



**HEADQUARTERS IOWA NATIONAL GUARD**  
**OFFICE OF THE STATE JUDGE ADVOCATE**  
CAMP DODGE JOINT MANEUVER TRAINING CENTER  
7105 NW 70<sup>TH</sup> AVENUE  
JOHNSTON, IOWA 50131-1824

January 6, 2019

Forty Under 40  
*BUSINESS RECORD*  
The Depot at 4th,  
100 4th Street,  
Des Moines, Iowa 50309

Members of the Forty Under 40 Committee,

I have known First Lieutenant (1LT) Blake since he was sworn in as an officer and a Judge Advocate (JAG) in the Iowa Army National Guard. I have supervised 1LT Blake for the last year as his direct superior at the 67<sup>th</sup> Troop Command (Iowa City). 1LT Blake serves as a Trial Counsel for the unit and provides legal advice to various commanding officers and staff officers. In addition to his advisory capacity, 1LT Blake tries administrative separation board hearing cases ("miniature trials" that center around determining whether to end a Soldier's military existence and, if so, determine how to characterize the nature of that service upon separation).

In my judgment 1LT Blake is an outstanding officer and judge advocate. Since finishing his training and assignment to the 67<sup>th</sup> Troop Command, he continues to grow rapidly. He is inquisitive by nature and always eager to learn more about the art of leadership. I also recently enjoyed litigating against him during his first separation board several months ago. In that case 1LT Blake was given the very difficult assignment of defending a Soldier who had, in a word, "ditched" a deployment. 1LT Blake, who does not litigate or do trial work in his civilian capacity, eagerly rallied to this Soldier's cause and, in my view, presented one of the most effective defenses I have ever seen for a judge advocate of his experience level.

Beyond his strictly professional capacity, 1LT Blake continues to be a valued member of 67<sup>th</sup> Troop Command as a young leader. He is insightful and conversant regarding issues and concepts unrelated to the military, and takes great delight in sharing thoughts and ideas. No matter the issue or his audience, 1LT Blake presents a universally positive and pleasant attitude to the table. Without a doubt, 1LT Blake has very quickly built a reputation within our unit as a level-headed and competent leader. I believe that 1LT Blake has a bright future in the Iowa Army National Guard.

It is with great pleasure that I highly recommend 1LT Blake for *Forty Under 40*. Such public recognition for his service and leadership would be well-placed and well-deserved.

Very respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. P. Hayek", is positioned above the printed name.

BENJAMIN P. HAYEK  
MAJ, JA  
Attorney-Advisor (General)