



January 10, 2018

Dear Forty Under 40 Selection Committee:

I am honored to know Keshia Meissner and to recommend her for the next Forty Under 40 Class. Like Forty Under 40, simply being accepted into the Greater Des Moines Leadership Institute's Community Leadership Program is a major accomplishment. But, what a person does with his/her time during The Institute experience and how they use it to better our community is what truly defines dedication and drive to develop as a leader.

Keshia brought an especially unique energy and perspective to the Community Leadership Program because not only was she part of the Class of 2017, she was a graduate of our Community Connect program and the organization she leads, Beacon of Life, was a class project partner in 2015. Due to her history with The Institute, two things became apparent to me: 1) Keshia is extremely dedicated to personal leadership development 2) she is committed to constant evolution of her non-profit organization.

As a class member, Keshia eagerly absorbed what she was learning and was not afraid to seek clarity to ensure success. In addition, Keshia often played the important role of confidant in her project group, which demonstrated her compassion, her desire to problem solve, and her attention to team culture; all important qualities of a servant leader. As a Community Leadership Program project partner in 2015, Keshia truly showcased her passion for helping women get back on their feet. When asked what being a project partner would mean for Beacon of Life, she replied, "everything." That became the primary motivator for the Beacon of Life project team and it represented Keshia's desire to give her all as a leader for women who need strong role models. The result was amazing new bathrooms at the Beacon house that translated into spaces to build confidence and feel at home.

True community leaders are those who challenge themselves and others. My utmost respect is given to Keshia because she exemplifies community leadership development. That is why I am thrilled to give a recommendation that could help her to be recognized for her contributions to The Institute and as a leader in greater Des Moines. Thank you for considering her for the next Forty Under 40 class.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amy Jennings". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Amy Jennings
Executive Director
Greater Des Moines Leadership Institute
Forty Under 40 Class of 2007