



May 26, 2016

FOODBANK
OF IOWA

To the Women of Influence Selection Committee:

Communicating with purpose, strength and clarity has been the life's work of Brooklyn NY native Eileen Wixted. Of course she would grow up and build a very successful public relations firm. And so it is my great honor to nominate Eileen for the Women of Influence Business Owner of the Year Award.

This Clive Iowa resident is a nationally recognized strategic communications and crisis management veteran with core competencies in the financial services, nuclear energy, agribusiness, and health care industries. As a strategist and communication trainer, she has helped clients navigate brand damaging issues as well as coached them to face hostile media interviews and government investigations. Companies and organizations across the country turn to Eileen for expert communication counsel that drives business goals as they face sensitive issues.

An experienced executive coach, Eileen prepares clients for investor conferences, shareholder meetings, quarterly earnings conferences and congressional testimony. She has prepped executives for interviews with national and international news outlets, including TODAY, MSNBC, Squawk Box, Good Morning America, The Wall Street Journal, Forbes and many others.

I was privileged to have been coached by Eileen and, although those sessions were grueling and sometimes embarrassingly painful, she made me a better presenter, speaker, and negotiator and was instrumental to my success in building positions of influence with key stakeholders. Eileen doesn't coddle and she doesn't sugar coat. When I hear "no pain, no gain" I think of two people: my high school long distance track coach and Eileen Wixted. Conversely, when I hear "cool as a cucumber", Eileen also comes to mind.

Eileen is a graduate of Michigan State University with a degree in mass communications. She began her career as a broadcast journalist earning the coveted Emmy Award. In 1989, Eileen was the co-founder of Wixted Pope, eventually becoming Wixted Pope Nora Thompson, a firm which she operated with her partners until 2006. In 2013, the firm rebranded as Wixted & Company, with Eileen solely at the helm. Wixted & Company employs a team of 10 full time employees and a variety of freelance professionals to meet the many public relations needs of a varied clientele in a fast paced environment.

In her spare time, Eileen is an advisor for Dowling on communications matters and has supported a number of area schools in the past. She is a popular speaker for local organizations and donates numerous hours helping adults and youth prepare for critical life-changing interviews, such as high school seniors preparing for college scholarship interviews. Eileen also volunteers her time advising the St. Francis a mock trial team.

Eileen has helped not only me be a better person and a more solid professional, but countless others, all the while mentoring a young team of employees to serve the future needs of our community. Thank you for considering Eileen Wixted for this important honor.

Sincerely,
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Michelle Book, CEO Food Bank of Iowa

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