



# Technology that changed the world

Elkhart northbound



Polk County  
I-35 northbound at milepost 100  
Emphasis: Technology that changed  
the world

Artist: David Dahlquist  
Completed: Feb. 27, 2015

- Traveling on Interstate 35 between Des Moines and Ames is one of the most important technology corridors in the world.
- In the 1930s, the first digital electronic computer was invented by John Vincent Atanasoff, professor of physics, and Clifford Berry, his graduate student, at Iowa State College, which is now Iowa State University.
- Atanasoff realized that a combination of the binary number system and electronic switches, together with an array of capacitors on a moving drum, could perform tedious mathematical calculations. The idea worked and the whole world changed. Today, almost every human endeavor has been touched and advanced by this invention.
- This Iowa Department of Transportation rest area facility celebrates this unique connection to ISU and recognizes and honors this milestone in the history of Iowa and the world.



"Then he went back and built the  
machine. It worked.  
The whole world changed."

John Vincent Atanasoff

Clifford E. Berry