

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF IOWA

Chambers of
CELESTE F. BREMER
Chief U.S. Magistrate Judge

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435 U.S. Courthouse
123 East Walnut Street
Des Moines, Iowa 50309-2036

May 26, 2015

Business Record: Women of Influence Award
The Depot at 4th, 100 4th Street
Des Moines, Iowa 50309

Re: Deborah Tharnish

Dear Award Committee:

Please accept my recommendation of attorney Deb Tharnish for the Business Record Women of Influence Award. I have known Deb for over 30 years, both in her capacity as an attorney representing litigants in this Court, and through her myriad of community service roles. She is thorough and ethical in her cases, and has served on Court practice committees. I have seen her work on the Judicial Nominating Commission; she has encouraged diversity in applicants, and helped the Commission give consideration to a wide variety of skills needed to serve on the bench, rather than just narrowly viewing litigation experience as the primary criteria for selection.

Deb's willingness to step up and fill leadership roles in the Iowa State Alumni Association, Big Brothers and Big Sisters, and the Des Moines Public Library Foundation are just a few examples of her willingness to spend time and talents improving the quality of life for Iowans. In addition to community boards, Deb has dedicated time and treasure to support Iowa Legal Aid, which provides direct services to low-income Iowans, and allows courts to operate more efficiently by providing legal services. Deb can always be counted on to assist wherever the need is greatest, helping organizations move forward to complete their missions.

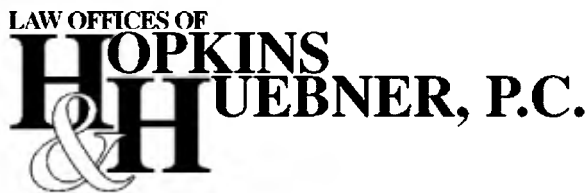
In addition to "big picture" thinking, Deb reaches out to younger lawyers, mentoring not only in her firm, but through the Polk County Women Attorneys and Iowa Organization of Women Attorneys, as an active and founding member for over 30 years. The number of women partners in law firms is not high (either as a percentage of partners, or just in raw numbers). It is important for younger women practitioners to see that you can have an active family life, community life, work life, and be a balanced individual, all within the structure of a law firm. She helped her firm craft policies that enable women to succeed in private practice.

Deb concentrates on business and employment litigation, and is a recognized expert, frequently speaking at continuing legal education programs for lawyers and businesses. She serves on Iowa State Bar Association Committees and Sections, networking, and sharing her depth of experience. Deb has demonstrated success and achievement personally and professionally, has invested time and talent in her community, and in mentoring young lawyers. She has blazed a trail for women to follow in the practice of law, and continues to serve as a role model for young practitioners, demonstrating how to achieve work-life balance, along with community service.

Very truly yours,



Celeste F. Bremer
Chief U.S. Magistrate Judge



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May 21, 2015

Re: Deborah Tharnish nomination
Women of Influence

To the Selection Committee:

I write in enthusiastic support of Deb Tharnish's nomination as a Woman of Influence.

When Deb entered the legal profession, she was an anomaly. There were few practicing female lawyers in any role and very, very few in litigation with large, well-respected law firms in Iowa. As a result, she consciously or unconsciously carried the banner for many young women with aspirations but few role models. And she made us all look good!

Deb is widely recognized for her professional competence and the gracious manner in which she vociferously advocates for her clients. She is both knowledgeable about the current state of the law and creative in its application to the unique needs of her clients. While I am aware of Deb's "paper credentials" (e.g., AV-rated lawyer, Iowa Super Lawyers, Best Lawyers in America), they are an inadequate reflection of the contributions she has made and the skills she displays.

Deb is widely and deservedly appreciated for her approach to legal issues that permits the efficient resolution of disputes. She is reliable; her integrity is unquestioned. The manner in which she has chosen to conduct her professional life is a positive model for all lawyers, male and female, young and "more experienced", in litigation and in other fields of expertise. Her career has blended previously bright divisions based on gender and, in the process, melted other equally unfortunate separations based on criteria such as race and ethnicity.

Because Deb was one of the first female lawyers in a large law firm in Iowa, her progress was visible if not often openly discussed. Many who have never met Deb have benefited from her success and learned from the gracious manner in which she has achieved so much.

But Deb's contributions don't stop there. She has consistently volunteered her time and talent to the benefit of our entire community. From her support for the colleges she attended to the hours and hours she donated on behalf of the Des Moines Public Library Foundation, Hawthorn Hill and Big Brothers/Big Sisters, our community has benefited greatly.

Perhaps one of the heaviest banners Deb has picked up is her work for Iowa Legal Aid. In a time of great economic challenge, those with the greatest needs are often at the greatest risk. And that is when Deb is at her best! She has been and will continue to be a powerful advocate for legal assistance to all in our community.

Given her extraordinary professional accomplishments and generous gifts of time and talent to our community for many years, for those who personally know her and those who don't, Deb Tharnish is a positive and powerful influence and I look forward to the public recognition of her achievements.

Sincerely,

HOPKINS & HUEBNER, P.C.

Lorraine J. May

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