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Jan. 13, 2016

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

The amazing woman I am nominating for the Des Moines Business Record's 2016 Forty Under 40 is one of the most influential people in my life. She has influenced my education, my health, my family, my home, my career and my overall well-being in extraordinary ways. Her name is Shannon Rudolph Umthum, currently the Chief/Designated Learning Officer at the VA Central Iowa Health Care System.

I have known Shannon since we were college roommates at the University of Northern Iowa in Cedar Falls, which was half a lifetime ago. Imagine two young women who had no clue about living the life of a college student (I was the oldest child and she was the only child in our families), yet together, we managed to survive and "laugh to tell" about it today. We clicked instantly and today, I see her as an honorary sister in addition to being my friend, mentor, former colleague and fellow health advocate.

Our 20-year friendship has sustained so many milestones and major events, much of it because of her strong character, genuine kindness and commitment to helping others. She has shown me exemplary leadership and here are some examples:

- Shannon was brave enough to call attention and help me through a very serious eating disorder when we were sophomores in college.
- In 2004, when I was living in Wisconsin and trying to move closer to my hometown (Davenport, IA), she told me about an opportunity at her workplace at the time, the American Heart Association. Thanks to her "tip," I landed the job and moved to Des Moines. She helped me get settled by touring apartments with me, letting me stay at her house while I found an apartment and volunteering her husband Kurt to help move my things.
 - Sidenote: A week after I moved to Des Moines, her husband Kurt introduced me to his friend Clark Anliker, whom I have been happily married to for almost nine years. Of course, Shannon was in our wedding.
- As colleagues at the American Heart Association, we worked together on several successful projects including Go Red for Women, educating high-risk populations on stroke and heart disease and general wellness initiatives.
- I am not sure if she is aware, but Shannon inspired me to apply to graduate school at Drake University in Des Moines because I was impressed with her passionate advocacy of education and the importance of having "knowledge as power."
- Her three children – Landon, Avery and Dylan (my godson) – are little lights in my life and taught me that the meaning of "family" expands beyond the bloodlines.
- When there is a human or animal in need, Shannon is the first to offer support, call attention to the issue and find creative ways to nip the need in the bud. For example, she has been known to have supplies in her car (i.e. treats, a leash) in the event she would come across a stray dog on the street.

In addition to being so influential in my life, Shannon is influential with others personally and professionally. She has a mighty role with VA Central Iowa, responsible for the direction, management and integration of learning throughout the medical center and its outpatient clinics. Her integrated learning programs, such as the Greater Des Moines Community Service Project for the organization's employees, have increased community awareness of the services the VA provides to veterans, as well as benefitted the Boys & Girls Club of Central Iowa, the Bidwell Riverside Center and the Ronald McDonald House. In addition to being a rock star in her career, she is a devoted wife, mother and citizen, devoting her free time as a childbirth doula, American Cancer Society Breast and Testicular Cancer Self-Exam Instructor,

St. Francis of Assisi School Homeroom Parent and Talking Canvas Art Program Volunteer and last, but not least, a member of the University of Northern Iowa Alumni Association (Go Panthers!). I should note this is just a few of her many accomplishments and volunteer efforts to shine a brighter light in this world.

In closing, this is not the first time I have nominated Shannon for something because I am so impressed with her leadership, drive and influence in Greater Des Moines and beyond. I also nominated her for the Greater Des Moines Leadership Institute's 2013 Community Leadership Program, which she successfully completed and is now a volunteer for the organization. I am honored to nominate her for something once again, this time for the 2016 Forty Under 40. She is without a doubt, one of the best people I know, constantly going above and beyond as a positive force for others. Shannon would be a wonderful addition to this elite group of leaders and I would love for her to be a "Forty" like me (I was honored in 2014). Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Cindy Hughes Anliker". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The first name "Cindy" is written in a larger, more prominent script, followed by "Hughes" and "Anliker" in a slightly smaller, more compact script. The signature is centered horizontally within the block.

Cindy Hughes Anliker
Des Moines Business Record 2014 Forty Under 40 Honoree
Publicist, Des Moines Performing Arts

January 13, 2016

Mr. Jason Swanson
Director of Operations
Business Publications Corporation
100 4th Street, Ste. 100
Des Moines, IA 50309

Dear Jason and Members of the Business Record's "40 under 40" Selection Committee:

Please accept the enclosed application and nomination for Shannon Rudolph Umthum as candidate for the Business Record's 2016 class of "40 under 40".

I first met Shannon when she and I served the American Heart Association. She as the Director, State Health Alliances, Cultural Health Initiatives & Government Relations and I as the Metro Executive Director for Greater Des Moines. She and I collaborated extensively with health partners and sponsors, working to successfully educate and help Iowans live healthier lives through the prevention of heart disease and stroke.

Shannon has that rare gift of making all around her feel valued and their opinions heard while also cutting to the heart of an issue in order to achieve real results. I grew to value her counsel and perspective as we together formed the inaugural GO RED FOR WOMEN event committee.

Since that time, Shannon has continued to use her skills to further the health and education of Iowans and personally donates her time to organizations that mirror her own values. She seeks leadership roles and continues to learn how to most effectively reach those who need information and education. She is also an advocate helping those whose voice need to be heard.

I hope that you will give sincere consideration to Shannon for this award nomination. Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me. I may be reached at (515) 238-1166 or leslielgarman@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Leslie L. Garman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Leslie" being more prominent and the last name "Garman" following in a similar style.

Leslie L. Garman, CFRE