturer and led teaching laboratory courses in the Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition. Jennie resides in Boone County with her husband and two children, on a century family farm that includes row crops, a cow-calf herd and their own trucking business.

Jessi Skoglund is a district field manager for the Iowa Corn Growers Association. She lives in West Bend and covers eleven counties in north central Iowa. In this role, Jessi involves corn farmers in the Iowa Corn Growers Association’s grassroot efforts and leadership advocacy programs. Jessi enjoys helping others identify opportunities to be a leader in the agriculture industry and beyond. Prior to joining the ICGA, she completed a degree in public service and administration in agriculture and Spanish at Iowa State. Jessi grew up on her family’s dairy and crop farm near Masonville. In her spare time, Jessi enjoys cooking, gardening, traveling, swimming and helping with her husband’s business, Skoglund Meats and Locker.

Cheryl Tevis grew up on her family’s grain and livestock farm in the Loess Hills of Hornick. Today she farms with her husband in Boone County where they raised their two daughters. Cheryl holds a master’s degree in journalism from the University of Missouri. As Successful Farming Farm Management editor in 1979, she was the first woman in the magazine’s history to write about business. Her monthly column elevated the role of women in the farm business and in agriculture. In 1983, her eight-page story, “STRESS”, was awarded the Oscar in Agriculture from the NAFB. She also wrote, “We Kill Too Many Farm Kids,” which was selected as a finalist for the 1990 National Magazine Awards. Cheryl organized and led three Farm Family Enrichment Conferences and the Generating Success Conference, helping farmers manage their businesses and estate plan transitions. She retired in 2015 after 36 years at Successful Farming magazine. Cheryl is a founding member of Iowa Women in Agriculture.

Karen Turner is a financial officer at Farm Credit Services of America in Perry. Karen has been employed as an agricultural lender for 35 years, and has spent the last twenty years as a financial officer working directly with farmers on their financing needs. Karen is a graduate of Upper Iowa University with a degree in finance. Karen and her husband enjoy spending time with their three children and their grandson.
Ellie Weiss is an account executive at Meyocks, a full-service branding and advertising agency that focuses on food, agriculture, health and mentor brands. Ellie works on most of their agricultural clients including AgDirect, Farm Credit Services of America, Drago, Farm Credit East and AgriLabs. Besides her full-time career, Ellie is currently serving as the co-president for the National Agri-Marketing Association Iowa chapter. Ellie graduated from Iowa State in 2013 with a degree in agricultural studies and a minor in advertising. Although Ellie did not grow up on a farm, her passion for agriculture sprouted during her years involved in 4-H in Story County. In her spare time, Ellie enjoys spending time with her fiancé, friends, family, horse and dog!

Katie Williams is currently working with ISU Extension and Outreach Story County in Nevada. Katie grew up on a small farm near Owasa in Hardin County. Early in life Katie was exposed to agriculture and has never looked back! Her parents raised cattle and hogs while Katie was growing up, and she eventually replaced the hog operation with sheep. Her parents supported her through this entrepreneurial project and today they have a flock of 20 Suffolk/Hampshire ewes, plus 25 crossbred Angus cattle, and a corn and soybean operation. Katie is an Iowa State graduate in agriculture and society and is currently pursuing a master’s in agricultural education at the university.

Conference Speakers Jeanne Bernick, Erin Cumings, Keri Jacobs and Susan Tronchetti also serve on the leadership advisory committee.

Advisory Committee Members

ISU EXTENSION AND OUTREACH WOMEN IN AG PROGRAM STAFF

Shana Hilgerson is an animal science, global resource systems and agronomy student at Iowa State. She was hired by the ISU Extension and Outreach Women in Ag program as a student assistant in the spring of 2017. She has experience in social media, writing, team building, advocacy, and youth outreach. Shana comes from a small dairy farm in northeast Iowa. She has had exciting experiences through Iowa State thus far, including a six-week service learning trip to Uganda in 2016. During the summer of 2017 she worked with ISU Extension and Outreach as a local food intern in the Rising Star Internship program in north central Iowa.

Madeline McGarry is a sophomore majoring in agricultural communications at Iowa State. In the fall of 2017, she was hired as a student assistant for the ISU Extension and Outreach Women in Ag program. Madeline was born in Appleton, Wisconsin, and has also resided in Arizona and central Texas. As her parents were born and raised in eastern Iowa, she has always considered the state to be her true home. Madeline aspires to be an advocate for the pork industry, and will be completing a communications internship with the National Pork Producers Council in Washington DC during the spring of 2018.

Myriam Lafrenière-Landry immigrated from Quebec City, Quebec, to Pella, two years ago. Myriam is an agronomist and a botanist by training and has an ardent love for plants, especially perennials. Before coming to the United States, Myriam worked for the Canadian government for ten years. She developed inspection programs and stakeholder collaboration on invasive plants. Later, she supported the adoption of agriculture innovations and conservation practices by managing projects on agroforestry, water quality, invasive pests, and
When Myriam is not working on Women in Ag projects as a contractor, she is busy with home gardening, exercising, cooking, drawing, and wood working. Although Myriam misses Quebec’s snowstorms and French speaking, she has gained Iowa’s native prairie and friendly people.

Lisa Scarbrough is a communications specialist with the ISU Extension and Outreach Women in Agriculture program. Lisa produces videos that showcase the successes of women working in agriculture. She also develops communication materials including posters, flyers and brochures. Working with a national team, she has helped launch the Women in Agriculture Learning Network and also coordinates promotion and facilitation of webinars for a national audience. Lisa received a degree in communication studies with a minor in journalism from the University of Iowa. She has more than fifteen years of experience meeting the promotion and communication needs of ISU Extension and Outreach’s internal clients and external partners and stakeholders.

Madeline Schultz is the ISU Extension and Outreach Women in Ag program manager. She works to develop educational programs, increase connections among women in agriculture, build the professional capacity of educators, and steward funding in order to help women improve their lives and contribute to national food security. Madeline also coordinates Iowa’s Annie’s Project courses. She contributed leadership to Annie’s Project nationally from 2008-15. Madeline began her career with ISU Extension and Outreach by joining the Value Added Agriculture program in 2003. She earned a bachelor’s degree in agribusiness and economics and master’s degree in business administration with an interest in sustainable agriculture from Iowa State.
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We want to hear from you!
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