May 10, 2016

To the Selection Committee for Women of Influence Award:

It is a pleasure to nominate Lisa Shimkat for the prestigious Women of Influence award. Lisa has had a significant impact on the state economy through her leadership roles with the Iowa Small Business Development Centers, first as a regional director and now as state director. Additionally, she has provided outstanding service to her community. Lisa is a woman of principle and integrity who serves as a great role model for all professionals.

The Iowa Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) is a statewide organization comprised of 15 regional centers that provide no fee, confidential, customized business consulting to all 99 counties in the state. Last year the SBDC network served 3,141 clients, helped 322 new businesses get started, and assisted in the creation of 1,585 jobs. Lisa became state director of SBDC about two years ago. She has brought new energy and focus to the organization through her personal passion for serving the small business community, by forming new partnerships and joint initiatives with other economic development organizations in the state, by more directly and substantively engaging the regional center host institutions, and by actively promoting the accomplishments and successes of both clients and the SBDC team. Lisa works tirelessly to increase the efficiency, impact, and profile of SBDC, and as a result the organization’s performance metrics have increased 10-15% since she became state director.

Prior to her appointment as state director, Lisa served as regional director for the Fort Dodge center for approximately nine years. Her center was consistently ranked as one of the top performing centers in the statewide network, and Lisa developed a reputation within her region and within SBDC as a person who gets things done and does it the right way. Her efforts earned the Fort Dodge center the 2014 Small Business Development Center Excellence and Innovation Award from the U.S. Small Business Administration.

Lisa’s passion and commitment for helping others extends beyond her professional life. She has been extremely active in her home community of Fort Dodge having served on the school board, the board of the local YWCA, and various committees for the Greater Fort Dodge Growth Alliance. Lisa also chaired the Fort Dodge Human Rights Commission, and she was a founding member of the Young Professionals Group.

We feel very fortunate to have Lisa as a colleague and leader of the Iowa Small Business Development Centers. She is thoughtful, strategic, collegial, trustworthy, and dependable. Lisa also has a very engaging and pleasant personality, and an infectious laugh. We strongly recommend her as a most deserving candidate for the Women of Influence award.

Thank you for considering this nomination.

Sincerely,



Michael R. Crum

Vice President for Economic Development and Business Engagement

David P. Spalding

Raisbeck Endowed Dean  
Iowa State University College of Business