

December 18, 2015

The Business Record
Attn: Forty under 40
100 4th Street
Des Moines, IA 50309

The Business Record,

This letter is in recognition and deep appreciation for the service and leadership of Paul Stewart to the Des Moines community. He is one who is not only passionate about equipping individuals to make a difference for good in this world but to also empower the city of Des Moines to be a place that is better for every single individual in real, tangible ways.

Paul has given his time, gifts, and energy in the most beautiful and remarkable ways to the city. In ways that could easily be overlooked because of his focus on raising up others who carry out their individual calling as well as supporting other businesses, non-profits, and ministries. One aspect to Paul that has left a lasting impression on me is his tenacity to believe and trust that goodness can break through even in the most difficult of situations and environments. That we are invited and called to enter into these situations and be the hand that assists and the one who befriends. It is this behavior that makes any community one that you want to live in.

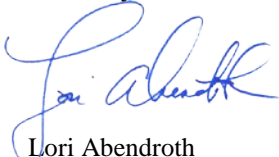
I am now a resident of Des Moines and member of The Gateway Church, led and pastored by Paul. But for five years, I lived in Ames and drove down to attend this remarkable community because the teaching and way of life I saw was astonishing. I believe you become the people you surround yourself with. Paul is one of those people I knew I needed to place myself near to be influenced, challenged, and encouraged by.

He seeks renewal in this city that he loves to his very core. It is woven into every fiber of his being and taught to us in the congregation and demonstrated through the efforts we embark in as a church here locally. He continually encourages members to not create new ministries or efforts but to join in with the work already occurring here such as serving alongside Joppa, partnering with Central Campus, or befriending our neighbors in the heart of Des Moines such as in Oak Ridge.

He equips others to live out their unique calling and use their talents to make life better for others through our direct and indirect actions. The church is full of musicians, lawyers, doctors, artists, teachers, and scientists. As a scientist and project manager of a large team at Iowa State University, I have been around many who are put into positions of power and leadership. I have also served within a service and leadership capacity within several organizations and churches. I'm grateful for what I have learned and witnessed from many extraordinary leaders along the years. I believe that Paul is one of those rare leaders and visionaries of our time however that stands distinct in his ability, care, and belief in the renewal of this city and every individual in it.

His heart for Des Moines is only matched by his heart for global communities around the world. Through his leadership, The Gateway Church and Des Moines is represented and known in communities in El Salvador and Cambodia for example. From the start of The Gateway Church, there has always been an intentional effort to partner and come alongside others whether here locally or globally. It is only when we build relationships with one another, seek the betterment of one another's communities, and support one another with our finances and deeds that communities are transformed. I am deeply grateful for the impact made by Paul in the city of Des Moines and the ripple effect his life has had to-date on so many.

Sincerely,



Lori Abendroth
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Climate and Cropping Systems Coordinated Agricultural Project
USDA-NIFA Award No. 2011-68002-30190 (\$20 million; 2011-2015)
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