

Norah Carroll

Phone: 515.289.5575 • Email: NorahEC@veridiancu.org

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To whom it may concern:

I am honored to nominate Nathan T. Wright to be a Forty Under 40 honoree. In the four years I have known Nathan, I have witnessed firsthand the significant impact he has made on the Des Moines business community, and I believe he would be a remarkable addition to the 2014 Forty Under 40 class.

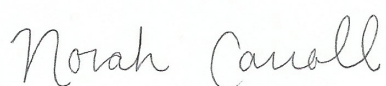
As the founder of Lava Row, Des Moines' first social media company, Nathan worked tirelessly to show companies across the Midwest the value of connecting with their customers online. In the process, he earned the respect of the business community as a thought leader and innovator, someone who wasn't afraid to push companies one step further, to ask more of them in service of their customer base. He became our community's leading evangelist for social media, working with companies large and small to develop strategic, meaningful approaches for connecting with their audiences. And he did it while building an iPhone app for frequent flyers, teaching as an adjunct professor in Drake University's College of Business and Public Administration and serving as a mentor for countless other professionals seeking to make an impact – whether as communicators, as entrepreneurs, or as founders.

I first observed Nathan's commitment to growing Des Moines' creative class as his employee – first as an intern at Lava Row, and then as a full-time strategist. For over three years, I had the opportunity to learn from one of the brightest minds in our industry, and I found incredible opportunities to develop as a professional with his coaching. What struck me most as I got to know Nathan was how valuable the relationships he formed were to him – and I believe wholeheartedly that continuing to nurture those relationships is what led him to the new role he now fills at Hy-Vee, a company that was once a Lava Row client.

Beyond his role at Lava Row, and now at Hy-Vee, Nathan has remained dedicated to nurturing the next generation of thinkers and doers through his involvement in Iowa State University's Greenlee Alumni and Friends board and the University of Northern Iowa's Interactive Digital Studies Advisory Board. His vast experience is a tremendous asset to these groups and to the students they serve, and I am confident that his coaching will help to develop students who are prepared to join a rapidly evolving workforce upon graduation.

Nathan T. Wright has established himself as a force for innovation in our community, and recognition as a member of this year's Forty Under 40 class would be a fitting tribute to the impact he has made in Des Moines.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Norah Carroll". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid, with a large, stylized 'C' at the end.