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PROMOTING from within

Executives from three Des Moines companies share why and how they look for talent inside their doors.

By Lindsey Giardino



FEATURE

At Bankers Trust, promoting from within is a core pillar of the organization.

To make that happen, leaders participate annually in talent reviews to discuss succession planning for key roles and employee development plans. They also map out the current and future needs of the organization so they can align talent with professional development opportunities and growth within the bank — an approach that supports the organization's culture and helps the team better serve its customers.

For employees, Bankers Trust offers numerous opportunities to develop and advance their careers internally. Many employees have created individual development plans and update them at least annually. They identify goals they want to achieve and build a plan to reach them, whether through on-the-job training, learning from others or self-study.

In addition to a large library of on-demand trainings, Bankers Trust regularly offers live sessions on topics such as crucial conversations and inclusive leadership. The bank has also developed two one-year leadership programs: Leadership Academy, which focuses on new and emerging leaders and has been around for more than a decade, and Ready Leader, a program created in partnership with Drake Executive Education to help leaders advance their skills in strategy and business planning.

In part because of this support, there are many success stories of team members who have grown within their teams or transitioned into new roles across the bank through these professional development programs.

One recent example is a Ready Leader graduate who has taken the skills and tools she learned in both programs and grown into a highly valued leader. Following the program, she implemented the business plan she developed in Ready Leader — an initiative that led to the bank receiving external recognition for her work. Her team members continue to praise her leadership approach, her support and her encouragement of their own professional development.

This example illustrates how promoting from within helps Bankers Trust maintain the strong culture it has worked hard to build.

"Team members can see our commitment to their growth and success, which helps increase engagement and retention," Julie Eggleston, chief human resources officer at Bankers Trust, says. "Investing in professional development, which has been a key factor in allowing us to promote from within as much as we do, also helps to continue upskilling our workforce to support the evolving needs of our customers."

Of course, developing internal talent comes with challenges, but Bankers Trust meets them head on.

"Employees are busy and give so much to the organization and our customers," Eggleston says. "They often put their development last, which means taking time to invest in themselves constantly gets pushed to

something that can be done 'later.' "

To help team members prioritize their own development, the bank reminds managers to regularly discuss growth goals with employees. The company also offers training on how to create individual development plans and how managers can support them. Additionally, Bankers Trust has expanded its Learning Management System, which now includes more than 4,000 on-demand trainings, developed shorter micro-trainings such as the Manager Lunch and Learn series, and incorporated more virtual live trainings when possible.

To measure the success of these efforts, Bankers Trust conducts an employee engagement survey every two years, tracking progress in three major areas: employee engagement, equip factors (whether employees have the tools they need to do their jobs) and manager effectiveness.

"We are proud that Bankers Trust's engagement scores consistently put us in the top quartile of our industry and that we've seen increases to overall engagement in our last two surveys," Eggleston says.

From potential to purpose

Holmes Murphy has several ways to identify employees with potential to take the next step in their career journey, one of which stems from their relationship with their leaders.

"That is a vital relationship that helps foster the opportunities," Julie McAnally, vice president of growth and development, says. "In addition to leader advocacy, we've built structured programs that create space for recognition and development. Through these channels, employees can showcase their strengths, take initiative and be seen by a broader audience."

The company also offers a range of programs for employees, from interns to those on the path to becoming shareholders. The Brainery focuses on accelerating the growth of those new to their professional careers and to insurance, while Soul recognizes and develops high-potential talent by engaging them with a deeper understanding of the business, connecting them with senior leadership, encouraging cross-departmental relationships, providing tailored mentorship and helping them see the career opportunities available within Holmes Murphy.

Through Holmes Murphy University, a shareholder education program for nominated employees whose next step is becoming an owner, participants gain a deeper understanding of the company's privately held structure, shareholder expectations, strategic history, financial insights and the benefits of ownership.

Why go to such lengths to nurture internal talent at Holmes Murphy?

"Promoting from within reflects our mission statement, 'Caring for your unique potential is our soul purpose,' " McAnally says. "We believe that when



Julie Eggleston, chief human resources officer at Bankers Trust

employees see a clear path for growth, they're more engaged, more invested and more likely to stay. Internal mobility recognizes that their development matters and their contributions are recognized."

She adds that employees who grow within the organization already understand the culture, systems and clients. They bring knowledge and established relationships that accelerate their impact in new roles.

"Promoting from within builds trust," McAnally says. "It shows that we're not just filling seats — we're building careers."

One of Holmes Murphy's challenges in this area is striking the right balance between individualization and scalability.

"We're committed to creating meaningful, unique learning experiences that meet individuals where they are," McAnally says. "But as our organization grows, so does the complexity of delivering tailored development at scale. Every employee has different aspirations, learning styles, and career paths. Designing programs that honor that, while still being efficient and accessible, is a balancing act."

One way Holmes Murphy tracks the success of its internal promotion efforts is by monitoring the number of new hires who join through employee referrals. A high referral rate is a strong indicator that they're encouraging an engaged, caring environment — one where employees feel proud to recommend Holmes Murphy to those in their personal networks.

"Once employees are part of our organization, it's essential that we continue to invest in their unique potential," McAnally says. "We believe in creating diverse pathways for employees to engage in areas they're

passionate about. Success here is reflected in the number of employees actively involved in our communities such as employee resource groups, culture teams and philanthropy initiatives. These connections deepen a sense of belonging and ultimately contribute to long-term loyalty.”

Investing in people

At Merchants Bonding Company, identifying future leaders within the organization begins with meaningful conversations about performance. Through regular one-on-one meetings, career discussions and annual performance reviews, leaders assess both results and growth potential.

“We want our managers and our associates to have great relationships, and that drives the way we grow our potential,” says Michelle Cole, director of training and development. “It’s truly at the heart of what we do.”

In addition, company leaders look beyond business goals to identify future leaders who engage in Special Interest Groups, Employee Resource Groups and the broader community and professional organizations.

“We are looking for people with a deep desire for continuous improvement,” Cole says. “Our goal is to recognize not only those who consistently deliver excellence, but also those who demonstrate curiosity, integrity and a willingness to stretch beyond their

current role — qualities that align with our courageous culture.”

Merchants offers a variety of development opportunities designed to help associates grow in their current roles and prepare for future ones, including through their new learning management system, Paycom Learn, book discussions, an EC mentoring program in which executives serve as mentors, and specialized in-house training for associates at every level.

“We encourage associates and managers to have ongoing career conversations as part of our development approach, exploring aspirations and growth opportunities within the wide range of programs we offer,” Cole says. “We believe in developing potential through learning and involvement, ensuring every associate has a path to grow both personally and professionally.”

For Merchants, promoting from within reinforces its purpose: to be the most trusted team in surety.

“It reflects our belief that trust is built when we invest in our people, nurture their potential and recognize their contributions,” Cole says. “Internal growth not only supports business continuity and innovation but also strengthens engagement and loyalty.”

Merchants measures the success of these efforts through multiple lenses, including retention rates, promotion trends and associate feedback. The company



Julie McAnally, vice president of growth and development at Holmes Murphy

also participates in the national Great Place to Work survey each year to assess its culture and ensure associates feel supported in every way, a recognition they recently received for the fifth year in a row.

“Ultimately, success is seen when our associates feel valued, supported and inspired to do their best work — because that’s what drives our culture and our business forward,” Cole says. ■

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SALE DATE: 2025-06-13
SALE PRICE: \$240,000
SELLER: DKJK LLC
BUYER: PESHAWARIA, ANU
ACRES: 0.301
SQUARE FEET: 2,880

4107 KINGMAN BLVD., DES MOINES
SALE DATE: 2025-06-16
SALE PRICE: \$315,000
SELLER: LEUTZINGER, CARRIE A
BUYER: YOUNG, LAWRENCE M
ACRES: 0.549
SQUARE FEET: 2,988

335 S.E. ORALABOR ROAD, ANKENY
SALE DATE: 2025-06-17
SALE PRICE: \$2,115,750
SELLER: ERIC & CAROL ZIEL JOINT REVOCABLE TRUST
BUYER: MR ESTATE LLC
ACRES: 2.401
SQUARE FEET: 17,360

500 E. LIVINGSTON AVE., DES MOINES
SALE DATE: 2025-06-18
SALE PRICE: \$257,000
SELLER: NORTHWAY LIMITED
BUYER: NORTHWAY, CHARLES T
ACRES: 0.710
SQUARE FEET: 8,300

4825 N.W. 59TH AVE., JOHNSTON
SALE DATE: 2025-06-18
SALE PRICE: \$408,531
SELLER: NORTHWEST BEAVER DEVELOPMENT LLC
BUYER: KOHLES MECHANICAL INC
ACRES: 1.753
SQUARE FEET: 0



519 S. 18TH ST., WEST DES MOINES
SALE DATE: 2025-06-18
SALE PRICE: \$1,450,000
SELLER: COMPASS GROUP USA INC
BUYER: DYNAMIC MACHINING & MANUFACTURING LLC
ACRES: 1.800
SQUARE FEET: 14,250



1304 LOCUST ST., DES MOINES
SALE DATE: 2025-06-19
SALE PRICE: \$1,500,000
SELLER: GARLAND ENTERPRISES LLC
BUYER: THREE'S CAR GARAGE LLC
ACRES: 0.319
SQUARE FEET: 17,136

3081 N.W. PRAIRIE LANE, DES MOINES
SALE DATE: 2025-06-19
SALE PRICE: \$790,000
SELLER: WW BUILDING SYSTEMS LLC
BUYER: WILD WILLY'S REAL ESTATE LLC
ACRES: 1.441
SQUARE FEET: 6,000

NO ADDRESS LISTED
SALE DATE: 2025-06-19
SALE PRICE: \$75,840
SELLER: MAPLEWOOD FARM LC
BUYER: CITY OF URBANDALE
ACRES: 2.803
SQUARE FEET: 0

3330 UNIVERSITY AVE., DES MOINES
SALE DATE: 2025-06-19
SALE PRICE: \$729,999
SELLER: ALPHA DELTA PI INTERNATIONAL HOUSING INC
BUYER: KNOWLTON BAILEY PROPERTIES LLC
ACRES: 0.530
SQUARE FEET: 5,756



213 S.E. MAIN ST., GRIMES
SALE DATE: 2025-06-20
SALE PRICE: \$290,000
SELLER: 206 PROPERTIES LLC
BUYER: MARK A WISKUS LIVING TRUST
ACRES: 0.067
SQUARE FEET: 1,323

1680 E. 17TH ST., DES MOINES
SALE DATE: 2025-06-20
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BUYER: DMF PROPERTIES LLC
ACRES: 3.401

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BUYER: MIDAMERICAN ENERGY COMPANY
ACRES: 4.344
SQUARE FEET: 0

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SALE DATE: 2025-06-24
SALE PRICE: \$195,000
SELLER: DONOVAN INDUSTRIES LLC
BUYER: 100 SHERIDAN LLC
ACRES: 1.039
SQUARE FEET: 0

2030 S. ANKENY BLVD., ANKENY
SALE DATE: 2025-06-24
SALE PRICE: \$7,150,000
SELLER: CAMPUS VIEW STUDENT HOUSING LLC
BUYER: PRAIRIE POINTE LC
ACRES: 3.320
SQUARE FEET: 79,637



3400 E. EUCLID AVE., UNIT C, DES MOINES
SALE DATE: 2025-06-25
SALE PRICE: \$350,000
SELLER: IOWA LABORERS' EDUCATION & TRAINING TRUST FUND
BUYER: PROVIDENCE REFORMED CHURCH OF DES MOINES IOWA
ACRES: 0.470
SQUARE FEET: 3,468

113 MILL ST., S.W., MITCHELLVILLE
SALE DATE: 2025-06-25
SALE PRICE: \$370,000
SELLER: MCCONNELL, VICKI TYLER
BUYER: LAB INDUSTRIAL PROPERTIES LLC
ACRES: 0.313
SQUARE FEET: 3,240

2000 MEADOW CHASE LANE, DES MOINES
SALE DATE: 2025-06-26
SALE PRICE: \$2,437,500
SELLER: DSMIA LLLP
BUYER: HGIG LYN HOLDINGS LLC
ACRES: 5.687
SQUARE FEET: 43,496

8717 URBANDALE AVE., URBANDALE
SALE DATE: 2025-06-26
SALE PRICE: \$295,000
SELLER: PICKLE PROPERTIES DSM 24TH ST LLC
BUYER: SAWYER, GRAHAM
ACRES: 0.581
SQUARE FEET: 2,744

2109 FOREST AVE., DES MOINES
SALE DATE: 2025-06-26
SALE PRICE: \$70,000
SELLER: FOREST AVENUE PROPERTIES LC
BUYER: KIMA, DANIEL
ACRES: 0.071
SQUARE FEET: 1,272

1702 KEOSAUQUA WAY, DES MOINES
SALE DATE: 2025-06-26
SALE PRICE: \$311,000
SELLER: PAVEMENT PLUS LLC
BUYER: SOLID CONCRETE DESIGNS INC
ACRES: 0.631
SQUARE FEET: 5,548

3330 109TH ST., UNIT 214, URBANDALE
SALE DATE: 2025-06-26
SALE PRICE: \$365,000
SELLER: GREENSPON PROPERTY MANAGEMENT INC
BUYER: IRVING LLC
ACRES: 0.154
SQUARE FEET: 32,500

3360 109TH ST., UNIT 102, URBANDALE
SALE DATE: 2025-06-26
SALE PRICE: \$300,000
SELLER: GREENSPON PROPERTY MANAGEMENT INC
BUYER: BAUM, NORMA
ACRES: 0.131
SQUARE FEET: 21,000

4090 WESTOWN PARKWAY, SUITE E, WEST DES MOINES
SALE DATE: 2025-06-30
SALE PRICE: \$550,000
SELLER: LD&P LC
BUYER: B&C MOORE ENTERPRISES LLC
ACRES: 0.431
SQUARE FEET: 3,812

3205 KINGMAN BLVD., DES MOINES
SALE DATE: 2025-06-30
SALE PRICE: \$900,000
SELLER: DRAKEMAN LLC
BUYER: OKSE LLC
ACRES: 0.864
SQUARE FEET: 11,368

2014 E. OVID AVE., DES MOINES
SALE DATE: 2025-06-30
SALE PRICE: \$850,000
SELLER: CM REAL ESTATE LLC
BUYER: MANTODEA LLC
ACRES: 0.832
SQUARE FEET: 9,712

30 N.W. 47TH PLACE, DES MOINES
SALE DATE: 2025-06-30
SALE PRICE: \$130,000
SELLER: CORADO BODY SHOP & REPAIR LLC
BUYER: NAIG REAL ESTATE LLC
ACRES: 0.858
SQUARE FEET: 0



3000 WESTOWN PARKWAY, WEST DES MOINES
SALE DATE: 2025-06-30
SALE PRICE: \$1,125,000
SELLER: 3000 WESTOWN PARTNERS LP
BUYER: KIDWELL FAMILY II LLC
ACRES: 1.946
SQUARE FEET: 15,640

3120 DOUGLAS AVE., DES MOINES
SALE DATE: 2025-06-30
SALE PRICE: \$6,125,000
SELLER: VARECO 3120 DOUGLAS LLC
BUYER: THE BIRCH APARTMENT LLC
ACRES: 3.339
SQUARE FEET: 66,127

8401 DOUGLAS AVE., UNIT 2, URBANDALE
SALE DATE: 2025-07-01
SALE PRICE: \$475,000
SELLER: HATFIELD, ALMUT
BUYER: IOWA EQUITY EXCHANGE PRKG 3260 LLC
ACRES: 0.399
SQUARE FEET: 4,900

7423 S.E. NINTH AVE., PLEASANT HILL
SALE DATE: 2025-07-01
SALE PRICE: \$731,500
SELLER: REVEIZ FARMS INC
BUYER: MIDAMERICAN ENERGY COMPANY
ACRES: 14.630
SQUARE FEET: 0

NO ADDRESS LISTED
SALE DATE: 2025-07-07
SALE PRICE: \$125,000
SELLER: RAE'S LAND COMPANY LLC
BUYER: THE DIRT COMPANY LLC
ACRES: 10.675
SQUARE FEET: 0



525 E. NINTH ST., DES MOINES
SALE DATE: 2025-07-02
SALE PRICE: \$700,000
SELLER: ELIM CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP OF DES MOINES IOWA INC
BUYER: STARTS RIGHT HERE
ACRES: 0.618
SQUARE FEET: 18,676



2831 DOUGLAS AVE., DES MOINES
SALE DATE: 2025-07-03
SALE PRICE: \$205,000
SELLER: CHIN, RET
NUYER: LIN, FANG
ACRES: 0.327
SQUARE FEET: 902 ■

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Sexton named as USDA Rural Development State Director

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins announced Michael Sexton has been appointed by President Donald Trump to serve as the USDA Rural Development State Director for the state of Iowa. Director Sexton will implement President Trump’s America First agenda at USDA Rural Development, ensuring the needs of America’s farmers, ranchers, and producers remain a top priority.



Michael Sexton

Merit Management Group appoints Jose Alfredo Pando Burciaga as director of marketing

Merit Management Group announced the appointment of Jose Alfredo Pando Burciaga as director of marketing. In this role, Pando will oversee the development and execution of marketing strategies across Merit’s portfolio of companies, with a focus on building a strong internal team and driving measurable growth.

Pando was drawn to Merit by the company’s vision for growth and the alignment he felt with its leadership team. “I joined the Merit team because of the exciting opportunities and growth I saw ahead. I instantly felt a good connection when meeting with Mike and Ryan and felt aligned with their leadership,” said Pando. “What excites me most is the tight team we are building and the role I’ll get to play in shaping that. Merit is focused on all the right things, from how we service our portfolio companies to the systems and teams we are building. I am thrilled to be here.”

Williams named director of development and planned giving at DMU

Des Moines University Medicine and Health Sciences has promoted Dave Williams, M.B.A., to the role of director of development and planned giving. As the new director, Williams will lead DMU’s planned giving efforts, helping alumni and friends of the university explore charitable options that align with their personal and financial goals. These options include bequests, charitable trusts and other tax-advantaged giving strategies.



Dave Williams

De Jong joins DMU Clinic as certified athletic trainer

Des Moines University Clinic - Physical Therapy welcomes Brittney De Jong, M.A., LAT, ATC, as a certified athletic trainer. In June, the DMU Clinic announced its exclusive athletic training partnership with the Des Moines Buccaneers, a Tier I junior ice hockey team in the United State Hockey League (USHL). As part of that agreement, De Jong will also train exclusively with the Bucs throughout the 2025-2026 season. She says her goal is ultimately to help the Bucs win the league’s Clark Cup.



Brittney De Jong



Iowa Bankers Association announces 2025-26 leadership

The Iowa Bankers Association recently elected officers and directors to serve on its 2025-26 board of directors. These leaders assumed their roles during the IBA Annual Convention, held Sept. 21-23 in Des Moines. Officers for the IBA executive committee are as follows:

- Abram Tubbs, at Ohnward Bancshares in Maquoketa, will serve as chair of the board.
- Melissa Spurgin, at First Iowa State Bank in Albia, will serve as chair-elect.
- Shane Zimmerman, at Two Rivers Bank & Trust in Burlington, will serve as treasurer.
- Jim Plagge, at Bank Iowa in West Des Moines, will serve as past chair of the board.
- Adam Gregg, IBA president and CEO, will serve as secretary of the board.

Officers were nominated and approved by IBA member banks from across the state. The IBA executive committee leads the board of directors, which is responsible for setting policy and overseeing the general operation of the IBA.

Also serving on the 2025-26 IBA board of directors are:

- Seth McCaulley, at Community State Bank in Spencer, representing the northwest region.
- Ryan Sheridan, at Denver Savings Bank in Denver, representing the northeast region.
- Matt Morris, at Charter Bank in Johnston, representing the central region.
- Nathan Koch, at Heartland Bank & Trust Company in Coralville, representing the east region.
- Julie Lanning, at Northwest Bank in Creston, representing the southwest region.
- Steve Fopma, at Leighton State Bank in Pella, representing the southeast region.
- Heidi Parkhurst, at Bank of America in Davenport, serving as member-at-large.
- Chip Reeves, at MidWestOne Bank in Iowa City, serving as member-at-large.
- Emily Abbas, at Bankers Trust Company in Des Moines, serving as member-at-large. ■