**Nomination letter from Allen Vaughan and Annah Backstrom, directors at the Des Moines Register**

There is no doubt that Carol Hunter should be recognized as a Woman of Influence for 2017.

She probably could have earned this distinction any of her past 37 years in the journalism industry. But, when she was named as the Executive Editor for the Des Moines Register – only the 12th in history - and the regional editor for seven other news organizations in Gannett’s Plains region in November, it cemented her legacy as one of the best journalists in the country. And she’s still rising.

Carol Hunter is the moral and ethical heart and soul of the Des Moines Register, the largest news organization in the state. In her 12 years here, she served as editorial page editor, politics editor and news director. She helped lead the Register’s nationally recognized coverage of the Iowa caucuses through three election cycles and has spearheaded multiple public service projects. During her distinguished career, she has also led two other news organizations as the Executive Editor (Green Bay Press-Gazette and the Bridgewater, N.J. Courier-News).

But it’s not just the positions she’s held that make her influential, it’s the high level of work and impact on the Des Moines community and the state of Iowa.

Just in the last few years she has led award-winning projects like “Iowa Kids,” that detailed and sought to help solve the issues facing an entire generation of Iowans, and “Black Iowa: Still Unequal.” A 2015 investigation on state and federal civil forfeiture laws in Iowa revealed that thousands of people have surrendered their cash or property since 20019 and that the system is stacked against property owners. And her leadership inspired the “Trans in Iowa” series, which told the varied and rich true stories of life as a transgender Iowan.

As any leader in the journalism industry, one of her finest skills is her ability to manage change. Despite starting her career in a strictly print/newspaper environment, she has become a leader in digital transformation. The Register is a century old brand that must be managed with tremendous care. The work that is done in the newsroom impacts Iowans in every corner of the state, whether that’s holding public officials accountable or advocating for Iowans’ access to public documents. Carol is unflinching in her support of Iowans and works every day to influence their lives in a positive way.

There’s an old journalism adage, Don’t pick a fight with someone who buys ink by the barrel. It’s meant that you don’t want to get cross with someone who has a lot of influence. That’s Carol Hunter.