

Date: January 10, 2018

Dear Forty Under 40 voting committee,

I'm pleased to support the nomination of Megan Vollstedt, executive director of the Iowa AgriTech Accelerator, for the Business Record's 2018 class of Forty Under 40. I've had the privilege of working with Megan through my involvement with The Accelerator, and her professionalism and commitment to the startup community and central Iowa is nothing short of commendable. Just like me, she was recently profiled in the Business Record as an innovator in our community and recognized as an innovative leader in the area of AgTech entrepreneurship.

As executive director of The Accelerator, Megan helps establish and manage a collaborative learning environment for the AgTech startups who come to Des Moines to participate in the program. With her help, the startups obtain mentorship, collaboration and on-site experience to advance their innovations and change the status quo. Megan has connected these very startups with corporate and research leaders building the future of agriculture in our state. She not only has a deep understanding of startups but, having served in the communications department at Workiva prior to her role with The Accelerator, she can also recognize what works and what doesn't when trying to accelerate a business. And, when they're not busy refining business plans and working on marketing strategies for their products, Megan enjoys showing the startups around the Des Moines metro region to relish in all that the city and surrounding communities have to offer.

Outside the office, Megan is a great advocate for the arts, health and community betterment. She's also actively involved in a number of young professional organizations, including Young Professionals of Ames and Young Professionals Connection.

I ask that you consider Megan for this year's class of Forty Under 40. She has a bright future ahead of her as an advocate for Des Moines and the promise this region brings for entrepreneurs and startups looking to grow their business.

Sincerely,

Tej Dhawan