To whom it may concern:

I am writing to nominate Des Moines Register’s Annah Backstrom for *Business Record*’s Forty Under 40 Award.

Annah was one of the first people I met when I moved to Des Moines from Washington to cover the Iowa caucuses for CNN, and she quickly became a close friend and helpful adviser as I navigated the Hawkeye State.

Annah spearheaded *the Register*’s coverage of the Iowa caucuses through a challenging and changing news environment, and the respect of her colleagues and competitors was clear.

She responsibly led her reporters as coverage was denied by candidate Donald Trump, and stood up on behalf of her organization as the Trump campaign attempted to limit the Register’s access, their first such attempt with a news organization.

In my experience covering the caucuses for CNN, *the Register* was invaluable to our network and helped drive our coverage, no doubt thanks to Annah’s leadership.

I depended on *the Register* heavily for editorial guidance on upcoming events.

One particular example of Annah’s absolute brilliance was *the Register*’s candidate tracker, which listed daily and upcoming events for all 17 Republican and 3 Democratic candidates, as well as their locations. It was the only resource of its kind — no competitor or other early voting state’s paper had anything like this. The website and corresponding iPhone app tracker was something I used multiple times a day and drove how our team at CNN prioritized our daily coverage. My colleagues at CNN and in Iowa were kept abreast of Iowa events because of Annah’s great idea, which she oversaw through the caucuses.

She was also an insightful, thoughtful voice when she spoke about the significance of the Iowa caucuses and help put developments in context for our readers and viewers. I interviewed Annah multiple times while I was covering Iowa, and she always knew the right thing to say.

There is no Iowan in news more deserving of this honor than Annah, and I know how much it would mean to her. Thank you for your consideration.

All best,

Betsy Klein
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