Cindy Hughes Anliker

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Jan. 11, 2016

To the Des Moines Business Record’s 2016 Forty Under 40 Selection Committee:

I am honored to nominate my colleague and friend Eric Olmscheid for the Des Moines Business Record’s 2016 Forty Under 40. As a member of the 2014 class, I take this nomination very seriously, as I think Eric would be a phenomenal addition to this elite group of leaders in Greater Des Moines.

To support my nomination, several letters from people in all walks of Eric’s life have been written. From college students he has mentored to former leaders who have witnessed his career growth, the letters are rich with details on how Eric has influenced their lives, why he deserves this honor and what impact he has made in our community and beyond. The letters are inspiring to read and a true testament to Eric’s passion, dedication, vision and generosity he has for everything - and I mean everything – he commits to in his life.

In my world, I have known Eric since 2010. We met because of our work on the Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield Family Series, when I was coordinating the sponsorship on behalf of Wellmark, and he was programming the Series as Des Moines Performing Arts’ Education Manager. In 2013, I became Eric’s colleague when I starting working at Des Moines Performing Arts as the Communications Manager/Publicist (by then, he was promoted to the Director of Programming and Education), and we continued to collaborate on dozens of projects, including the Iowa High School Musical Theater Awards, the annual Season Announcement and media interviews. I could always count on Eric to go out of his way to help me and our organization accomplish goals whenever his actions were needed.

I can highlight Eric’s personal and professional accomplishments, and there are a number of them he should be proud of, but in all honesty, I want to highlight what I think sets him apart from other leaders. First, it’s his willingness to evolve, learn and strive each day to be a better person and to create a better world. Eric never settles on himself and he is genuinely curious about his surroundings and the people who are a part of them. He truly wants success for everyone. Second, Eric is not afraid to rock the boat and make tough decisions, yet he has this uncanny ability to be inclusive of others while doing it. He probes, he thinks and he listens to ultimately discover the best solution. Third, he has a belief system of himself, his people and his environment where he believes anything is possible through integrity, hard work, luck and a lot of love. His passion is infectious and you can’t help but agree to his big ideas, projects and visions. And finally, the best thing about Eric is his approachability as a leader. He is “honestly kind” and respectful to all levels of professionals, patrons and the general public.

As someone who has been honored as a “Forty,” I often think about “who” deserves this distinction and every time I do, I think of Eric. I sincerely hope he joins me in being a “Forty.” Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Cindy Hughes Anliker  
Des Moines Business Record’s 2014 Forty Under 40 Honoree

Publicist, Des Moines Performing Arts

**ERIC B. OLMSCHEID**3216 Iola Ave | Des Moines, IA, 50312eric.olmscheid@gmail.com | 612.805.4109

**SUMMARY**

* Highly creative performing arts administrator with diverse arts background
* Standard for high-quality experience for all audiences
* Experience in national and international performing arts booking and presenting
* Extensive development and management of comprehensive arts education programs, with emphasis on accessibility and diverse populations
* Passionate non-profit arts leader, interested in deepening the intersection of the community (donors, participants, artists) and arts engagement (performances, education, civic dialogue)
* Collaborative leader by nature
* Experienced staff manager with practice in hiring, evaluating, coaching, and firing staff and contracts
* Positive, optimistic, self-starter who excels under pressure
* Innovative critical thinker and problem solver with passion for the arts and education
* Engaged member of the arts and civic community

**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

**Director of Programming & Education** | Des Moines Performing Arts, Des Moines, IA | March 2011 to present

* Guide and fulfill the artistic and educational vision of Des Moines Performing Arts - Iowa’s premier performing arts center
* Strategic development of Education and Engagement programs serve more than 70,000 patrons annually
* Developed new performing arts series and initiatives: Dance Series, Family Series, Live at the Temple Concert Series, Des Moines Symphony programming partnership, Lunch Unplugged, Spotlight Series, and other special projects.
* Oversee programming of Des Moines Performing Arts presented events and attractions. Scout and select artists, negotiate terms, and oversee engagement implementation across multiple departments
* Prepare annual budgets and forecasting for DMPA-presented programming, including sales projections and operational expenditures.
* Collaborate with fundraising team to develop viable funding solutions for programming initiatives. Participate in fundraising pitches and liaison with donors.
* With the senior leadership team, develop long-term plans and strategic development for the organization
* Manage the department staff including education and programming support team members

**Education Manager** | Des Moines Performing Arts, Des Moines, IA | Sept. 2008 to March 2011

* Oversaw K-12 Education and Community Engagement programs
* Developed strategic directions for program growth
* Curated the Family Series and Applause Series (school matinee performances)
* Established program evaluations and benchmarks

**Community Engagement Coordinator** | Ordway Center for the Performing Arts, Saint Paul, MN | Aug. 2006 to Sept. 2008

* Managed community engagement and outreach initiatives, including pre and post-performance events, master classes, workshops, residency programs, organizational partnerships, and special projects
* Hired, supervised, and evaluated teaching artists for workshops and residency programs
* Developed and implemented programs that connect with on stage presentations, with a strong commitment to accessibility and diverse community participation
* Served as the staff liaison to the Cultural Advisory Council, a volunteer community advisory board
* Fostered and strengthened organizational partnerships with community arts and cultural institutions

**Education and Development Associate** | Ordway Center for the Performing Arts, Saint Paul, MN | July 2005 to July 2006

* Co-managed Festival fundraising during fundraising team transition, successfully achieving the goal of $475,000.
* Managed all internal and external department communications. Developed and implemented monthly electronic newsletter.

**Festival Assistant/Assistant to VP of Programming & Education** | Ordway Center for the Performing Arts, Saint Paul, MN

Sept. 2004 to July 2005

* Project managed the 2005 Flint Hills International Children’s Festival, attendance of 33,000
* Negotiated and contracted 25 local performance groups, liaison for 33 partnering arts and cultural organizations
* Recruited and managed more than 500 volunteers, 3,700 total hours
* Negotiated and managed relationships with Festival vendors

**Other related experiences:**

* **Front of House Associate,** Birmingham Hippodrome Theatre, Birmingham, England
* **Vacation Planner**,Walt Disney World, Inc., Orlando, FL (through the Disney College Program)
* **Disney College Program Recruiting Representative**, Walt Disney World, Inc., Orlando, FL

**PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS AND DISTINCTIONS**

* Named “14 People to Watch in 2014” by the Des Moines Register
* Committee Co-Chair, Capital Crossroads (Community Cultural Plan)
* Member, Iowa Presenters Network; former vice-chair
* Member, The Broadway League Audience Engagement Committee
* Chair, The Broadway League Education Forum Planning Committee, 2010-current
* Member, Association of Performing Arts Presenters
* Member, International Performing Arts for Youth
* Member, Plains Presenters Network

**VOLUNTEER AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

* CELEBRATE IOWA Gala Planning Committee, 2013-current
* Board President, Des Moines Gay Men’s Chorus, President 2012-2014; board member 2010-2015
* Founding Leadership Team member, New Leaders Council - Des Moines, 2010-2013
* Service Dog puppy raiser, Paws & Effect (Fiyero, a black lab)
* Caucus volunteer, precinct vice-chair
* Twin Cities Gay Men’s Chorus Board of Directors, Secretary, 2006-2008

**EDUCATION**

**Master of Arts**, Arts and Cultural Administration, 2007 **|** Saint Mary’s University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN **Bachelor of Arts**, Vocal Music; International Studies concentration, 2004 | University

**40 under 40**

**Nomination: Eric Olmschied**

**I am honored to write this recommendation for Eric Olmschied who I have known for a number of years professionally in his position at the Civic Center. I have worked with him on projects revolving around the Ray Society and putting together programs for Life Long Learning. He has shown remarkable sensitivity and creativity in engaging this populationof mostly senior citizens. Often this is a first exposure to New York Theater. The program has become increasingly sought out by our members with as many as 60 participants.**

**More recently, I have supported his ongoing effort to bring the Dance Series to Des Moines. These world class companies have added a new and exciting dimension to the Des Moines Cultural Scene.**

**Eric works in a professional and sophisticated manner that is remarkable in a person of his young age.**

**I am surprised that he has not been recognized in the past and would whole heartly endorse him this year.**

**Lois Fingerman, community activist and past president of the Ray Society**

Douglas A. West, CFP   
Managing Director-Investment Officer   
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**MEMO**

TO:  [Cindyha@desmoinesperformingarts.org](mailto:Cindyha@desmoinesperformingarts.org)  
FROM:  Douglas A. West, CFP  
DATE:  December 29, 2015

RE:  The Des Moines Business Record 40 Under 40 Nomination letter of support

It’s my understanding that Eric Olmscheid has been nominated for the 2016 40 Under 40 class.  I would support his nomination wholeheartedly.  I have known Eric since his arrival at the Civic Center of Greater Des Moines (now Des Moines Performing Arts) initially as Director of the Education Program and more recently as the Director of Programming and Education for the organization.  My wife and I are patrons of the DMPA and I served for 9 years on its Board of Directors including 4 years as Director of the Development Committee and 3 years as Treasurer.

Eric’s commitment of time, energy and talent to the success of the programs in his area of responsibility has been exemplary.  Specifically, without his leadership I don’t believe the **Family Series** (programs specifically designed for 3 to 11 year olds priced at an accessible level to encourage participation of families who otherwise wouldn’t be able to see theater), the **Dance Series** wherein, world-renowned dance troops appear for limited engagements at the Civic Center, now in its 7th year and, most dear to my heart, the **Iowa High School Musical Theater Awards Program** which is entering its 4th year providing an opportunity for high school students whose passion is musical theater to have their efforts recognized in the same way in which we recognize students in athletics, speech and debate.

These programs have broadened the availability of programing to a much wider and diverse audience than the Civic Center was able to manage before Eric’s arrival.  The impact on the community has been significant as each of the programs has grown in popularity since inception and many of the offerings include cast involvement with local school programs and master classes.  Eric exemplifies the professionalism, community impact and philanthropic involvement that should characterize nominees for the 40 Under 40 recognition.  DMPA would not be the nationally recognized, state-of-the-art regional facility it is without Eric’s contributions.

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Douglas A. West, CFP®  
Managing Director – Investment Officer/ps

12/22/2015

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing in support of nominee Eric Olmscheid as the Forty Under 40 honoree. As a dance professional in Des Moines, I know first-hand that Mr. Olmscheid has changed not only the picture of art in Iowa but nationally and internationally.

Mr. Olmscheid made it his personal mission to create *the Dance Series* at the Des Moines Civic Center. This series brings in 3 professional dance companies every season. Before the creation of *the Dance Series* we traveled to Iowa City in our only hopes of catching a professional dance company passing through Iowa. His formula is tremendous both in terms of historically important dance companies and also the latest and greatest in the field.

Now the dance audience in Central Iowa is educated, sophisticated and hungry for more. But it is all because Mr. Olmscheid took a risk and built the series from the ground up. He has commissioned works from both legendary choreographers and cutting edge new companies. I have seen world premieres at the Civic Center that will go down in the dance history books. I am honored as an Iowan that major art pieces have been developed and supported by Iowa and it has all been through the efforts of Mr. Olmscheid.

His work doesn’t stop with the onstage performance but is magnified with community outreach. Visiting companies go into the public schools working with educators and students. Master classes are provided for both dance students and professionals in the community. Mr. Olmscheid’s broader vision is creating the next generation of educated young artists, families and educators.

Mr. Olmscheid is truly unique in his knowledge, hard work, passion and persistence. He is a true visionary the likes we see in more major cities. We are all just lucky that he has chosen Des Moines as his city. I have written most of this letter in praise of *the Dance Series* but I have equal praise for *the Broadway Series* he has also developed. As a fellow audience member, I am delighted to see the Civic Center filled with theater goers. I know this translates to the culture and economics of Central Iowa. I know the credit for this growth is through Mr. Olmscheid’s work along with his staff. Bravo to all of them.

I know Eric Olmscheid has successfully changed the cultural landscape of our city and I hope you will make him this year’s honoree.

Sincerely,

Paula McArthur – DanzArts Director

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To the Selection Committee of *Forty Under 40:*

I am writing this letter to support the nomination of Eric Olmscheid for the 2016 Des Moines Business Record’s *Forty Under 40.* I have worked with Eric as a performer on several occasions at the Des Moines Civic Center.

He served as a mentor and guide to me during my experiences as one of the Iowa High School Musical Theater Awards “Triple Threat Award” winners in 2013. Eric’s help was invaluable and I couldn’t be more thankful for what he has done for me. I felt right at home with the people at the Civic Center thanks to Eric and he helped me work my way through a very new and thrilling experience for me when I was only a junior at Waukee High School. I had never flown on a plane before, let alone performed on a Broadway stage in New York, but Eric gave me the confidence and support I needed to have a great time and improve myself as a performer. I never felt lost because of Eric and I could go into any situation and feel prepared with his help.

When I returned to compete for the Iowa High School Musical Theater Awards Triple Threat Award in 2014, Eric was there again as a helpful and familiar face that I knew I could depend on and he helped make this experience memorable and beneficial to my future in performing. When Bridget Johnston and I returned to the Awards a couple years after our Triple Threat wins, we pulled off presenting the new competing performers with the help of Eric. He made sure that we felt confident with our script and that we truly sounded like ourselves on stage for the big night.

This is only a fraction of what Eric has done for me and many others, but I believe it justifies entirely why he is truly deserving of being selected for *Forty Under 40.*

Best wishes,  
Kellen Schrimper  
Undergraduate Vocal Performance B.M.  
Drake University  
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