

Biography of Chad C. Airhart

Early History

Chad Airhart is a sixth generation and lifelong Iowan. He was born of a 15 year-old mother and 18 year-old father. Airhart comes from a “hard luck”, “wrong side of the tracks” background. His father was convicted of conspiracy to deliver cocaine during Chad’s teenage years. Chad overcame adversity and attended Grand View College in Des Moines for Art Education. Later in life, Chad would return to school to study American History and Political Science.



Professional History

Airhart, along with Jason McArtor, co-owned a well recognized, published, and up and coming graphic design and marketing firm, McArtor Design. After September 11, 2001, Airhart decided to change his career and entered the public arena. In 2003, he went to work for Victory '04, and managed Iowa’s largest county, Polk County along with 22 Counties in SW Iowa for the Bush/Cheney campaign. In 2004, Iowa was carried by the Republican nominee for President for the first time in 20 years.

Airhart then went to work for the United States Congress, where he ran a Congressional Office for Congressman Steve King (IA-5), in Creston, Iowa. There, Airhart worked with constituents all throughout Iowa’s largest Congressional District. In the summer of 2006, Airhart left his position with Congress and went to work for Governor Mitt Romney’s Commonwealth PAC. In January 2007, when Governor Romney announced his Presidential campaign, Airhart joined the campaign’s senior staff as the Iowa Coalition Director.

In the summer of 2007, in an effort to spend more time with his family & friends, Airhart accepted a position as the Director of the Waukee Area Chamber of Commerce. In his first year on the job, the Chamber’s membership increased by nearly 75%; and during his 3½ year tenure he nearly doubled the size of the Chamber.

In 2011 Airhart went back into business with Jason McArtor, forming Canvas Strategies to provide consulting, digital and print materials to political campaigns and causes.

Civic Life



In 2004 Airhart formed the Airhart Leadership Foundation, a non-profit organization that provided assistance to children that had a parent in prison. This organization came about because of Airhart’s own reflections of growing up with a father in prison, and a mother that could not make ends meet. The Airhart Leadership Foundation provided food, gifts, mentoring and counsel to families that found themselves in a similar situation to that of which Airhart was in during his teenage years. In 2010 Airhart closed the foundation to focus on other efforts in the community.

In January 2007, Airhart was appointed to serve on the Planning & Zoning Commission for the City of Waukee. In 2010 he was elected to serve as Vice-Chairman of the Commission. In 2009, Airhart was named to the Des Moines Business Record’s Forty under 40.

In November of 2010 Dallas County voters overwhelmingly supported Airhart, defeating a 22-year incumbent by 15%. Airhart is currently in his first term as Recorder, and when elected was one of the youngest Recorder’s in the history of the State of Iowa. Three years into his first term, Airhart has returned approximately \$950,000 in a surplus to the County general fund and made 40 years of records available electronically, more than any other county in Iowa.

Airhart is a member of Simpson United Methodist Church, serves as the President of the Waukee Leadership Institute and is a Board Member for West Bank’s Central Iowa Community Board. Chad recently concluded serving on the United Way of Central Iowa’s Education Cabinet, is an active member of the Waukee Area Chamber of Commerce where he is a former board of director. Months into his first term as Recorder, he was elected Chairman of the Iowa Republican County Officials Association and is currently in his second term as Chairman, leading an organization of 530 County elected officials.

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