

Dear Forty under 40 Selection Committee,

John Maxwell says "a leader is one who knows the way, shows the way, and goes the way". No statement could define Karen Karr better. I had the opportunity to first meet Karen in 2014 when she and her Greater Des Moines Leadership Institute (GDMLI) team chose to work on the Community Youth Concepts (CYC) remodeling project. During this process, I witnessed first hand the tenacity at which Karen manages projects. Karen's team had taken on a large project, with many players, and within the first meeting, it became evident that regardless of what it took, Karen was going to see that the project was completed to a high level of quality. While Karen was an instrumental player in the remodeling of our headquarters to become a youth-focused exploration center, it was what came next that most demonstrated her leadership qualities.

With most large scale projects that are condensed into a short timeframe, burnout is high. While I was expecting the "project slide" to occur following project completion, I was pleasantly surprised when Karen asked to stay involved through our capital committee. In this role, she has leveraged her resources to assist with energy efficiency projects and has assisted with various legal tasks associated with purchasing the building. As in Maxwell's quote, Karen knew the way and showed us (me) the way to complete many real estate transactions necessary to secure ownership of the building and associated land. She was diligent to ensure we were able to file the appropriate tax exemption paperwork and guided us through the necessary steps in each situation. She quickly became my "go to" person for various real estate contracts that were beyond my scope of expertise.

What I appreciate most about Karen is she's not afraid to get her hands dirty. When the basement was flooding faster than I could bale, she grabbed a bucket. Later, she helped address the source of the issue to correct the problem. Karen is the first to volunteer to drop off various supplies that are needed for an event to be successful or to organize a fundraiser to go off without a hitch. What has most impressed me about Karen is her willingness to work behind-the-scenes and her ability to complete tasks judiciously and without compromise.

When I first met Karen, I was immediately grateful she was on my side. I have cherished getting to know her as an accomplished, successful, and respected attorney who is fair and dedicated to the tasks at hand. While some volunteers may fade into the background when it becomes easier to do so, Karen has never taken that route. She is as dedicated to the work of CYC today as she was in our initial GDMLI presentation in the fall of 2014. Karen embodies the characteristics of a Forty under 40 honoree and I would be honored to have her recognized among myself and the countless other Forty under 40 honorees.

Respectfully,



Amy Croll
Executive Director
Community Youth Concepts
Forty under 40 Class of 2015