

June 4, 2015

2015 Women of Influence Awards
Meredith Emerging Business Woman of the Year
Nomination: *Donna Miller*

To Whom It May Concern:

I am honored to nominate ***Donna Miller*** for the Meredith Emerging Business Woman of the Year Award. I have known Donna since we participated in the same Greater Des Moines Leadership Institute class in 2001-2002. Donna and I have also worked closely as board members for the AIDS Project of Central Iowa.

Donna is an excellent attorney and is respected in Des Moines and statewide for her workers' compensation practice. She has taken an active role in the legal community by participating in a number of legal associations and organizations, most recently being named to the Polk County Bar Association Board and the Supreme Court Grievance Committee. Her selection by the Iowa Supreme Court to the Grievance Committee, which oversees the application of ethical rules for all attorneys, demonstrates her high ethical standards.

As a "seasoned" female partner at her firm, she has served as mentor to a number of young attorneys over the years.

Knowing of her past community involvement, I asked Donna to serve with me on the board for the AIDS Project of Central Iowa. We worked two years on the board together, and then Donna served another 10 years, many as Board President, overseeing the hiring of two executive directors, and several years later assisting them with their merger with Primary Health Care. In the years I have known her, Donna has served in executive positions on a number of boards, including Goodwill of Central Iowa, and she has been asked to serve on the national board for Goodwill International for nine years.

Her community involvement also involves direct interaction with those in need. She has helped over 20 individuals and children with domestic issues the Volunteer Lawyers Project in the last two years, she has read to elementary school children with the Everybody Wins program, and counsels women at the Beacon of Life house on financial issues every week.

Although Donna continues to contribute daily to our community and her workplace, there is one quality about Donna that I admire above all- she participates out of a sincere and honest belief that being involved is a responsibility we have as humans. Donna is an unsung hero. She contributes not for recognition or for a resume or to see her name in print. She contributes both financially and of her time because it is the ***right*** thing to do. Donna stands out as she is not afraid to 'enter the danger'. The 'danger' of standing up and not rubber stamping a budget or an initiative in order to please a group. Donna forms opinions, makes recommendations and takes actions based upon extensive research and with the intent of doing what's in the best interest of the organization she is serving at the time. And, like so few out there- she is willing to put in the work to implement those initiatives.

Over the years, I have developed not only a friendship with Donna but an immense amount of respect for a woman who has contributed so much to this community and to those young men and women she provides guidance and leadership to within her profession.

It is my deepest desire for Donna to be recognized for her contributions in a public fashion and I hope you strongly consider her for the recipient of the Meredith Emerging Business Woman of the Year.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Heidi Wessels", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Heidi Wessels

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