“I HAVE A DREAM” Foundation

 Des Moines

January 8, 2013

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Business Publications Corporation

100 – 4th St.

Des Moines, IA 50309

Dear Jason,

As the chair of the board for the Des Moines “I Have a Dream” Foundation, I am writing to nominate Emily Hamilton for this year’s 40 Under 40 class. Emily’s accomplishments as Executive Director for “I Have a Dream” and her entrepreneurial vision for the future of the organization make her a worthy candidate.

Since joining “I Have a Dream” in 2010, Emily’s professional accomplishments include:

* Increasing fundraising revenues by 300% and securing numerous $100,000+ gifts;
* Strengthening the organization’s stability and sustainability through strong management and financial oversight;
* Developed a new model for providing education support and building a culture of college and career readiness for at-risk students in Des Moines;
* Grown the organization’s outreach and community involvement by expanding the board and committees, creating and implementing a comprehensive marketing & outreach strategy, and developing new partnerships with other community organizations
* Established herself as a network-wide leader by coordinating activities with other “I Have a Dream” affiliates around the country and the national “I Have a Dream” Foundation board of directors;

Emily brings more to “I Have a Dream” than just her fundraising and management experience. She brings passion, creativity and commitment to the Dreamers. Working with at-risk kids means that there will be lots of challenges. On any given day, Emily may be meeting with the president of a local corporation to ask for significant funding; or she may be taking a student home after basketball practice (because he’s homeless and otherwise wouldn’t be able to participate), or sitting down with a family to discuss how we can help their Dreamer raise money for a school trip that she desperately wants to attend but that the family can’t afford.

Whether she’s fundraising or problem solving, Emily doesn’t give up, or ever say that the effort to help a student isn’t worth it. She finds creative ways to address barriers, and if her first or second or third strategy doesn’t seem to be working, she goes back to the drawing board to find a new idea.



Emily has helped “I Have a Dream” evolve from a relatively small, unknown organization, into one that more people in our community are talking about, and one that will create sustainable change for our community through education.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Barp

President, Des Moines “I Have a Dream” Foundation

Vice President, Worldwide Finance, Kemin Industries