



Blank Children's Hospital

UnityPoint Health

1200 Pleasant Street
Des Moines, IA 50309
(515) 241-5437

A service of Iowa Methodist Medical Center

May 21, 2014

The Selection Committee for
the Women of Influence Award

RE: Melissa Clarke-Wharff

Dear Committee,

It is my pleasure to write this letter of reference for Melissa Clarke-Wharff for this year's Women of Influence Award. I currently serve as the President of Blank Children's Hospital and have known Melissa from both work and personally for over 10 years.

Melissa has impacted numerous community organizations throughout her career both professionally and through her volunteer efforts. The impact that she has provided at the hospital over the years in her role in Food and Nutrition in Integrated Service has been enumerable. She has provided an impact on our patient satisfaction results, on our culture of quality and also on staff retention through her leadership in a significant fashion. Many leaders have grown underneath her tutelage during her time at UnityPoint Health.

Melissa's community outreach extends broadly. She has volunteered to help provide materials for local auctions at churches and schools while also supporting community organizations like the March of Dimes, JDRF, Cancer Connection and numerous others, with her personal volunteer time and talent on those boards and at those special events.

Finally, her most recent endeavor with Courage League Sports is nothing short of remarkable. Her vision for developing something that does not exist anywhere else in the state of Iowa for the children and their families that need that kind of outlet is truly benefiting our community in a way that is immeasurable. She is a true community partner in every sense of the word reaching out to numerous agencies and organizations and building what is the most unique service I've seen in this community in the past decade. Another example for outreach was her willingness to come and promote this new service at Blank Children's Hospital just last Fall. While spending time all day at the hospital she also helped patients find their way, answer questions regarding services and was a true ambassador for not only Courage League Sports but also for healthcare in general.

I would recommend without hesitation Melissa Clarke-Wharff to Women of Influence for this year. You will find no better candidate who truly embodies what this award entails. If you have any questions about this recommendation or anything further about Melissa, do not hesitate to call me.

Very Truly Yours,

David Stark, FACHE
President/COO