Letter of Recommendation for Ellen Nelson as Woman Business Owner of the Year

Dear Business Record:

Intelligent, empowering, encouraging, empathetic, thorough, organized, kind, gentle and humble - all these adjectives describe Ellen Nelson, owner of Funding Solutions, Inc. Funding Solutions is a fundraising consulting business. Many of the Greater Des Moines non-profit fundraisers have been successful because of Ellen. Although she does not ask for money directly, I have watched her train novice volunteers.  She schools them in fundraising etiquette (including writing thank you notes for any solicitation meeting), provides background information on the person or company to be solicited, suggests a target ask amount and then role plays with them until they are comfortable making the call.

I have worked with Ellen as she helped Zach Mannheimer develop a realistic budget when he was starting the Des Moines Social Club.  Then she guided him in selecting prospects for funding and in tailoring an approach appropriate for each prospect. I am aware of similar work she did with Legal Aid Iowa...as a recipient of a fundraising ask and yes, we gave.  I also worked closely with Ellen in raising over $2,000,000 to complete the Jester Park Nature Center. She provided me with detailed information prior to each of my calls and stayed in contact and encouraged me along the way. Ellen would say she did not raise the money for the Nature Center rather the committee did - but we would not have been successful without her support, organization and follow through.

One of the reasons the Greater Des Moines area is thriving is that Ellen is always in the background seeing that worthwhile efforts raise the funds they need. She is deserving of being named the Business Record’s Woman Business Owner of the Year.

Sincerely,

Allison Fleming