

In the Q: Accomplishments Throughout the First Year



Phil Wasta
MedQuarter
Executive Director

My first year as executive director of the MedQuarter. It sort of sounds like, 'what I did on my summer vacation,' doesn't it?

The last twelve months seem to have passed at an alarmingly fast pace.

I read an article years ago that suggested that the perception of time passing

more quickly is correlated to my age, because each passing year represents a smaller percentage of my life experience, therefore, time seems to pass more quickly. I'm not sure that makes me feel better. Regardless of the pace, the last twelve months have been very productive.

The MedQuarter Regional Medical District, and its existence as a SSMID District in Cedar Rapids, is becoming more evident in more ways to more people. One of my main goals when I started as executive director was to actively increase the public's awareness of **where** the MedQuarter is; **what** the MedQuarter is; and most importantly – **why** the MedQuarter is important to Cedar Rapids and the Creative Corridor. Over the last several months I have been encouraged to read articles and listen to other communications referencing the 'MedQuarter' or the 'Medical District' conversationally. This is a sign that awareness is building. Earning that awareness has been

an interesting journey. I have learned that we touch different audiences in different ways to make an impression. Below are just a few ways we've promoted the MedQuarter in the past year:

- Printed our first MedQuarter brochure/map highlighting all businesses in the District and distributed them to businesses throughout the District
- Produced our first visitors video showing viewers everything that the District has to offer and posted it on the MedQuarter website
- Launched a Façade Improvement Program in partnership with the City of Cedar Rapids
- Conducted a bike tour of the District to introduce myself to business owners
- Handed out 1,000 MedQuarter cookies at the 'Especially for You' race
- Hosted the 'Five Trees for the Season' kickoff tree lighting at the Fourth Avenue Pocket Park
- Engaged with the Creative Corridor Regional Vision Strategy initiative as a stakeholder
- Hosted a District Gathering for all land owners and business owners to learn about our improvement initiatives and share their thoughts for priorities

- Sponsored and hosted an **Overalls All Over** statue at the Fourth Avenue Pocket Park
- Implemented Phase II of our MedQuarter banners throughout the District which highlight amenities available within the MedQuarter
- Sponsored an Innovation Summit Series event at the Iowa Startup Accelerator
- Hosted a group of volunteers to improve the District during the United Way's 'Day of Caring'
- Made dozens of presentations to hundreds of people at various civic organizations and other venues to make them aware of what is happening in the MedQuarter Regional Medical District

None of this could have been accomplished without the efforts of the Medical SSMID Commission members and committee members. Each volunteers their time and talents to take an active role in guiding the activities of the District. I am extremely grateful for their continued commitment, support and engagement.

As I look forward to the coming year, I am confident that time will still seem to pass quickly. I am also confident that the list of accomplishments will grow. I look forward to reporting those accomplishments to you next year. Now, about my summer vacation...