

FEBRUARY 28, 2026

Drake University, Meredith Hall



2026
BUSINESS & NONPROFIT
FAIR

ONE VOICE DSM

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Business Clinic



IOWA CREDIT UNION FOUNDATION

1995 30 YEARS 2025



PRAIRIE PATH INSURANCE

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ABOUT US

ABOUT ONE VOICE DSM

One Voice DSM was established to unite the African diaspora in Iowa, embrace and promote our cultures and heritage, and cultivate opportunities for the present and the future of Iowa and beyond.



Our 5 strategic pillars:

- Economic Progress and Cooperation
- Youth Development
- Welfare of People and Families
- Education and Narrative Ownership
- Social and Community Connection

ABOUT THE ONE VOICE BUSINESS & NONPROFIT FAIR



The objective of the Business & Nonprofit Fair is to identify and invite businesses owned by members of the community, to provide an opportunity to network with the ecosystem of business resources that exists in Iowa with the purpose of educating and creating synergies that can foster business growth and the entrepreneurial spirit.



MORNING SCHEDULE



Time	Activity & Room	Topic & Speaker(s)
8:00 a.m.	Check-in / Registration & Refreshments/ Mingle (Exhibitor Hall)	Census Lo-Liyong
9:00 - 9:30 a.m.	Opening Ceremony (Auditorium 1)	Jack Chimbete Trudy Carlson
9:30 -10:15 a.m.	Morning Workshop (Auditorium 1)	Chase Spencer Pitching your business
10:30 -11:15a .m	Morning Workshop A (Breakout session)	Ray Main Packaging and Increasing the Value of your Business
10:30 -11:15a .m	Morning Workshop B (Breakout session)	Marh Abdulmahdi & Dr. Eric Idehen Ecosystem Resource and Opportunities
11:30 -12:15 p.m	Morning Workshop A (Breakout session)	Ena Barbic Barnes Financial Inclusion
11:30 -12:15 p.m	Morning Workshop B (Breakout session)	Debra Carr Business Development

AFTERNOON SCHEDULE



Time	Activity & Room	Topic & Speaker(s)
12:15 - 12:45 pm	Refreshments (Exhibitor Hall)	Olive Mukress
12:45 - 1:00 p.m	Key Note (Auditorium)	Nancy Mwiroti Strengthening Ecosystems
1:00 -1:45 p.m.	Panel Discussion (Auditorium)	Paula Bell (Moderator) Panelists: Miss Vie Dr. Ngozi Igbokwe Diogenes Ayala Justin Appenzeller
2:00 - 2:30 p.m	Pitch Competition & Award Ceremony (Auditorium)	Judges Chase Spencer Directors council Rep Rohey Sallah Empigo Academy Rep
2:30 - 4 p.m	Business Bazaar (Exhibitor Hall)	Attendees enjoy refreshments as they mingle at the Business Bazaar Prime window to build relationships, spark interest, and grow your reach.

ONE VOICE BUSINESS FAIR

IMPACT DOCUMENTARY



JACK CHIMBETETE

FOUNDER/PRESIDENT
JSI/AFRICALIVENETWORK

Jack Chimbetete is an Entrepreneur/Community leader and Startup Founder. He serves as a consultant with CultureALL, CEO/Founder of Africalivenetwork.tv and Jack's Shack International among sitting on Investment cabinets and as the President of One Voice DSM. His vision is connecting the community of people of color with opportunities within the US and beyond creating an International vibrant African economy.





PITCH COMPETITION WORKSHOP

CHASE SPENCER

PROGRAM MANAGER
DRAKE UNIVERSITY

Chase started the company Chasing Cars LLC in August of 2022. Grew the Chasing Cars database from 0 to 110 cars in less than a year.

Chase studied Sustainable Development in Uganda for 3 weeks in 2022 and teamed up with fellow Drake Students and Makerere University Business School (Kampala, Uganda), meeting with business, government, healthcare, and education officials on what Uganda is doing to grow and develop their economy and citizen wellbeing.



Chase Spencer is the Program Manager of the Entrepreneurship Centers at Drake University. In this position, he oversees the Drake Business Clinic as well as student programs. He started his own company, Chasing Cars, as a student in an entrepreneurship class. The company helps classic car owners tell the story of their car through new technology and community. Chase has seen success in customer discovery, ideation, and thinking about the company holistically. He has also helped many students and faculty move their businesses from ideas to reality. Some of which have gone on to win multiple pitch competitions.

chase.spencer@drake.edu



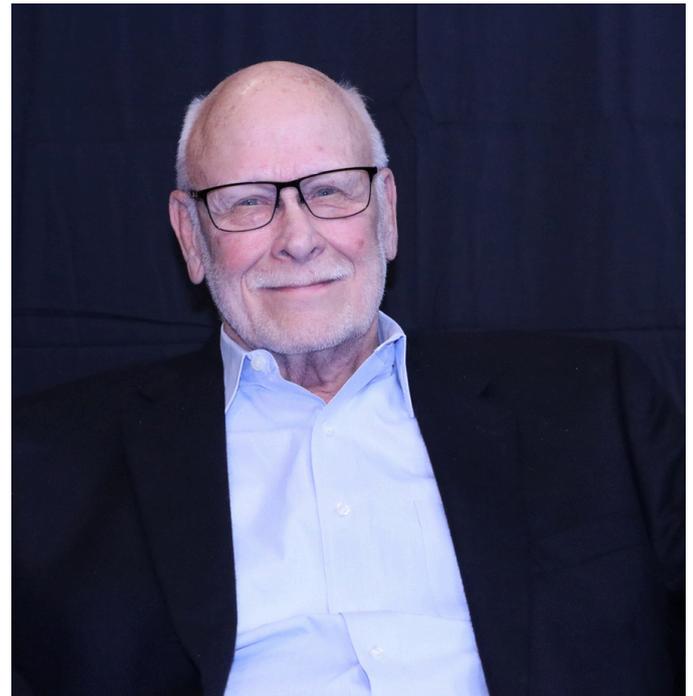
SPEAKER

RAY MAIN, CLU, CEBS

OWNER AND PRESIDENT

I am a Des Moines native who has lived in Urbandale since 1981. I married Mary Main in 1971, and we have two children, Michael Main, DDS of Waukee and Emily Gilchrist, Art Teacher in Wylie, Texas. We have been blessed with six grandchildren and get to see a lot of them!

For over 20 years, I developed, implemented, and managed employment-based health care, retirement, and executive benefit programs as an insurance broker serving midwestern employers. I retired from this independent commercial insurance agency as a Stockholder and Board member.



After retiring, I served as Director of Development and Community Relations for a faith-based not-for-profit retirement community, creating annual and legacy gifting programs for this organization's capital, operation, and endowment needs.

Returning to for-profit, I represented a central Iowa business brokerage firm as a sales agent.

When that office closed, I moved to an employee benefits agency and concentrated on cash flow, debt reduction, income replacement, and other "ability" programs for professionals and business owners.

Today, as a Business Broker Professional, I help business owners prepare for a successful succession, the purchase of a company, or the sale of their business.

I assist owners increase the value of their business, owners and their families prepare the business and themselves for the exit, build personal wealth, and complete their succession dreams on their terms and time frame.



SPEAKER

DR. ERIC IDEHEN

MANAGER

EVELYN K DAVIS CENTER

Eric's personal and professional travels took him from his home country of Nigeria to Ukraine, Spain, and finally the United States of America. During his long odyssey from Nigeria, he nursed the dream of opening orphanages in Africa (Nigeria). The Cornerstone of Hope Orphanage is the realization of that dream that began many years ago.

Eric graduated from Federal Polytechnic Auchi (Nigeria) with a Higher National Diploma in Quantity Surveying, a master's degree in business administration from the University of Phoenix (USA), a master's degree and Ph.D. in Industrial and Organizational Psychology specializing in Organizational Diversity & Social Change, from Walden University (USA).



Eric is the manager of the Evelyn K Davis Center in Des Moines. Also, he is the principal partner of OPX International LLC. Before that, He worked for AmeriFirst Financial Corporation as the Director of Community Development and Wells Fargo in various positions, including teller, customer service representative, personal banker, community development and diversity consultant. In 2010, he was promoted to Vice President of Diversity and Inclusion. He worked for Bank of the West 2012 - 2014 as Branch Sales Manager and briefly as the Unit Direct for the Ellis Levitt Boys and Girls Clubs in Des Moines, Iowa, before returning to Wells Fargo as Vice President of Community Relations (June 2014 - May 2021).

Eric sits on the board of the Cornerstone of Hope Orphanage, and many more, where he continues his service to his community and shares his experience with others. Past board and Committee membership include the Northwest Rotary Club, Iowa Community Capitol, 6th Avenue Corridor, OneEconomy, Iowa Literacy Council, American Red Cross Board of Central Iowa, the New Iowan Centers Community Advisory Committee, the Greater Des Moines Partnership Diversity Committee, Iowa International Center, Iowa Asian Alliance, Allianza Chamber of Commerce, etc.

Eric and his wife, Emily, live in Urbandale, Iowa and have three sons and one daughter. In addition to several Nigerian dialects, Eric also speaks fluent Spanish and Russian.



SPEAKER

MARH ABDULMAHDI

CAREER COACH

EVELYN K DAVIS CENTER

Marh Abdulmahdi is an up-and-coming HR professional and career coach dedicated to helping people grow in their careers. Born in Baghdad, Iraq, and raised in the United States, she brings a deep understanding of cultural adaptation, resilience, and the unspoken rules of navigating opportunity. Her career began as a cashier at Hy-Vee, followed by restaurant and service jobs that supported her through college and gave her firsthand insight into the realities of frontline work and financial sacrifice. These experiences shaped her empathy, persistence, and practical approach to workforce development.



Marh began her college journey at Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC), where affordability and access allowed her to pursue higher education. After transferring, Marh earned a BS in Management from Iowa State University (2023) and a Certificate in HR Essentials from Cornell University (2025). Though her transfer extended her graduation timeline, it gave her valuable perspective on determination, adaptability, and the importance of accessible education. As Career Coach Team Lead at the Evelyn K. Davis Center in Des Moines (June 2025–present), she empowers individuals to build confidence, clarify goals, craft strong resumes, and prepare for interviews and onboarding.

Drawing on her lifelong experience as a bilingual Arabic-English speaker and immigrant, Marh has developed strong cross-cultural communication skills and has long provided interpretation to ensure accessibility and understanding for diverse communities throughout her life and career.

Her work is guided by empathy, accountability, and a belief in each person's potential. She is passionate about equity, inclusion, and helping people find meaningful work that aligns with their strengths and values. She continues to dedicate her career to workforce empowerment, individual growth, and creating pathways for shared success.

SPEAKER



ENA BABIC BARNES

MPA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
IOWA CREDIT UNION FOUNDATION (ICUF)



About the Speaker

Ena Babic Barnes oversees the strategic execution of ICUF's mission driven programs and investments. Prior to this role, Ena served as a Program Manager with ICUF, where she led ICUF's financial education initiatives and fundraising campaigns, surpassing projected annual goals. Prior to coming to ICUF, Ena spent her career in various leadership roles with nonprofit and trade association organizations in Serbia and Europe. She led the development of programs and strategies focused on European integration and community development.

About the Workshop

Join us for an insightful session on financial inclusion and well-being, where we'll explore how access to financial services and resources can empower individuals and communities, leading to greater financial stability and prosperity. From breaking down barriers to inclusion to promoting strategies for achieving financial wellbeing, Ena will showcase ICUF' work across Iowa, provide some data metrics and shed the light on how we can all engage in ensuring everyone has the tools and opportunities to thrive. Having financial stability is a cornerstone of individuals' well-being. This session will offer insights about financial inclusion landscape in the United States and Iowa, offer ideas on how to involve and support the communities, and engage you in meaningful discussion on how we can collaboratively do more.



SPEAKER

DEBRA CARR

PRINCIPAL CONSULTANT AND OWNER
CARR & ASSOCIATES

Debra A. Carr, LMSW, ACSW, CFSW is a seasoned business facilitator, consultant, and coach with extensive experience supporting entrepreneurs, nonprofit leaders, and community-based organizations. She is the Principal Consultant and Owner of Carr & Associates, where she provides business training, strategic planning, coaching, and counseling services focused on sustainable growth, financial confidence, and leadership development.



Debra brings a strengths-based, culturally responsive approach to business development, helping individuals and organizations clarify their goals, build capacity, and navigate complex systems with confidence. Since 2025, she has served on the City of Des Moines Small Business Loan Program, contributing her expertise to expand equitable access to capital and technical assistance for small businesses.

With a deep commitment to economic empowerment and community advancement, Debra is especially passionate about supporting African refugees and immigrants as they build businesses, create generational wealth, and strengthen local economies.



KEYNOTE SPEAKER

NANCY MWIROTSI

FOUNDER AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PI 515

Nancy Mwiroti is many things to me, and not just because she is my mother. She is a person who is sympathetic, generous, outgoing, positive, supportive, humble, admired, and loved. She is driven, determined, innovative, impactful, and a visionary." -Riziki Mwiroti

Nancy Mwiroti has dedicated her life to advocating for underrepresented individuals, including refugees, young women, and people of color. She believes success comes from opportunity. She compels local and national community members and organizations to empower hundreds of students to build skills for the future. These skills start with afterschool STEM education. Each student served is given the support they need to garner influence and gain stability in their families and communities.

"Nancy courageously started something from nothing because she saw a need and an opportunity. While helping refugee mothers in the community obtain jobs, she realized that their children needed support, too. She understood that because these students would perhaps be the first in their families to complete high school or attend college, they needed a pathway for their success. Pursuit of Innovation (Pi515) was founded to help build these pathways. Since its inception in 2014, Nancy and Pi515 have seen over 150 students graduate high school and seek post-secondary education. She provides these youth with confidence and skills for the future. One thing that has remained constant from the beginning is Nancy's ability to create lasting personal relationships with Pi515 students and their families. In 2021, she led a state-wide Digital Inclusion campaign that provided free hotspots and basic digital literacy skills to over 300 Iowans.

Currently, Nancy is expanding Pi515 and building the tech pipeline to increase diversity in STEM careers and close the digital divide. She tirelessly pursues programming that will set her program apart from other STEM programs.

"The future of work is creating space to honor young people's leadership. We will be driven by the desire to elevate young people to create, design and innovate to not just use future technology but build it." -Nancy Mwiroti





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PAULA BELL

EMCEE & MODERATOR

Paula Bell is the CEO of Paula A. Bell Consulting, LLC, a dynamic speaker, author, consultant, and coach specializing in business analysis, leadership, career and life development, and cultivating inclusive, equitable, and culturally responsive environments. With over 21 years in corporate America, she has led multi-million-dollar projects across industries, transforming businesses through strategic and sustainable solutions.

Through her mind, body, and soul coaching model, Paula empowers individuals to discover their purpose, elevate their personal brand, and achieve meaningful success. As a certified life and career coach, community leader, and group fitness instructor, Paula blends discipline, movement, and mindset into her holistic coaching practice. She is also a passionate community leader who integrates principles of resilience, purpose, and empowerment into every client engagement, supporting both personal breakthroughs and professional growth.



One Voice DSM



DIOGENES AYALA

PANELIST AND EMCEE

Diogenes Ayala is a nationally respected voice in emergency management, public safety, and resilience. As a Public Safety Leader, he builds cultures of preparedness across healthcare, government, and community organizations.

With more than two decades in homeland security and emergency management, Ayala has responded to tornadoes, critical incidents, and emerging threats, and was named Iowa's Emergency Manager of the Year in 2022. He holds a Master's degree in Homeland Defense and Security from the Naval Postgraduate School, as well as both a Bachelor's and Master's degree in Criminal Justice from Simpson College. Known for blending real-world experience with powerful storytelling, Ayala trains law enforcement, healthcare professionals, and community leaders in counterterrorism, de-escalation, and crisis leadership—challenging audiences to lead with discipline, foresight, and heart. Preparedness, he teaches, is not fear-driven; it is an act of service.



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JUSTIN APPENZELLER

PANELIST

Justin Appenzeller is the owner and President of Prairie Path Insurance LLC, an Allstate agency located in West Des Moines, Iowa. Prior to establishing his insurance agency, he held the title of Sr Project Manager at Principal Financial Group in Des Moines, Iowa. Additionally, he has managed a rental property and several other small businesses over the past two decades. Justin Appenzeller was born and raised in Boone, Iowa, and earned his Bachelors degree from the University of Northern Iowa.



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MISS VIE

PANELIST

Miss Vie is an entrepreneur, professional braider, and mother of two, originally from Cameroon and now based in Iowa, USA. She holds a nursing degree and is fully qualified as a state nurse, but her passion for entrepreneurship and her natural craftsmanship in braiding led her to build something of her own.

What began organically as a skill and creative outlet grew into Miss Vie Beauty — a thriving hair enterprise known for precision, care, and versatility. Today, she leads a team of skilled braiders, serving a diverse clientele across Iowa with both salon and home services.

Miss Vie works with all hair types and textures, combining structure, creativity, and a deep respect for scalp health. Her journey reflects discipline, vision, and a commitment to excellence — bringing together healthcare precision and artistic expression in every style she creates.



One Voice DSM





THANK YOU

Thank you to our guests, vendors, volunteers, supporters, sponsors and all the non-profits and small businesses that made the 2026 One Voice Business Fair possible!

We could not have done it without you and hope to see you again next year!





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ONE VOICE BUSINESS & NON-PROFIT FAIR



STRENGTHENING ECOSYSTEMS



Feb 28, 2026 | Meredith Hall
8:00 AM - 4:00 PM | Drake University

12847 University Ave, Des Moines, IA
50311St



Rundown

8:00

Registration
Exhibitor Hall

9:00

Opening Remarks
Auditorium 1

9:30

Pitching Workshop
Auditorium 1

10:30

Breakout Sessions
Rooms A & B

12:15

Refreshments
Exhibitor Hall

12:45

Keynote
Auditorium 2

1:00

Panel
Auditorium 2

2:00

Pitch Competition
Auditorium 2

2:30

Business Bazaar
Exhibitor Hall

4:00

Closing Remarks
Auditorium 2

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NEW THIS YEAR!

2-4PM Attendees enjoy refreshments as they mingle at the Business Bazaar Prime window to build relationships, spark interest, and grow reach.

Full program at www.onevoicedsm.org