

January 12, 2018

Des Moines Business Record
100 Fourth Street
The Depot at Fourth
Des Moines, IA 50309

Re: Nomination of Leslie C. Behaunek for the Forty Under 40 Award

Dear Forty Under 40 Nominating Committee:

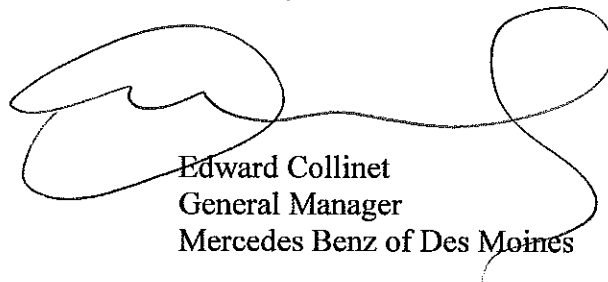
I write this letter to recommend Leslie Behaunek for the Forty Under 40 Award. I have had the pleasure of knowing Leslie for several years through her work with the Des Moines Choral Society, and I have been thoroughly impressed with her leadership of the organization.

Leslie is organized and focused, and she has a warm personality that brings people to the table. She understands when to delegate tasks to others and when to step in, and she has really come into her own as a volunteer leader of a non-profit arts organization. Leslie has truly been an asset to the Des Moines Choral Society during her tenure with the organization.

As her résumé shows, Leslie is successful in her field and gives back to the community in a number of ways. Leslie is a rising star in Des Moines' business and legal communities, and I am honored to recommend her for recognition as one of the Business Record's Forty Under 40.

Please contact me if you have any questions or would like additional information.

Sincerely,



Edward Collinet
General Manager
Mercedes Benz of Des Moines

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Dear Forty Under 40 Nominating Committee:

Three years ago in an introspective moment, I made a list of the people in my life whom I believe are making a difference for good in our community. Among others, that list included six young women who are bright and focused, who care about other people and the community in which we live. These are the people who bring me hope. Among the names on my list is Leslie Behaunek.

I first encountered Leslie Behaunek when I was president of the Des Moines Choral Society, a now 38-year old Des Moines performing ensemble. The most important task in any non-profit organization is to produce a solid slate of board members and officers who will fulfill their fiduciary responsibility to ensure a solid financial foundation for the organization so that the organization can fulfill its mission. When the nominating committee met in the spring of 2012, Drake Law School professor, Cathy Lesser Mansfield, remarked that she had a student who was looking for a significant way to become a part of the fabric of the Des Moines community. We, of course, followed up with Leslie Behaunek and, after interviewing her, asked her to join our board of directors. She came, not only with the desire to get involved in the community, but also with the understanding that real board membership includes a commitment of time, not just being a name on a list.

Since her first encounter with the Society, the depth of Ms. Behaunek's involvement has only increased. Realizing that the way to learn a community is to get involved, she first served as co-chair of the silent auction for our annual *Society Celebration* fund raising event. Working with the individual singers, Des Moines businesses and the event committee team, she shared her considerable organizational skills to produce a successful element of the event. She went on to serve as Vice President for Community Outreach, where she honed her marketing skills as she learned how the greater Des Moines community shares information and what timelines are involved to most effectively present a message. Finally, she moved into the board Presidency where she oversees the operation of the organization and works successfully with numerous volunteers who power the organization to fulfill its mission.

It is extremely rare for an individual straight out of school to actively seek roles of responsibility within a community, but Ms. Behaunek did just that! She brings a rare combination of intellect, common sense and imagination to her role with the Des Moines Choral Society, as I am sure she

does to all the other areas of her life. In other words, she is a difference maker, not just focusing on her profession, but on ways to make her community a better place to live.

After working with Ms. Behaunek for five years, I continue to appreciate the gifts that she brings not only to the Des Moines Choral Society, but also to the greater Des Moines community. Because she actively seeks opportunities to participate in the life of our community, I unconditionally endorse the nomination of Leslie C. Behaunek for the Forty Under 40 Award. She is a difference maker – someone in Des Moines who consistently brings me hope!

Yours,

Sharon E. Strohmaier
Executive Director
Iowa Religious Media Services