I met Cal Hultman in January 2012, during the first legislative session I spent as a lobbyist. I was 27 years old and a little uneasy about working in the “Third House.” I gravitated towards both peers closer to my age and also those with many more years of experience. Cal was one of the more approachable lobbyists and had great stories to share. It wasn’t long before I was joining him in the lobby lounge once or twice a day to hear about his past experiences and talk about what was really happening behind closed doors.

Cal was first elected to the Iowa Senate in 1972, 12 years before I was born, but that didn’t change the relevancy of the stories he shared. It was Cal, as the Senate Republican Leader, who worked with Democratic Leader Lowell Junkins to create the funnel deadlines now followed closely by lobbyists, legislators, and media alike. In the late 1980s, Cal help to draft the creation of the Revenue Estimating Conference, a three-person board charged with estimating annual revenues for the State of Iowa. Since 1987, the REC has guided the Iowa Legislature in their annual budget discussions with the Governor.

Although I worked on the Democratic side of the Iowa House and Cal has strong ties to the Republican Party, it didn’t change the depth and quality of our conversations. I often asked Cal questions about how things had changed over the years, to which he always replied with optimism, assuring me things were not worse; things were simply different.

There are so many impressive things about Cal and his experiences as a statesman, because he is no less. Named Jaycee Outstanding Young Man in Iowa 1972, Cal was also named one of top ten national Republican legislative leaders in 1981. He worked across the aisle and considered it an honor to serve his constituents in the Iowa Senate. As a founder of Hope Lutheran Church in West Des Moines, Cal was raising money for their current church, while at the same time he was helping lead fundraising efforts at St. Francis of Assisi where his wife belonged. He continues to support many of the programs at Hope Lutheran is a strong advocate for the church and personal spiritual development both.

After he retired and I moved from lobbying to research in the Capitol, Cal continued to visit me in the State House for coffee. We would talk about legislation and policy changes that were happening. He would share his insight into the “politics of the politics.” We would talk about our families and he would share photos of his grandson in Texas. He gave me advice on how to support family members struggling with addiction. But no matter what, he always was sure to ask whether I was striving to be more. While I loved my job at the Capitol, it was he that pushed me to keep looking for stronger roles I could take in my career and in the community. I feel blessed every day to have Cal as a mentor, confidante, and supporter.

We continue to meet for coffee, now that I’ve moved to a new job. And he continues to ask about my family and share photos of his grandson. He shares the titles of new history books I need to read and I can always count on a text or email at the right time.

Over time I have had the opportunity to get to know Cal, including his love for woodworking and for his wife, sons and their families. He spent time as a kid in Wyoming and continues to spend time at the cabin he and his wife share. He often sends photos of his horse rides and the gorgeous mountain views from their home. A friendly and approachable man, Cal is also a private person and nothing means more to him than his relationships with others and his faith. He cares deeply about those around him and more than anything, he is one of the most humble people I’ve ever met.

It is a true honor to nominate Cal for this award.

Sincerely,

Andrea Woodard

Public Policy Manager, Greater Des Moines Partnership

2014 Business Record 40 Under Forty

2014 Juice Young Professional of the Year