

January 9, 2018

Dear Forty Under 40 Selection Committee:

It's my honor and pleasure to submit this letter of support for Aubrey Alvarez's nomination as a Forty Under 40. I've had the opportunity to get to know Ms. Alvarez over the last five years during her tenure as Executive Director of Eat Greater Des Moines.

What stands out the most about Ms. Alvarez is her tenacity. She has been a catalyst in enhancing awareness about our region's food system and positively impacting outcomes during her tenure. Thanks to her vision and tireless efforts, local producers have been connected with local restaurants and grocery stores, supporting both better health outcomes and small businesses. Additionally, Ms. Alvarez's work has simultaneously helped reduce hunger and food waste in Central Iowa - major wins for the entire community.

The work that Ms. Alvarez leads isn't easy, but she takes it on with a can-do attitude. The word 'no' isn't in her vocabulary. Instead, Ms. Alvarez works to find alternative solutions, strategically partnering and ensuring the food system perspective is represented at key decision-making tables.

The work that Ms. Alvarez does day after day is by no means glamorous, but it's the kind of work that quietly transforms a community. It's the kind of work that helps ensure children don't go hungry and that builds our community's social capital.

Ms. Alvarez is a key leader in making the Des Moines metro a truly great community. She's on the frontlines of transforming an ugly issue into a positive for the community and tackling every challenge that comes her way head-on. It is because of this grit that I believe Aubrey Alvarez should be recognized as a Forty Under 40.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Bethany", followed by a long, flowing horizontal line that ends in a small loop.

Bethany Wilcoxon
Vice Principal of Community Planning
McClure Engineering Company