



**Staci Ackerson, Veteran Small Business Owner  
Shankland Insurance**



Staci Ackerson, a United States Navy Desert Storm veteran, acquired Shankland Insurance in 2012. Staci wanted to expand her business and her husband, Stacy, a retired contractor, knew that Charles City had loads of untapped potential. With Stacy's vision of rehabilitating the historic Charles City Western Railroad depot in mind, Staci reached out to the NIACC John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center and Small Business Development Center and Community Revitalization of Charles City to help provide cash flows and options for acquiring capital.

Staci and her husband worked to put together a plan that would not only house Shankland Insurance, but also provided executive apartments for long-term transitional corporate hires. Along with that plan, they used several pre-existing concrete piers for footing for small rental storage units, transforming a derelict property into an advantage for downtown Charles City.

Working with the NIACC Pappajohn Center SBDC, Community Revitalization of Charles City, and the Main Street Program, Shankland Insurance was able to apply for and receive an IEDA Main Street Challenge Grant, the Charles City Community Grant, and funding from First Citizens Bank to rehabilitate the historic building. Mark Wicks of Community Revitalization of Charles City said, "Staci had a real vision. This was a serious nuisance property. They really cleaned it up and turned it into something Charles City could be proud of. She brought that building back to life while also expanding her business. It's a win-win for everybody in Charles City."

With the help of SBDC, Staci was able to not only acquire and expand Shankland Insurance, but she was also able to rehabilitate a historic downtown building that would have otherwise gone unnoticed and unrestored. Through her and her husband's efforts, they were able to breathe new life into Charles City's downtown historic district and fulfill their entrepreneurial spirit.

Staci was awarded the 2019 Neal Smith Entrepreneur of the Year Award by SBDC Iowa, in recognition of all her efforts.

In honor of National Veterans Small Business Week, we'd like to extend our thanks to Staci for her military service and her dedication to revitalizing an important part of Charles City's history. We salute you!