May 15, 2016

To the Business Record Women of Influence Award Selection Committee,

In September of 2014 Lisa Shimkat was selected as the State Director for Americas Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) for the State of Iowa. Her academic credentials holding a MBA from Iowa State University and a CBA from Toledo University’s Graduate School of Business combined with her vast experience as the SBDC Director in Ft. Dodge made her the perfect fit for this challenging position. Lisa inherited a very demanding position in need of reform and direction and from the outset created a foundation of collaboration, innovation, and excitement to the 15 Centers and their Directors across the State of Iowa.

Lisa immediately began a systematic and frequent approach to all the host institutions and their leaders for the SBDC Centers ranging from the community colleges to the Regent universities. This approach had previously been rather neglected. Her personal interaction has solidified the host institutions to their mission of supporting the Regional Centers to provide business support services for new and existing businesses and entrepreneurs. Lisa has also addressed the Lead Center in Ames and established changes and efficiencies that will be very positive going forward for the SBDC organization. She has undertaken a huge task in rewriting our State SBDC Strategic Plan and has engaged the entire network in this project with amazing leadership.

Additionally, Lisa has become involved in various organizations and increased the SBDC presence in many communities. She already well-known and appreciated by all of the SBDC strategic partners such as economic development, chambers of commerce and our state legislative bodies. Lisa has been honored by being appointed to the Securities and Exchange Commission’s National Advisory Committee for Small Business, serves as a school board member of the Ft. Dodge Community School District, is a competition judge for the John Pappajohn Business Plan Competition, and serves on the National Development Council of the Economic Development Finance Professionals. Lisa has also held numerous positions on boards such as the YWCA, Young Professionals Group, and School Booster Clubs as well as private sector positions with job responsibilities ranging from finance director to plant manager. She has a vast base of experience and has tirelessly commanded excellence from her staff at the state level as well as the regional directors she governs. When Lisa assumed the director’s role, she restored confidence and direction. She leads by example and sets high standards.

Lisa is very deserving of this prestigious award due to her commitment to excellence, positive attitude, problem solving skills and willingness to serve beyond her enormous responsibilities. Thank you for considering Lisa’s nomination.

Ted Bair, CBA Regional Director Iowa State University/SBDC