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January 11, 2019

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**VIA ONLINE SUBMISSION**

Business Record  
100 4<sup>th</sup> St.  
Des Moines, IA 50309

*Re: Nomination of Robert Hodges for Forty Under 40*

Dear Members of the Selection Committee:

Bob Hodges is one of the finest people I know. Based on his professional success and even more impressive personal character, I am pleased to nominate him for the 2019 Class of Forty Under 40.

I have known Bob for almost ten years and have observed him in both casual and professional settings. He is intelligent and insightful. He is respectful and respected. He listens more than he talks, but when he speaks he commands attention. In a profession often known for its bluster and ego, Bob is honest and humble. This is despite having accrued many more accolades than the majority of his peers.

In recent years, Bob's legal work has been recognized by Best Lawyers, Chambers USA and Super Lawyers. While these publications may not mean much to non-lawyers, appearing in all three is considered the "triple crown" in our profession. It is no surprise that he has quickly risen through the ranks to become the Chair of the Estate Planning Group at one of the most successful law firms in Iowa. Although he is not a member in my firm, I have referred numerous clients to him.

Bob has excelled academically—ranking in the top 10% in both undergraduate and law school, despite participating in numerous other activities including Law Review and four years of college football. He was honored as the Graduate Tax Scholar while earning his L.L.M. An L.L.M. (or Master of Laws) is not needed to practice law. Few attorneys in Des Moines have this advanced degree. I am not aware of any, other than Bob, that have one from the prestigious Georgetown University Law Center. The choice to take time away from his practice to obtain this additional credential shows his desire for knowledge, his work ethic, and his dedication to excellence.

These traits are long-standing--as evidenced by his achieving the rank of Eagle Scout--but he continues to hone them. He is a member of numerous professional groups, is on a key committee at his church, and is an alumnus of Leadership Iowa.

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All Forty Under 40 nominees engage in public service, and Bob is no exception. One thing that sets Bob apart is that his service includes having risked his own life on the front lines while providing legal guidance to the U.S. Army. After completing with distinction his own time in hot spots around the globe, Bob now provides ongoing support and counsel to multiple Veterans groups in Iowa.

I am fully aware of the competitive nature of this honor and the caliber of the nominees. Notwithstanding this very high bar, I assure you that Bob is a deserving candidate. His inclusion will elevate the award, and his classmates will be honored to be associated with him going forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "David Nelmark", with a stylized, flowing script.

David Nelmark  
Partner, Gislason and Hunter  
President, Polk County Bar Association  
Member, Forty Under 40 Class of 2012

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