

January 10, 2018

Dear Forty Under 40 Selection Committee:

This letter will serve the purpose of nominating Belle Du Chene for the 20th Annual Forty Under 40 class. I am happy to be a part of her life and her journeys in Des Moines.

I'm just gonna go right in - My entire life in Des Moines has been made possible by Belle's openness to new people and dedication to making the city better. When I first came here, she was 50 percent of my Des Moines social network-and then my other friend moved away! I didn't know anybody. She took a chance, even with her incredibly busy schedule, on a wacky orthodontist who moved from Los Angeles and took me around to a ton of events. My knowledge of Des Moines' art and culture scene completely came from her. My new wife moved here because Belle helped her too fall in love with the city. Belle has even connected my wife to Bras for the Cause (where a portion of the proceeds for her art now goes), MainFrame, the Des Moines Art Center and many more organizations.

As I accompanied Belle around town, I realized that I was basically hanging out with a mayor-in-training. Belle knows EVERYBODY. And connects EVERYBODY to EVERYBODY. It was nuts. She was a popular, funny girl who was super well liked and had good fashion sense. I was very lucky to be her friend. Through the events she took me to, I started to carve out a social circle of my own.

Belle is incredibly smart and motivated. She and I have invested in a business together when nobody else would join up with me. I am happy to partner with her because of her business sense. If she doesn't know something, she buys a book and reads about it or sits down for coffee with someone who does. She learned how to do financial projections and supply chain management by reading books she found out they used at Harvard. She means business! She is also creating her own cosmetic product and is not only a visionary but works herself crazy because she believes anything is possible. She also shows up on time to meetings. And she seems to be at all the events around town. I dunno how long I should gush about her in this letter, but I could go on if need be.

Sure. I'll go on. It's relevant to say that she's not simply a popular prom-queen style character. Belle has earned respect by just being a darn good person. She keeps in touch with people and has a sincere care for peoples' futures. She's one of my favorite people currently alive today and I think she should be added to this list.

If she sees this, she'll probably blush and cry. And laugh. Because she laughs and smiles a lot. She is humble to a T and would help a friend with anything, anytime. Without asking for anything in return. I am happy to write this letter on her behalf.

Sincerely,
Dr. Brad Podray
Orthodontist