

May 10, 2015

The Selection Committee for

Woman Business Owners of the Year

**RE: Melissa Clarke-Wharff**

Dear Committee,

It is my pleasure to write this letter of recommendation for Melissa Clarke-Wharff for this year’s Woman Business Owners of the Year recognition. I currently serve as the President of Blank Children’s Hospital and have known Melissa from both work and personally for more than 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 our hospital over the years in her role in Food and Nutrition has been enumerable, including patient satisfaction, culture of quality, and leadership not only in her department but across our organization.

Melissa’s community outreach extends broadly. She has volunteered to help provide materials for local auctions at churches and schools while also supporting community organization like March of Dimes, JDRF, and Cancer Connection to name a few.

Today, her most recent endeavor founding 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 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 as she reaches out to community agencies and organizations – building what is the most unique service I’ve seen in this community in the past decade. It is amazing to think that Courage League Sports will be two years old in November. In its first year and a half, this facility has made a last impacting on children and families and numerous adults with mental and physical disabilities. It truly is amazing and inspiring.

I highly recommend Melissa Clarke-Wharff for the Woman Business Owners of the Year recognition. You will find no better candidate who embodies what this award entails. If you have any questions about this recommendation or would like any further information about Melissa, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

David Stark, FACHE

President/COO

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