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Jason Swanson

The Business Record

100 Fourth Street

Des Moines, IA 50309

Dear Mr. Swanson:

It is with great enthusiasm and confidence that I nominate Kirk Irwin, CFO of the Greater Des Moines Partnership (GDMP), for the CFO of the Year Award. I became acquainted with Kirk in 2012 when I joined the GDMP Board of Directors. My work relationship with Kirk has deepened over the last few years because of my role on the GDMP Finance Committee.

Kirk has overseen tremendous growth at the Partnership, which is now the fourth largest chamber organization in the country with 5,000 member businesses. In Kirk’s role, he must work with a diverse group of stakeholders, and at times navigate a wide range of opinions, to successfully complete his job. This includes a large Board of Directors and Executive Committee, over twenty affiliated Chambers of Commerce, as well as key business and community leaders. Under Kirk’s leadership of the GDMP, the greater Des Moines area has received top national rankings and awards as a great place to work, live and do business.

A fire at the former Younkers building in March of this year presented incredible challenges to the GDMP, including the evacuation of all employees from their offices in the Partnership Building and relocation to new offices. This was all done over one weekend and under Kirk’s direction. He was instrumental in securing and transitioning to new office space, working with the insurance company, City officials and GDMP employees throughout the process. The employees at GDMP were able to continue their work because Kirk attended to these fire related matters. Despite the business interruption, all planned programming moved forward seamlessly. Financial results were not negatively impacted; in fact, investments in the GDMP increased this year. Work related to the fire continues, and Kirk led the way in negotiations to return to permanent office space.

Whether dealing with an emergency or handling day-to-day Partnership activities, Kirk works behind the scenes to make certain the organization runs smoothly. He doesn’t care who gets the credit and never seeks the limelight. Without his hard work and expertise, the Partnership would not be the successful organization it is today. His contribution helps the Partnership better serve Greater
Des Moines.

Best regards,



Kim Felker

Audit Partner