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Dear *Forty Under 40* Selection Committee,

Dynamic. Thoughtful. Strong. Visionary. Compassionate. These are just a few of the words I would use to describe Christina DeShaw, an amazing business leader and community contributor whom I recommend for the 2015 Class of *Forty Under 40*.

Throughout the past year, I have had the pleasure of working with Christina both one-on-one as her coach as well as in the Acceleration Mastermind, a small group of high-achieving leaders that I facilitate. During this time, I have witnessed Christina's stellar business expertise as she has repeatedly taken the initiative to make her organization the best it can be. She has a keen sense of recognizing ways to continuously improve and grow, whether company-wide or on an individual basis, and proactively designs programs and implements systems to make that growth a reality. Christina doesn't just think and wish; she strategizes, connects, and takes action.

On the personal side, Christina strives for excellence in her various roles – Mom, volunteer, community member, and more – and does so with grace and positivity. The mother of twins, one of them born with significant heart issues, Christina has tended to her family's needs with compassion and care while also serving as an advocate for "heart kids." Whether making blankets for special needs children or building community and sharing resources through her writing, Christina makes a difference. She has a gift for creating solutions and puts them into practice whether at home, at the office, or in the communities in which she serves.

Christina has experienced her share of adversity and, throughout it all, continues to look for opportunities to grow, learn, and help others. In every interaction I have shared with Christina over the past year, she has always brought her "A game" and generously offered her expertise and creative ideas to benefit those around her. She is an inspiration and role model for so many, and a leader in the truest sense of the word.

As a former *Forty Under 40* honoree (Class of 2012), I recognize the quality, contribution, and purposefulness inherent in those receiving this designation. Without hesitation, I highly recommend Christina for this honor, as she represents the qualities of the award with excellence, class, and heart.

Warmly,

Christine D. Hegstad, Ph.D.
President