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Dear Forty Under 40 Selection Committee,

I am writing to recommend Melissa Knutson for the 2018 Business Record Forty Under 40 Award. I have known Melissa for over ten years in many different capacities: as a running buddy, a teammate, a boss, and a friend. I have had the pleasure of watching her grow both personally and professionally, and can confidently say that this is a woman who has made an impact – and that impact is only going to grow in the years to come.

When I met Melissa, she was working as a Business Development Manager for NCMIC, and I was hired as Account Manager. Even then, we jokingly called her the Mama Wolf – and that was before she had her three beautiful daughters! Melissa is fiercely loyal, and will always go to bat for her people. She's also fiercely competitive, and will never expect more from her team than she's willing to give herself. Not long after I met Melissa, she encouraged me to run my first half marathon. (It was also my ONLY half marathon, but not Melissa – she has gone on to run several more!)

When the Sales Manager position opened up for our team at NCMIC, Melissa was the obvious pick. She has the drive, she has the know-how, and perhaps most importantly, she has the ability to keep a level head in any situation and keep her eye on the end game. Her role has since grown into VP of Finance, and in 2017, she led our team to a record year with 150% growth over last year, in an industry that was flat at best.

Melissa is a leader for her family, for our team, for our company, and for our community. She gives freely of her time and talents, whether that is a friend who needs an ear, Habitat for Humanity, her Little Sister, or the women's shelter, and she inspires others to do the same. Thank you for considering Melissa as one of this year's honored recipients!

Sincerely,



Emily Blair