

Amy Jennings
1216 49th Street, Unit 3
West Des Moines, IA 50266

January 8, 2015

Des Moines Business Record
The Depot at 4th
100 4th Street
Des Moines, Iowa 50309

Dear Forty Under 40 Selection Committee:

I am honored to know Emilee Richardson and to recommend her for the next Forty Under 40 Class. From experience, I know that leading the Young Professionals Connection (YPC) is a much bigger job than most people realize. It takes someone with vision, tact, perseverance, and natural leadership abilities to successfully lead a group of her peers in a highly visible organization. Emilee is that person.

Thrilled is how I described my reaction to hearing Emilee was elected YPC president. In her, I saw a wisdom beyond her years and a passion for change which was what YPC needed to grow. I continued to be thrilled as I watched Emilee reorganize the board structure and lead strategic planning. One task I was especially keen to observe was combining the Juice YP of the Year awards with the YPC YP of the Year awards. Both organizations had so much pride in their recognition systems, but collaboration was an obvious route because the goals were the same. Emilee navigated through history and strong opinions with grace while continually making sure YPC's mission and purpose were never compromised. The result was a partnership which will recognize young leaders with three unique awards and elevate their contributions to the community. This was a true win for both organizations, thanks to Emilee's leadership.

Exceptional community leaders seek compromise, hold true to their personal and organization's purpose, and demonstrate grace during change. My utmost respect is given to Emilee because she exemplifies community leadership. That is why I am thrilled to give a recommendation which could help her be recognized for her contributions to YPC and as a leader in greater Des Moines. Thank you for considering her for the next Forty Under 40 class.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Amy Jennings". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a large, stylized 'A' and a long, sweeping underline.

Amy Jennings
Executive Director
Greater Des Moines Leadership Institute
Forty Under 40 Class of 2007

Jason Swanson
The Business Record
100 Fourth Street
Des Moines, IA 50309

Dear Mr. Swanson,

As President of the largest and most influential young professionals organization in the region, Emilee Richardson has proven herself as a leader in Greater Des Moines. Under Emilee's watch as President, Greater Des Moines has earned the status of the #1 City for Young Professionals. It is my honor to nominate Emilee Richardson as a Business Record Forty Under 40 honoree.

It was a great pleasure to serve on the Greater Des Moines Young Professionals Connection (YPC) Board with Emilee. Emilee is now entering her second year as the President of the organization. As President, Emilee has led YPC through major organizational changes and represented the organization with true professionalism every step of the way. In 2014, Emilee led YPC into the formation of a partnership with Juice magazine, which combined the two organizations' YP of the Year awards. Through that partnership, YPC launched its NEXT: Des Moines professional development event series, a game-changer for the organization. Behind the scenes, Emilee guided the YPC Board through a much-needed reorganization process which will keep the Board and organization strong for years to come. Through it all, she has been a visible and well-spoken advocate of the organization and has represented YPC well at community events and in the media, having done countless interviews with The Des Moines Register, Juice magazine, and television news stations.

As a leader, Emilee's composed demeanor makes people feel comfortable and valued, allowing them to do their best work. She is a strong communicator, a trustworthy confidant, and brings a sense of calm to every situation. She enables YPC Board members to learn, grow, and succeed. Emilee has been a strong, hardworking, dedicated President, but her leadership goes far beyond her appointed position. As a Board member, Emilee was a clear leader within YPC before becoming the President. Throughout her time on the Board, her voice and opinion have carried a lot of weight, and when she commits to a project you can rest assured that she will complete it.

Emilee is truly one of the faces of the young professional community in Greater Des Moines. As a result, she is well-positioned to be an influential leader and ambassador for our region as we continue to reach new heights. Please consider Emilee Richardson as a Business Record Forty Under 40 honoree.

Sincerely:



Kyle Oppenhuizen
Communications Project Manager, Greater Des Moines Partnership
Board Member, Young Professionals of Iowa



January 9, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

I am pleased to recommend Emilee Richardson for the Business Record's 2015 *Forty Under 40* recognition.

Throughout the last two years, Emilee has led SCI's communications and marketing efforts. Under her leadership, SCI is not only serving a record number of participants, but she is having a direct impact on the long-term success and sustainability of one of our community's most important cultural assets, and one of the most highly regarded science centers in the country. With Emilee's professional leadership, SCI has realized two of its most successful years of the past decade.

Emilee's commitment to the SCI brand spans eight years, a tenure unmatched by many young professionals today. Emilee began her career as an Education Programs Presenter, communicating her love of science with the public on the floor of the Science Center. Today, her professional expertise in social media, brand marketing and integrated communications has earned her a seat at SCI's senior management table and her success is regularly acknowledged by SCI's board of directors.

My recommendation of Emilee for this prestigious community recognition is not done lightly. Emilee has gained my respect and that of her peers through her quality work, her demonstrated leadership both individually and as a team member, and her willingness to take on new challenges and responsibilities.

Emilee is also a passionate advocate for building a better and stronger community as demonstrated by her role as President of the Young Professionals Connection. Emilee is a tremendous asset to Greater Des Moines and should be recognized as a Business Record 2015 *Forty Under 40*.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Leisha Barcus'.

Leisha Barcus

Leisha.barcus@sciowa.org





January 9, 2015

To "40 Under 40" Selection Committee,

Emilee Richardson exemplifies the best of what we strive for at the Science Center of Iowa (SCI). She has a foundation built on the highest professional standards, enhanced with a passion for learning, balanced with a meaningful commitment to the community!

Emilee first worked at the Science Center on the "front lines" as one of our talented team of science program presenters helping visitors understand complex science concepts in fun and engaging ways. She was able to utilize her great people skills in this setting and also quickly demonstrated her ability to work effectively in a complex team environment. These early experiences working directly with our visitors have grown into a mature understanding of the many audiences who attend SCI - knowledge she is creatively applying as she shapes new ways to better serve them. In her current capacity as *Marketing and Communications Manager* she has quickly emerged as a leader among our staff, specifically building on her experience and depth of understanding of what our participants need to have an amazing visit to SCI.

Emilee has also been an integral part of, and played a leadership role for, SCI's expansion of the range of audiences we serve. The organization's strategic plan outlines objectives to expand our "live long" learning audiences dramatically in the coming years. Her work to engage Iowa's young professional community with SCI's programming, events, and volunteer opportunities has been an overwhelming success in reaching these new audiences. She has created a vision and lead the effort to place SCI at the forefront of utilizing social media as a key part of marketing strategies. Under her leadership our social media engagement has doubled over the previous year.

I also had the opportunity to work directly with Emilee while she was working at IRIS. Emilee worked closely with SCI to place an international intern from Egypt, Mohamed Zarkani, at SCI in 2010. All involved with the internship rate it as one of their more memorable work experiences and the program's success was largely due to Emilee's professionalism, continuous engagement, and follow through.

And in closing – Emilee is just a delightful, positive person that is fun to work around. Her "can-do" attitude inspires others to accomplish more and her successes to date at SCI will serve as the platform from which she will help shape a visionary future for the organization.

I highly recommend Emilee Richardson for consideration as part of the next class of "40 Under 40"!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'C. Simmons'.

Curtis Simmons
President & CEO
Science Center of Iowa

January 9, 2015

To Whom in May Concern,

I would like to submit Emilee Richardson for consideration as a member of the Des Moines Business Record Forty Under 40 class of 2015. As a 2012 class member who assisted in the process of reading applications last year, I have seen the caliber of applicants and recipients of this honor. Emilee not only meets the requirements to receive this type of recognition but has met them at the young age of 27! I worked with Emilee at the Science Center of Iowa (SCI) where she currently serves as the marketing and communications manager. Within SCI, she has truly "climbed the ladder." She began as a summer camp intern in 2007, moved up to a part-time programs presenter and was chosen for marketing and communications position upon her return in 2011. In 2013, SCI restructured its communications department giving Emilee even more leadership responsibilities. Emilee's self-proclaimed "science nerdiness" is evident in the passion she puts towards all parts of her job. She relentlessly looks for ways to utilize new media to share her passion for science and technology with the entire online community. SCI has been able to significantly expand its new media footprint thanks to her effort, and message consistency has greatly improved. In fact, she has been recognized as a leader in social media in greater Des Moines, serving on panels of experts and providing guidance for numerous organizations. Whenever I have asked for her assistance with projects, even after leaving SCI, the professionalism she has exuded has been exceptional. She loves sharing her excitement for science with visitors of all ages and has been highly involved in SCI's girls in science initiative. She's even an official NASA Solar System Ambassador!

Beyond science, she is equally passionate about Des Moines and finding ways to be involved in the community. She was the 2014 president of the Greater Des Moines Young Professionals Connection, was president-elect in 2013 and served as social media chairwoman in 2012. This year, she was asked to again fill the role of president due to a conflict-of-interest for the president-elect. Emilee faced stiff competition in her original race to be president, and I believe her positive attitude, tenacity and passion for everything Des Moines helped her to win. One of the new effort she spear-headed for YPC in the last year is a collaboration with Juice Magazine on the NEXT: Des Moines series. Along with the series, this partnership has brought together the Juice YP of the Year award and the YPC annual awards. When researching her volunteering experience to write this letter, I continue to be amazed at the multitude of groups with which she has been involved. And yet, I am not surprised because I have seen the light in her eyes when she walks into a room of strangers. To her, every person she meets is a potential new friend and partner. Since moving to Des Moines to attend Drake University, she has embraced this city and its people. She is a naturally born networker, and I know she will impress us with her newest undertakings time and time again. Emilee is an asset to the non-profit community where she works as well as the business community for whom she is a tireless cheerleader. I strongly recommend Emilee Richardson for the Forty Under 40 class of 2014.

Sincerely,

Sara Kobilka

Des Moines Business Record Forty Under 40 Class of 2012