

January 10, 2018

RE: Forty Under Forty

Dear Selection Committee:

I am writing to recommend Ray O'Donnell for the Forty Under Forty Class of 2018.

I have known Ray for nearly 10 years in the capacity of supervisor and friend. As both an undergraduate and graduate student at Iowa State University, Ray showed maturity and wisdom beyond his years. He was a highly dependable employee for our office and always showed initiative to complete projects and work without prompting.

Ray was an hourly student employee and then later a Graduate Assistant; however, his contributions provided the same value to our organization as a high-performing, full-time staff person. When he graduated and left Iowa State University to pursue his career, he left a major hole in our organization that was difficult to fill.

Not only was Ray an excellent employee, he was a fantastic student as well. He often tutored his peers in his graduate courses and maintained excellent relationships with the faculty. In fact, creating, fostering, and maintaining relationships is what I consider to be one of his strongest attributes. In addition to the recruitment and leadership roles that he fulfilled for his fraternity, he was actively engaged in mentoring programs with Youth and Shelter Services and served on his fraternity board.

During a particularly stressful time for our organization as we merged with another unit on campus, Ray played a crucial role in our successful transition. The merger was not a welcomed one by all staff and was accompanied with some technical bumps. However, Ray was well-liked among hourly students and full-time employees; his positive relationships with the students and full-time staff helped reduce technical failures and bridged the gap between newly merged staff.

Ray has an incredible amount of drive and determination. I am constantly in awe of his accomplishments and impressed with his upward professional progress. I can't recommend Ray enough for consideration for the Forty Under Forty Class of 2018. I would be glad to discuss further my recommendation at any time.

Best Regards,



Amanda Rasmusson
Director of Student Services and Marketing
Engineering-Liberal Arts and Sciences, Iowa State University

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

It is my pleasure to recommend Ray O'Donnell for the Forty under 40 award.

I had the pleasure of working with Ray at the Center for Distance and Online Learning on the campus of Iowa State University from 2008 to 2012. I hired Ray into our unique start-up to assist us with our marketing and communication efforts. He began contributing immediately and soon established himself as an incredibly valuable asset to our team.

Ray has terrific talents in finding creative methods to improve quality, service and efficiency, but his greatest talent is in helping people. The quick success of our entity would not have been possible without the efforts of Ray to understand the needs of our customers and the students we served. Ray took on duties beyond those he was hired to perform and helped countless numbers of students to complete their educational endeavors through online learning.

Outside of work, Ray was extremely dedicated to helping others. He served as a leader in the ATO Fraternity, became a leader in the campus Greek system, mentored ISU students, served as a Big Brother and worked with Youth and Shelter Services to assist youth in need of direction.

Ray is team player and his positive, can-do attitude brings out the best in those that work with him and makes our community a better place to live.

Please feel free to contact me at (515) 231-2520 should you like to discuss Ray's qualifications and experience further. I'd be happy to expand on my recommendation.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David M. Anderson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "David" being the most prominent.

David M. Anderson
Information Security Officer
Iowa Department of Transportation