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| Business Record's Forty Under 40 Selection CommitteeThe Depot at Fourth100 4th StreetDes Moines, Iowa 50309 | Sondra Ashmore, Ph.D.3480 109th StreetUrbandale, Iowa 50322 |

December 22, 2017

Dear 2018 Forty Under 40 Selection Committee:

It is my great pleasure to nominate Dr. Deborah Kent for the Business Record’s Forty Under 40 Class of 2018. I met Deborah when she joined my neighborhood’s book club. I liked her immediately and was intrigued to learn more about her when I learned of our shared background as authors and STEM promoters. As I have come to know her better, I have been fascinated to learn about her diverse experiences from her musical talents on the piano, to her literary studies at Oxford, to her certification to teach yoga for First Responders.

Deborah is an Associate Professor of Mathematics and Drake University. She is beloved by her students and uses creative approaches to demonstrate how math can solve real-world problems. She has lead a group of 17+ students on a London travel seminar to study the history of actuarial science in Europe and partners with professors across the Drake campus to integrate math with other subjects such as computer science and entrepreneurship. Deborah advises around 40 students each semester and is also the founding faculty advisor for the Women in Mathematics and Computer Science group.

Deborah has secured an international reputation for her expertise in the history of mathematics. She has been an invited speaker at both national and international conferences. She has also published her research in international journals. In 2017, she co-authored a book with Canadian mathematician, Dr. M. DeVos, called “Game Theory: A Playful Introduction”. Given her accomplishments, it comes as no surprise that in 2017 she was awarded both the best in mathematical writing from the Mathematical Association of America and the Technology of Iowa’s Women of Innovation award for Academic Innovation and Leadership.

One theme you will see throughout Deborah’s recommendation letters is how much she is admired for is how selflessly she gives of her time to support others in our community. She is a volunteer at the Science Center of Iowa, she teaches important coding skills to middle school students at Pi 515 and Forest Avenue Library. She has also been a judge with FIRST LEGO League, an organization that creates engineering challenges to help young people learn more about engineering. As a resident of Sherman Hill, she is also active with her neighborhood association and contributes to events that support her neighbors in the Oakridge community.

I feel that I have grown as a person by spending time with Deborah and couldn’t be more humbled to have such an accomplished friend. She sets an amazing example of leadership locally, nationally, and around the world. It is with this in mind that I enthusiastically recommend Deborah for the Business Record’s Forty Under 40 Class of 2018.

Most sincerely,



Sondra Ashmore, Ph.D.

Forty Under 40 Class of 2012