



It's our name . . . and our promise.

Suku Radia

CEO and President

(515) 245-5656 • (515) 247-2150 fax

May 19, 2014

Selection Committee

Meredith Woman of Influence

Business Record

100 4th Street

Des Moines, IA 50309

Members of the Selection Committee:

This letter is written to support the nomination of Emily Abbas as an *Emerging Woman of Influence*. Emily is a young lady with a remarkable record of accomplishments.

She currently serves as Executive Director of Public Relations at a very successful public relations, web design and advertising agency, Strategic America. Amongst her notable achievements is her service as the account and public relations lead on the Governor's STEM Advisory Council. This is a significant undertaking and Emily is doing an exceptional job of attaining 95% message penetration.

Previously, she held a number of responsible positions at Aviva USA, including Communications Director and Business Manager to the Regional CMO. She launched Aviva USA's Diversity and Inclusion program, which received a global Diversity Award. I could enumerate a number of other accomplishments at Aviva but the bottom line is she was well respected, perceived as a real team player and someone who understood the importance of customer and employee retention.

Emily has attained great success in her chosen fields and has never failed to exceed expectations. She is hard-working, dedicated and yet understands the art of caring for her fellow employees. Her academic record at the undergraduate and graduate level was exceptional.

In terms of her contribution to community, she is the current president of the Board of the Des Moines Community Playhouse, which is undergoing a major transformation. Emily has significantly impacted fundraising efforts for the Playhouse. As co-chair of the Hollywood Halloween event, Emily led efforts to raise over \$100,000. She has served as the president of the Drake University Alumni Board as well as being a member of its Board. She is very devoted to her alma mater, Drake University. In 2012 and 2013,

May 19, 2014

Emily served as co-chair of the Des Moines Symphony's Yankee Doodle Pops concert, which is a major undertaking attracting over 125,000 people for an outdoor concert held around Independence Day. She is a five-year donor and member of the United Way of Central Iowa's Women's Leadership Connection. I could enumerate many other community activities, but the message will remain the same: Emily gets things done because she is persistent and driven. She is wise beyond her years. She provides great leadership by setting an example. What a delightful and affable young lady!

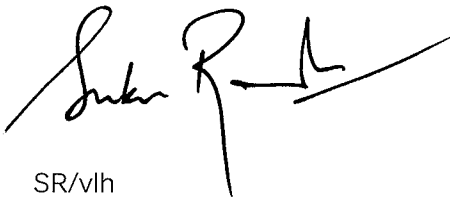
In terms of her reputation, Emily enjoys an impeccable one. She has the utmost of integrity and people seek her out for her wise counsel. Students at Drake University and Simpson College are the beneficiaries of certain courses she has taught there. The student feedback validates how much wisdom she has, how she inspires others to do better and how much she enjoys human interaction.

Emily has already received some wonderful accolades:

- Named by the *Des Moines Register* as one of the 14 People to Watch in 2014.
- Participant in the Greater Des Moines Leadership Institute Class of 2003/2004.
- Drake University named her national "Young Alumni Loyalty Award" winner in 2013.
- Named "PR Professional of the Year" by the Central Iowa PRSA Chapter.

The list is longer, but the message is simple. She has been recognized for much and given her commitment to family, community and doing the "right thing," Emily will be a great honoree of the Meredith Emerging Woman of Influence Award. Her recognition will inspire others and set the bar very high. I urge you to accord Emily this award which will be well-deserved recognition of her many years of paying her "civic rent."

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Susan R. L.", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

SR/vlh