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Andy Ludeking takes helm as Cresco Bank & Trust Market President, pledges relationship-driven growth and community investment

RACHEL RILEY
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the area, Andy is uniquely positioned to successfully lead our Cresco team into the future."

Ludeking, who joined Decorah/Cresco Bank & Trust in 2011 after beginning his career at FMSB in Waukon/Decorah, has served as Ag & Business Banker, Chief Credit Officer and most recently Chief Lending Officer. He will continue to oversee the organization's lending function while leading the Cresco market.

In an interview, Ludeking said the opportunity to serve in his hometown motivated him to pursue the role. "Getting the opportunity to lead a team in the community where you grew up, with the ultimate goal of making a difference is not only humbling, but also exciting. To me, it's about helping others - serving our customers, seeing the team grow and thrive, and the same goes for our community."

When asked about his leadership approach, he described it as being grounded in fundamentals. "Listening, leadership, and being open-minded come to mind. Every business, farm, and customer is different. Taking the things I've learned and figuring out how to apply them in different situations is important; that combined with communication and transparency typically leads to positive outcomes for all."

Ludeking said the bank's core identity will remain steady. "Our values, our culture and long-term vision for the bank will remain the



Andy Ludeking, newly appointed Cresco Market President of Cresco Bank & Trust follows his values both in and out of work - putting people and community first. Pictured here in front of the Bank Sign in Cresco.

same. Our team will care about each other, the community, and the work we do." He added that his long-term goal is clear: "Our goal is for Decorah/Cresco Bank to remain an independent, locally owned bank that plays a vital role in the communities in which we serve."

Asked about the bank's greatest strength and most urgent challenge, Ludeking was clear: "Greatest strength - our team and culture" and "Urgent challenge - cybersecurity & fraud - The bank must continue to evolve to ensure we keep data safe and consumers

informed about potential risks."

For Ludeking's new position early strategic priorities will center on growth and education. "We're committed to driving the growth of the bank. Growth not only strengthens our ability to serve more clients but also enables us to reinvest in the communities we're proud to be part of - whether that's through local initiatives, lending programs, or other impactful investments." He added: "Second, education is a cor-

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From Crestwood to the cutting edge: Cresco native Brooke Dexheimer maps how the brain learns to move



Brooke (Fosaaen) Dexheimer, Cresco Native is changing the perspective on how the brain works with her research.

Cited Information, photo and Quotes provided within article by:
NEWMAN, KYRA
"OT researcher earns pilot grant to uncover how the brain adapts movement"
Virginia Commonwealth University Articles Website

Local Article Written By:
RACHEL RILEY
TPD Editor

CRESCO/RICHMOND, VA
On a breezy day in Howard County, a sudden gust can push you off balance—and your brain fixes it in a blink. For Cresco native Brooke Dexheimer, Ph.D., OTD, OTR/L—a 2012 Crestwood High School graduate and the daughter of Stan and Bach Fosaaen—that simple, everyday correction sparked a career built around one question: How do we learn to move?

Dexheimer, a cognitive neuroscientist and professor at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), has launched a new project that traces those split-second adjustments to their source in the brain. Backed by a \$75,000 pilot grant from the VCU Parkinson's and Movement Disorders Center, her team is uniting occupational therapy, neurosurgery, and engineering in a first-of-its-kind collaboration. "Motor adaptation is something we do constantly—when a gust hits, when someone bumps your arm, when the ground tilts," Dexheimer said. "We want to know which brain regions make that possible, and what happens when that system is disrupted."

Her study focuses on essential tremor, the world's most common movement disorder. While tremor is the hallmark symptom, Dexheimer suspects the condition can also impair the brain's real-time "recalibration" system—making everyday fine-motor tasks harder for reasons that shaking alone can't explain.

To probe that idea, Dexheimer is collaborating with VCU biomedical engineer Dean Krusienski, Ph.D., and neurosurgeon Kathryn Holloway, M.D., leveraging a rare research window during deep brain stimulation (DBS) surgery for severe tremor. DBS clinically places tiny electrodes deep in the brain to reduce tremor—often by up to 80%—and can also record

electrical activity in regions unreachable by standard scans.

"We can observe real-time signals from the thalamus while someone is actively adapting their movement," Dexheimer said. "That's something surface electrodes can't capture."

Study participants will complete a computer-based motor adaptation task—"almost like an optical illusion," she said—while the implanted device records brain activity. Comparing those brainwave patterns could reveal the electrophysiological "signatures" that distinguish healthy adaptation from the impaired adaptation seen in essential tremor. If successful, the findings could help clinicians detect adaptation deficits earlier, tailor rehabilitation to each person's neural profile, or guide neurosurgeons as they fine-tune DBS settings.

The one-year pilot will lay groundwork for larger, federally funded trials and builds on Dexheimer's growing portfolio. She is part of a national NIH-funded collaboration, totaling more than \$2 million, that examines motor learning and brain stimulation across neurological diseases. Through her Novel Environments for Reducing Disability & Dysfunction (NERDD) Lab, she aims to map the brain's movement network—from the basal ganglia to the cerebellum to the thalamus—and understand how disruptions change daily life.

For Cresco, the work feels close to home. Locals may remember Dexheimer the halls of Crestwood High School. After graduating from Crestwood in 2012, she earned a bachelor's degree in Movement & Exercise Science at the University of Northern Iowa (2014), a Doctorate in Occupational Therapy at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis (2019), and a Ph.D. in Kinesiology at Penn State (2022).

That hometown foundation still guides her approach. Occupational therapy centers the whole person—how body, brain, and environment shape function—while neurosurgery opens a window to the brain's circuitry and engineering decipher complex signals. Together, Dexheimer said, the partnership moves discoveries from the operating room to the clinic and back again.

"If we can pinpoint how essential tremor affects motor adaptation—and the brain signals involved—we can detect problems earlier and build better rehab strategies to help people stay independent in daily activities," she said.

For Cresco, Howard County residents, and especially her parents Stan and Bach Fosaaen still of Cresco; it's a point of pride: a Crestwood grad turned national research leader, still inspired by a windy walk down Elm Street—and by a hometown that helped set her stride.

The Boy from Howard County Who Fed the World A Birthday Remembrance - Norman Borlaug



In 2007, Dr. Norman E. Borlaug, second from left, is presented the Congressional Gold Medal in the Capitol Rotunda in Washington, on Tuesday, July 17, 2007, by Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, from left, Pres. George W. Bush and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid. In 1970, Dr. Borlaug received the Nobel Prize, the only person working in agriculture to ever be so honored, for developing a strand of wheat that could exponentially increase yields while actively preventing disease.

RACHEL RILEY
TPD Editor

From Iowa farm kid to "Father of the Green Revolution," Norman E. Borlaug helped change how the world grows its food—and how many people get to eat. The quiet plant pathologist from Howard County won the 1970 Nobel Peace Prize for boosting wheat yields with sturdier, disease resistant varieties and for pushing, hard, to get better seed and know how into farmers' hands across the world; all starting here in Howard County.

Borlaug was born March 25, 1914, on a small farm near Cresco to Norwegian American parents. He came of age in an era of tough chores and tougher harvests, an experience that shaped his life's work.

Norm's schooling began in a one-room schoolhouse. After he finished eighth grade, his family bought their first tractor, so he wasn't needed on the farm as much. Encouraged by his cousin—a teacher who told his parents there was something special about him—he went to Cresco to continue his

education. He stayed in Cresco during the week, returned home on weekends to help on the farm, and eventually graduated from Cresco High School.

After High School he studied forestry and then plant pathology and genetics at the University of Minnesota, he earned his Ph.D. in 1942. A wartime stint in industry followed. In 1944, he joined a Rockefeller Foundation effort to lift Mexico's wheat production—a turn that would alter both his career and global food security.

In the dusty plots of Sonora and near Toluca, Borlaug and his colleagues tackled two problems that kept yields low: relentless rust diseases and tall wheat that collapsed when fed more fertilizer. He sped breeding with a "shuttle" system, growing two generations a year in different climates so selections wouldn't be tied to day length. By bringing in semi dwarf genes and layering multiple rust resistances, he produced short, tough plants that could take irrigation and fertilizer without falling over—and that also stood up to disease.

The payoff came quickly. By the mid 1950s, Mexico had become self sufficient in wheat. A decade later, with drought, pests and booming populations pushing India and Pakistan toward disaster, Borlaug's team helped move seed, training and practical agronomy to South Asia. Working with local scientists and policymakers—including M.S. Swaminathan and agriculture minister C. Subramaniam—farmers adopted the new semi dwarf wheats alongside fertilizer, irrigation and improved management. Yields jumped. By the late 1960s, both nations were harvesting record crops. Time magazine coined "Green Revolution," and Borlaug—happiest in a field, not on a stage—became its reluctant face.

He didn't stop at wheat. Borlaug helped build the institutions that would keep progress going, notably the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT) in Mexico, which grew into a global hub for cereal research and the open exchange of germplasm. In 1986 he created the World Food Prize to celebrate work that improves the quality, quantity or availability of food—a bid to keep the spotlight on science driven answers to hunger.

Later, he turned to places still left behind. Worried that much of sub Saharan Africa hadn't benefited from improved seed and agronomy, he joined Japanese philanthropist Ryoichi Sasakawa and former U.S. President Jimmy Carter to launch Sasakawa Global 2000, helping farmers gain access to better varieties, fertilizer and training. Well into his 90s, he was advising efforts against Ug99, a fast evolving and highly virulent stem rust first identified in East Africa. He also argued forcefully for biotechnology, saying modern

BORLAUG'S BIRTHDAY - PAGE 5

Goings on!

SUNDAYS:

-BINGO AT THE CRESCO WILDLIFE CLUB. NOON

MONDAYS:

-AA MEETING, VFW HALL CRESCO 5PM
-BINGO AT FAMILY FUN & FITNESS, LIME SPRINGS 6:30PM

TUESDAYS:

-EUCHRE AT PUB NO. 7 TOURNAMENT STARTS AT 6:30
-500 AT KESSEL LODGE, 1PM

WEDNESDAYS:

-EUCHRE AT KESSEL LODGE, 1PM
-TRIVIA NIGHT AT PUB NO. 7, 6PM

3/25: Happy Birthday Norman Borlaug!

3/28: Turkey River Pheasants Forever Banquet, Expo Center.

3/29: Evans Senior Living Community Easter Egg Hunt! Ages 0-12, 2pm

4/01: Faith & Four Letter Words - Cresco Theatre 6pm.

4/02: The Easter Bunny visits Kessel Kids! 4-6pm.

4/03: GOOD FRIDAY

4/04: Accura Easter Egg Hunt 1:30pm

4/05: HAPPY EASTER!

4/07: Drive-thru Pantry, Cresco Fairgrounds 4:30pm

4/10: Larry Reis presents at the Cresco Library, 10am.

Looking Ahead!

5/12: Howard County Business & Tourism Banquet @ 5:30 pm.

6/18-6/20: Cresco's Spring City-Wide Rummage Sales.

6/24-6/28: Mighty Howard County Fair!

7/11: 20th Annual Elma Trail Days. Run/Walk

8/7-8/9: Sweet Corn Days - Lime Springs.

8/14-8/16: Czech Days - Protivin.

8/21-8/23: Norman Borlaug Harvest Fest & All School Reunion.

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