

Luca Berrone – Italy Luca came to Iowa in 1974 after his brother studied abroad in the U.S. and returned full of awe and wonder. Luca earned a degree at Iowa State University and began working for the Iowa Development Commission (now the Iowa Economic Development Authority). Iowa Sister States was soon formed under Branstad's administration and Luca became the nonprofit's inaugural director. In 1985 Berrone oversaw a delegation that would go on to shape the unique relationship between Iowa and Chinese President Xi Jinping. At the time, Xi was a young chemical engineer and county official, but he remembered Luca Berrone even after he gained political power. In 2011, when Branstad was on a governors' trip in China, Xi handed the governor a business card with Berrone's name that he had kept since 1985 and asked if Branstad knew the man. Part of the reason Xi was so impressed with Luca's love for Iowa is because he is an immigrant. When asked about this, Luca called himself an Iowan by choice, not by chance. Today, he is the president of SACMI, USA, Ltd., a subsidiary of an Italian manufacturing company.

Swati Dandeker – India Swati was born in Nagpur, India, and traveled to the United States in 1973 to join her husband Arvind and start a family. She earned her bachelor's degree from Nagpur University in Chemistry & Biology and a post graduate diploma in Dietetics from Bombay University in India. In 2002, Swati was elected to the Iowa House of Representatives, making her the first Indian-born American to hold a state legislative position. She was reelected for three consecutive terms. In 2008, Swati was elected to the Iowa Senate, where she chaired the Senate Commerce Committee. In 2011, Swati was elected President of the National Foundation of Women Legislators, where her national platform consisted of Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (STEM) education, increased application of broadband communication for economic growth, and PTSD issues faced by our veterans. Most recently, Swati served as U.S. Executive Director and Ambassador to the Asian Development Bank (ADB). In this position, Swati dealt with 60 countries in Asia and the Pacific Rim, where she worked on energy, telecom, water and transportation issues as well as helping the ADB develop infrastructure projects in many of these countries. In January 2017, the new administration recalled all Ambassadors appointed by the Obama Administration. Swati was part of this recall. In addition to her degrees, Swati is fluent in Hindi, Gujrati and Marathi languages. Swati also has working knowledge of Urdu, Punjabi and Bengali languages. Swati and Arvind live in Marion, Iowa, where they raised their two sons, and own a successful business.