Marc Reed

Breakthrough Career Development and Leadership Institute

530 NE Broadway

Des Moines, IA 50313

01/04/18

Business Record

100 SW 4th Street

Des Moines, IA 50309

Dear Business Record:

I have known Jerry Brantley both personally and professionally for over 10 years, and he epitomizes what a *Forty Under 40* award winner should be. Having the unique opportunity to know Jerry both personally and professionally, I have been able to witness his commitment to professional and civic leadership.

I can cite multiple occasions where Jerry has exemplified tremendous leadership with limited resources and models of success. However, two examples stand out above all others. Jerry has volunteered his time with my organization, Breakthrough Career Development and Leadership Institute. Specifically, he sat on our leadership panel designed to offer teens the necessary tools to be effective leaders. On the panel, among several successful and accomplished business leaders from Central Iowa, Jerry was the youngest member, but was still able to stand out. Jerry was relatable to the youth; he shared his successes and failures and he discussed how his failures became lessons that have allowed him to be successful today. He was also able to offer the students practical advice and made himself available to the students after the event.

Jerry has plenty of professional accomplishments like being the highest ranking African-American at Nationwide’s Des Moines office, or how he was a successful business owner immediately following college, or how he has successfully completed some of Nationwide’s most selective leadership development programs. However, personal real-life examples offer a different perspective of an individual -- an authentic and untainted affirmation of their leadership skills. For this reason, my second example comes from an event from Jerry’s personal life I was able to witness. This summer I saw Jerry act as the Power of Attorney during the illness and eventual death of his father. I witnessed his demonstration of commitment to his father, his work, and his family -- working from the hospital, traveling to Iowa City two to three times per week, while maintaining his duties at the Director level. Jerry exemplified leadership when he became knowledgeable of all of his father’s ailments, communicated updates to friends and family members across the country, managed his father’s expenses, and ultimately he demonstrated strength when he had to submit to his father’s wishes and make the decision to transition from a medical plan to a comfort plan, and ultimately ensure his father’s funeral plans were in alignment with his father’s wishes.

Jerry is not only the future of Central Iowa leadership he is the present. His diverse set of skills allow him to be talented in a multitude of things, but his willingness to stretch his limits and his commitment to success will allow him to be a Giant in the region.

Sincerely,

Marc Reed

Executive Director & Founder