



**The Emmett J. Vaughan  
Institute of Risk Management  
and Insurance**

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Business Record  
The Depot at Fourth  
100 4<sup>th</sup> St., Des Moines, IA 50309

RE: Forty Under 40 Nomination for Erin Wonsmos

Dear Selection Committee:

It is my pleasure to provide this letter of support for the nomination of Erin Wonsmos for the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Des Moines Forty Under 40 Award. I have known Erin in a professional capacity since fall of 2007 when she began taking classes in the Risk Management and Insurance program at the University of Iowa. She was an exceptional leader when she was on campus and continues to inspire and support others as a graduate. I can't think of anyone who is more deserving of this award.

Soon after graduation, Erin and another graduate began holding two or more networking events each year for Vaughan Institute graduates and other young professionals in the insurance industry in Des Moines. As you know, the insurance industry is one of the top two industries in Iowa, second only to agriculture. It is important to keep our young professionals in the state and engaged with the industry and Erin is playing a major role in that endeavor. Networking events such as those she arranges helps young professionals establish a professional community and an affinity for the industry as well as for the community. The events are so popular that they now hold events in Eastern Iowa as well. Also, they are developing plans to network in Chicago and Minneapolis.

In 2009, Erin saw the need to include students in the Young Professionals Network. She became one of two leaders who formed a committee that eventually became the Vaughan Institute's Young Alumni Board. The Vaughan Institute provides a certificate of Risk Management and Insurance to any interested student who is completing an undergraduate major at the University of Iowa. The Young Alumni Board, thanks to Erin's leadership, holds career exploration events with students, provides career panels in classes and for a student organization, establishes skill

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sets and course suggestions for students seeking a variety of industry careers, mentors students, informs students of jobs and internships in their companies, and assists young professionals who are seeking to return to Iowa for careers in insurance.

We need more young professionals in Iowa who are as focused as Erin on helping others advance their careers and make Iowa their homes. Her commitment to her peers and the industry is exceptional and commendable and she is certainly worthy of becoming one of Des Moines top "Forty Under 40". Please contact me at 319-335-1015 if you need additional information.

Sincerely,

Viana Rockel  
Associate Director