

May 26, 2017

Des Moines Business Record
Women of Influence – Emerging Business Leader
Recognition Selection Committee

Dear Committee Members:

With great pleasure I recommend Abby Rodewald as a most worthy candidate for this year's recognition of Women of Influence – Emerging Business Leader. For the past several years I have had the opportunity to work with Abby and observe and admire her outstanding community and career path successes.

Poise. Confidence. Leader. Role Model. Activator. Achiever. Consensus Builder. These are but a few key words I think of when describing Abby. I first met Abby shortly after she moved to Des Moines following her graduation from Iowa State University. Abby had become involved with YPC through her boyfriend, Cory Sharp. While YPC may have been Cory's passion first, it didn't take Abby long to grow passionate about the organization and this new city she now calls home. Abby took on YPC leadership roles with enthusiasm, commitment and hard work. She gained great respect and trust from the YPC membership and two years ago was elected President-Elect of YPC where she now serves as President. To every effort she brings passion, efficiency and visionary impact. She fosters an environment of team, and makes sure that all involved in a project or event are genuinely acknowledged and valued for their contributions.

With a clear sense of self, purpose and vision, Abby is charting a path for her life that has already garnered much deserved acknowledgement of her outstanding personal and professional skills. Whether in her career or community engagement, when Abby makes a commitment she stands by it by giving her all ... she won't go in half way.

This proved true recently as she took a risk and made a pivot in her career path. While she enjoyed working in her educated field of Landscape Architecture, she was beginning to feel a desire to do something more fulfilling and challenging. That calling led her to her new role as Manager of the Heart of Iowa (HOI) store in Valley Junction. In this role, she is responsible for the day-to-day operations including managing staff, organizing special projects, being involved in the community, social marketing and more. Specifically, her connection to other business leaders and business professionals is proving a great asset to the HOI operations as one of her main goals is to grow the business, specifically the business-to-business sector.

Abby's strong passion for giving back to the community has also fit nicely with HOI's strong foundation in supporting many community and charitable efforts. Her commitment to Greater Des Moines, the YPC organization and Valley Junction shows her strong leadership skills. Many young people would not have taken the chance in changing careers, but Abby wants to be passionate about not only her

community involvement, but her career and this ability to take her career in a different direction shows what a leader she can be to others.

Abby is truly an emerging leader who has and will continue to have a great impact on our community. I am honored to support her nomination for the 2017 Women of Influence – Emerging Business Leader.

Sincerely,


Mary Bontrager
Executive Vice President,
Talent Development

