

Isak Sivi – Turkey Isak was born in Istanbul, Turkey to a family that draws its ancestry from Sephardic Jews from Spain. Isak had an interest in business from a very young age. He attended business school in Istanbul and apprenticed with an import-export business there. In 1970 Isak immigrated to Israel with his family where he joined a kibbutz and met his wife-to-be, Marti. Isak and his new wife moved to Des Moines in 1972 and he began working the Des Moines community in a variety of manual jobs available to him. Within six months of coming to Des Moines, Isak began working in the lab of an optical company where he first learned to make eyeglasses. After successfully selling glasses and managing stores for five years, Isak started his own business, Real Optics Inc. in 1978. In 2003, he owned 23 stores in central Iowa. Beyond his success in business, Isak has been successful through his high level of involvement in the community. He has served on the boards of the Des Moines Jewish Federation, Beth El Jacob Synagogue, and the Iowa Foundation for Preventing Blindness. Isak feels a great responsibility to assist new immigrants living in Iowa who need advice, mentoring, and at times, a job. Isak speaks four languages fluently and was a member of ICIU's language bank.

Dr. Karuna Sayeed – India Dr. Karuna Sayeed graduated from Osmania Medical College in India, before moving to Winnipeg, Canada with her husband, Dr. Hussain Sayeed, in 1963. She completed her training in pathology in 1970, then moved to Des Moines in 1970 with her husband and three children. In Des Moines she furthered her pathology education at Mercy medical Center, later joining Des Moines University as a Professor of Pathology. Since first joining the faculty of Des Moines University, Dr. Sayeed has been honored for her dedication to her students. She was awarded the Best Teacher of the Year Award by students several times during her tenure, and the Des Moines University yearbook, "The Peacemaker," was dedicated to her in 1991. After 36 years of service to the university, Dr. Sayeed retired in 2001, and was bestowed the honor of Professor Emeritus. She continues to be involved at Des Moines University by participating in the interview process of candidates and sharing her knowledge as a guest lecturer. Additionally, she stays busy spending time with her six grandchildren.

Som Baccam – Laos At the young age of 11, Som and her family sought refuge in the U.S. Som graduated high school in Story City and earned her Associate Degree of Nursing from DMACC in Boone, Iowa. Som has contributed to the community through both her professional career and her involvement with many community organizations. Som has been President of the Tai United Foundation and the Tai Dancers, a member of the Des Moines School Board, an active statewide consultant for educational presentations, and involved with the Iowa Asian Alliance. As President of the tai United Foundation, Som has taken huge strides toward promoting tolerance of all people by including a more diverse group in the Foundation's annual Chinese New Year Celebration. In 2001 Som was honored with the Iowa Governor's Volunteer Award.

Fred Lorber – Austria Originally from Austria, Fred immigrated to the U.S. and is now the owner of Lortex, Inc, co-founder of Compressor Control Corporation, and a community activist.

Alicia Stessman – Bolivia Alicia moved to Des Moines in 1973, after emigrating from Bolivia and meeting her husband in Milwaukee. Over the years, Alicia has worked at several local hospitals as a nursing assistant. In addition to her professional work, she has gone above and beyond with her volunteer work. She has volunteered extensively with the Mercy-Variety Club-Yucatan project, which brings Mexican children with heart problems to Des Moines for surgery. For many years she served as coordinator of the volunteers, responsible for meeting families at the airport, translating for them, accompanying the parents during the surgeries of their children, transporting them to religious services, etc. Alicia and her husband are volunteer instructors for their church's pre-marriage classes, giving as many as many as 100 Spanish-language classes per year. Alicia's other activities include interceding for those who need housing, medical assistance, employment, and help with legal or immigration issues.