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ENGAGES AND INSPIRES IOWANS
ALONG THEIR JOURNEY OF
LIFELONG SCIENCE LEARNING.

December 27, 2018

Forty Under 40 Selection Committee:

When I think of the characteristics that define a Forty Under 40 recipient, I think of leadership, passion and a commitment to the community. Strikingly, those are the same characteristics I would use to describe my peer and friend, Chris Wood.

In all aspects of his life, Chris goes big or goes home. I've never met anyone who goes to such lengths to share his passions – whether it be the work of Make-A-Wish Iowa (where he serves as chief development officer), an event he's volunteering to help organize or even just a cool new restaurant or business in the community. Chris is someone you want on your team if you want the community to know about and get excited for something.

I experienced this firsthand during our time serving on the Young Professionals Connection board. As Charitable Chair, Chris led one of the organization's most active and engaged committees, a feat not to be understated when you're dealing with 20-year-olds.

Under his leadership, the committee planned opportunities for YPC members to learn about and become involved with charitable organizations around the community. One of the signature events was the 2015 YPC Volunteer Fair, which was presented by Drake University and sponsored by United Way of Central Iowa and Storey Kenworthy. The event connected people of all ages and interests with more than 70 nonprofit organizations that were seeking volunteers or support. The event was planned down to the smallest details, and the execution was impeccable. Attendance was record setting, but more importantly, there was a true sense of collaborative achievement among the committee, which says a lot about Chris's leadership style. He is a true servant leader.

I think it's no coincidence that Chris ended up with a career in nonprofits.

As chief development officer at Make-A-Wish Iowa, he is able to share stories of an organization that believes a wish experience can be life changing and help others realize that they can help make a child's wish a reality.

It's this combination of caring and charisma that make Chris so successful in all of his endeavors. His leadership, passion and commitment to the community are common themes in everything he does. And as a servant leader, he brings people along with him – helping to lift others up instead of focusing on his own accomplishments. For these reasons and many more, it is my pleasure to recommend Chris Wood for the 2019 Forty Under 40 class. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Emilee Richardson'.

Emilee Richardson
Director of Marketing & Public Relations
Science Center of Iowa & Blank IMAX Dome Theater
Forty Under 40 Class of 2015