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December 29, 2017

Dear Forty Under 40 Judges,

Imagine the good fortune of hiring someone who not only emulates, but radiates, your company's behavioral core values. That was our experience when Katie Stull, a former employee of ours, was hired. She's enthusiastic, energetic and competitive; which I believe in part makes her an excellent candidate for this year's Forty Under 40 class.

I met Katie approximately four years ago. We were experiencing tremendous growth at Willis Auto Campus and made a strategic decision to strengthen our human resource department. Part of that focus included hiring a Human Resource Manager. Katie applied for and won the opportunity and went on to do a great job strengthening the HR side for our 350+ employees.

She came to us with a stellar track record and an evident commitment to taking on challenges as both an employee and as a volunteer in the community. This you will see in her resume. What won't be as evident is what I believe to be her "*super power*" – her personality!

Katie has the kind of personality that brings positive energy and enthusiasm to every conversation, every challenge and every opportunity. Combine that with intelligence, a natural leadership style, and great work ethic and it's no surprise she is the kind of person others relate to and respect.

I often say that *we are in the **people** business and, by the way, sell a few cars along the way*. In the community that means being philanthropic and giving our time, talent and financial support. Katie has a very philanthropic spirit and helped lead a successful United Way campaign for us, as she has done for several other companies over the course of 10+ years. She also serves as president of the Central Iowa Society of Human Resource Managers, helps nonprofits such as the Ronald McDonald House, Prevent Child Abuse, and Make-A-Wish Iowa, just to name a few. She also serves as a volunteer at Drake University where she earned both her BA and MBA.

While Katie left our company to move on to an even greater challenge, now serving as Chief Human Resources Officer at DART, it makes me happy that she is still part of our community and among our next generation of leaders.

I hope you agree Katie Stull is a most worthy Forty Under 40 candidate.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Rich Willis", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Rich Willis
President

The Tradition Continues