

Chris Schwartz moved to the Cedar Valley at the age of 18 to attend the University of Northern Iowa as a music education and jazz studies major with the upright and electric bass as his principle instrument. However, following the 2000 election debacle Chris felt that the country had become dangerously complacent and nothing would change unless different types of people went into politics.

His focus quickly changed to politics and community organizing, Chris started and served in the leadership of several progressive advocacy organizations while a student at UNI. In 2006 Schwartz was hired by Americans for Democratic Action (ADA) to be their Iowa organizer, and later their state director, a role he continues in today. ADA the nation's oldest progressive advocacy organization has allowed Schwartz to continue his work on several social, economic, and environmental causes.

Schwartz was first elected to the Black Hawk County Board of Supervisors in 2016, becoming the first out LGBTQ elected official to hold office in North East Iowa. Schwartz was re-elected to a second term in 2020. In his time in office Schwartz has led several victories on workers rights, renewable energy, open government, and equality.

Schwartz serves on the board of directors of a number of local, and state-wide non-profits including Cedar Valley Pridefest, The North East Iowa Food Bank, The Middle Cedar River Watershed Management Authority, The Upper Cedar River Watershed Management Authority, The Black Hawk Creek Soil and Watershed Coalition, Operation Threshold, The Waterloo Warming Shelter, The Friends of Iowa CASA, The Iowa Citizen Action Network, The Iowa Interfaith Alliance, The Black Hawk County Alternative Energy Committee, The Cedar Valley CRUSH Coalition on Opioids, and the Northland Area (hazmat) Response Group. Schwartz is also the current President of the National Association of LGBTQ Leaders and Allies.