Dear Selection Committee,

Easterseals Iowa provides exceptional services to ensure people with disabilities have equal opportunities and independence in our Iowa communities. Kevin Small has served as CFO for Easterseals Iowa for 11 years and handles all finance and accounting functions for the organization.

During his time at Easterseals Iowa Kevin has lead the organization through many changes to better serve the community. The organization has grown from an $8 million budget to a $12 million budget, changing programs as needed to meet community needs. Kevin’s leadership has assisted the organization to navigate through funding cuts and changes. His skillful planning and strategic insight assisted in ensuring that our clients and families could continue to receive the services they need.

Chair of the Easterseals Iowa Board Gary Buelt (Bankers Trust) says, “Kevin’s professionalism, thoroughness and responsiveness in the overall financial reporting of the organization allows the board to be strategic and effective in its mission.”

While Kevin is diligent in best practices on the business side, he also has a heart for the mission and understands its people who are at risk if Easterseals Iowa doesn’t have a sustainable financial footing. He cares about the work and it shows.

In the past fiscal year (September 1, 2017-August 31, 2018), Easterseals Iowa incurred a sudden an unexpected loss of revenue. Easterseals Iowa received notification on October 31, 2017, that AmeriHealth Caritas (one of three Managed Care Organizations in the state at the time) was leaving the State of Iowa’s IA Health Link program. Our contract to provide case management services to more than 700 clients was ending. Therefore, as of December 31, 2017, current Easterseals Iowa case management clients were no longer able to receive case management services through Easterseals Iowa. We supported our clients and families through this transition; many had been with the same case manager at Easterseals Iowa for years.

The change also created a $1.5 million shortfall in a $12.5 million budget. We had to act fast to adjust and determine how we would handle the rest of the year. Much of the burden of determining this solution fell to Kevin. To help us navigate this transition, Kevin put systems in place to ensure efficiency and data collection. Kevin’s leadership and attention to detail have made it possible for us to have minimal reductions in paid claims through the many changes with the health care system. His ability to see both the big picture vision and break down the dollars needed to attain the vision are impeccable. We were able to redirect and even ended the fiscal year in a position to be able to increase wages for some team members.

This was possible because of the detailed analysis of the impact of these changes on our operations, and the creation of a plan to ensure future financial sustainability.

Board Chair Gary Buelt says, “Kevin had the ability to take a monumental challenge, work through it in a way that was a calming influence to the entire staff, and quickly and proficiently rebalanced the budget.”

Thank you so much for considering Kevin for this recognition. He is a humble leader and has been a rock for our organization.

Sincerely,

Sherri Nielsen, President/CEO of Easterseals Iowa