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Des Moines, IA 50306-0657

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Jason Swanson
Des Moines Business Record
100 4th Street
Des Moines, Iowa 50309

Dear Jason:

I have known Karen Novak Swalwell for 15 years and am writing to recommend her for the Business Record's 2019 Women of Influence award.

For more than 30 years, Karen has pursued her passion in the field of executive recruitment at Francis & Associates. She joined the firm as a researcher, and her dedication, talent and tenacity landed her the role of president. Karen has achieved measurable results for the firm. She is well-known for her ability to coach corporate and nonprofit boards to successfully hire and retain CEOs and other senior leadership roles.

Beyond her thriving career, one of Karen's most admirable qualities is her commitment to serving her community. She is active in both the West Des Moines and Greater Des Moines communities and has served in numerous leadership roles for nonprofit and civic boards. Currently, she serves on the Prairie Meadows Board of Directors, is a board member for the West Des Moines Development Connection, and is the Vice Chair of the Central Iowa Regional Drinking Water Commission. Previously, she was appointed by the Governor to serve on the Consumer Advisory Panel of the Office of the Consumer Advocate for the Iowa Utilities Board.

Karen is also an advocate and mentor for women. As a founding member of Financial Executive Women (FEW), Karen provides advice, guidance and support to help ensure other women excel in their careers. As the first female Trustee and Chair of the West Des Moines Water Works – a \$12.5 million public utility serving more than 22,000 customers – Karen is a role model to women pursuing leadership roles within their communities.

Karen is authentic in her leadership, always focusing on improving her community and helping others succeed. I am honored to support her nomination for the Women of Influence award, and I believe you'll be hard-pressed to find another nominee with her combination of ability, talent and passion for serving others.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Kunert
Vice President, Economic Connections and Integration