

Forty under 40- Class of 2017

Business Record

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I have a very strong interest in joining the group of distinguished local business and community leaders under the age of forty in the class of 2017. I believe I have earned the career achievements and possess the community leadership experience required to contribute to this group of talented young professionals.

Currently I am the Sales and Marketing Director at Customized Newspaper Advertising (CNA), which is the sales division of the Iowa Newspaper Association. CNA works with national and regional clients and advertising agencies across the country as an expert in print and digital advertising.

When asked about my career, my focus is more about the industry as a whole and I share stories about the privilege I am given every day to influence the future of newspapers. Did you know that there are 280 newspapers in the state of Iowa? The Iowa Newspaper Association (INA) is a non-profit organization with a mission to improve the newspaper industry through education and work as leaders to preserve a free press society. Its sales arm, Customized Newspaper Advertising, is charged with advancing the economic well-being of Iowa newspaper enterprises primarily through, research, promotion and advertising sales. I am proud to currently lead a team who are driven and committed to spreading the positive story of the newspaper industry and bring new advertising revenue to Iowa's newspapers.

In 1999, I began my career at the Iowa Newspaper Association as an intern selling advertising into the statewide newspaper directory. The listing for this position sparked my interest while I was studying at Drake University in the School of Journalism. At the time, I was an active member of the Society of Professional Journalists. I had just arrived home from the National SPJ convention as the mid-west student ambassador for the club. (I recruited more new student members to SPJ in one year than any other university in the nation and won the trip to the convention- all expenses paid!) My advisor pulled me aside to share this internship listing. Knowing that I had a deep passion for journalism and still charged from the convention, I applied immediately!

Working at the INA for a few short months during the summer, I sold more advertising than any intern and was offered a position in the inside sales department that fall. I began selling newspaper networks for the INA part-time as I finished my degree at Drake University.

Upon graduation from Drake in 2001, I became a full time Account Executive continuing to sell newspaper networks. These networks are a primary revenue source for the INA to fund education programs for newspapers across the state. I also began selling CNA's services to advertising agencies as a one stop shop for media buying. As part of a team of several account executives and a full media placing team, CNA sells millions of dollars of newspaper advertising annually into Iowa newspapers and newspapers across the country. I also spent time visiting

with newspapers in Iowa to learn more about how they function on a local level so I could work harder as an extension of their sales staff. I continued to work as an Account Executive through 2006 handling CNA's largest accounts.

My next chapter at CNA started as the Inside Sales Manager in January 2009. During my time in this position, the network sales department increased sales by 43% between 2009 and 2015. The team was able to increase sales year over year, including an overall record sales year in 2014 with almost \$15 million annual sales. Comparing to other state press, this made CNA the leader in the country. As the manager, our success in sales was due to pioneering new efforts in newspaper advertising, embracing a digital atmosphere but also keeping the integrity of the printed product. This pioneer spirit created a successful sales structure and we were able to acquire other sales departments in the country including Wisconsin and Michigan.

Also during this timeframe, I produced notable projects, including the development of many new newspaper networks that are now nationwide and developed online solutions for newspapers including digital options. These projects were seamlessly implemented, proving my leadership skills were well received. In addition, managing a sales team and handling staffing challenges has given me poise to handle tough situations professionally and the sales staff considers my extensive knowledge of the newspaper industry an asset when seeking guidance.

In my 15 years at the INA, I have been devoted to the newspapers of Iowa and advocated on behalf of the newspaper industry. My motivation to stay with one company continues to be my passion for journalism that started in college. It brings me great pride to be part of projects that will have an impact in the Des Moines community but also statewide and nationally. Now as the director of CNA, I will continue to lead a team with a clear vision of the future for an ever changing industry and continue to pioneer new ideas and solutions. CNA continues to be the leading sales force among press associations in the country. Working with a board of directors to create a focus will be my next chapter at the INA and I plan to continue to lead this organization to even bigger heights.

Outside of my career, my time is spent in many different faucets. First, I live in rural Carlisle, IA with my husband and two children. We have a hobby farm (Fett Farm Fresh) that we started five years ago; raising chickens- we have about 30. Originally from a Chicago suburb, my love for Iowa and Des Moines started the instant I moved here and has only grown. Des Moines allows for the perfect balance to live in a rural setting but also work downtown!

In volunteering my time, I focus almost solely on positively influencing and inspiring youth in the Des Moines community. I have been the youth leader at Our Saviour Lutheran Church in Des Moines since 2008. Even though we live in Carlisle, we still maintain membership at a church on the North side of downtown Des Moines on 2nd ave. This is where we feel at home and work with the local community and youth in the area. My desire to be a youth leader grows each year with the goal to guide these young teenagers in making good decisions and to become leaders among their peers. Many of these kids come from a wide range of adversities that include drugs and abuse, so a positive role model is so important to keep them on track. The vision for the youth group includes working within the community in a positive way. Each spring and fall we collect garbage along highways in the Des Moines area as way to show them respect for

their surroundings. The kids also volunteer their time during Halloween and Easter, to create a safe place for the surrounding neighborhood to celebrate with games, crafts and other fun activities. These kids give up their own social time to do this.

Our group also raises money for a mission trip opportunity every three years. The money pays for the expenses of the trip and our small group was able to raise more than \$14,000 which enabled all the youth kids to attend the gathering with no out of pocket cost! The LCMS National Youth Gathering was held in New Orleans in 2016. This gathering attracts 20,000+ youth and youth leaders from across the country and world and is the biggest youth gathering in the US! This trip gives youth the chance to grow in their faith, but also work with others in need. Landscaping, building houses and giving blood were just some of the opportunities available. This trip was inspiring to these kids and allows them to come back fully charged to be leaders in their community and among their peers. This is a much needed positive experience for them and without the financial assistance they would not be able to attend. 2016 was the second mission trip that I lead and the next one is in 2019; the planning has already begun! I am so proud of the kids in this group and have the opportunity to watch them grow up and become productive adults.

In addition to working as the youth leader at Our Saviour, I have also worked as a youth leader for the Lutherans Women's Missionary League (LWML) solely working with young women and providing different mission opportunities in Des Moines. This role included fundraising to fund mission goals for Hope Ministries and also other needs at local hospitals.

In being a member of the LWML, I was also chosen as the Young Women's Representative (YWR) in 2007. This was an application process opened statewide. As the YWR, I attended the regional convention and worked with national LWML leaders to forge a vision for the organization to include more young women. With my faith as my motivator and my desire to work with youth, this was a great opportunity to assist in the future of LWML.

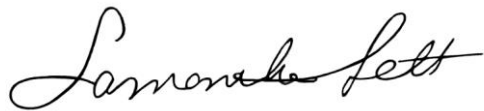
Continuing my passion working with children, I also started teaching dance classes at a central Iowa dance studio between 2010 and 2015. I have been a dancer my whole life and cherish the memories of learning dance at a young age, which inspired me to get back into it and start teaching. My focus was on younger kids ages 3-7 and we explored many different types of dance including tap, ballet and tumbling. For many kids, this was their first experience in a dance class. It was a rewarding experience and filled me with great joy knowing I was teaching these kids life skills. Teaching dance is about being inspired to use movement in creative ways and express emotions. Lessons about dealing with disappointment were a core focus because it's important to teach children to get back up and try harder next time! The few short years I was able to teach dance were a great blessing.

Recently, I have also taken on a few new hobbies while working with the youth group. Some older members of the LWML gave lessons to our youth group on crocheting! This has become a huge interest that has become a regular hobby! I now crochet, knit, sew and recently started quilting. I also entered several of my pieces into the Warren County Fair and won two first place blue ribbons!

My family continues to be a big supporter of the work I do in the community. My husband of almost 15 years shows me constant encouragement because he shares my vision. Our two daughters, Sophia and Cecelia are also inspired. Being in their teen and pre-teen years, I see them in situations at school -volunteering for things that their peers shy away from. They too are becoming leaders and that makes my heart happy to know that my actions in the community have inspired them to be the best they can be all of the time. If anything, this is my biggest accomplishment because it has been my focus from the beginning - inspiring youth to be good leaders and make good decisions!

I appreciate your consideration for the "Forty under 40" class of 2017 and look forward to hearing from you. Thank you for the opportunity to share my experiences!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Samantha Fett". The signature is fluid and elegant, with the first name "Samantha" being larger and more prominent than the last name "Fett".

Samantha Fett