

June 23, 2016

Connie Wimer
Chairman
Business Publications Corporation
100 4th Street
Des Moines, Iowa 50309

Dear Connie,

I am writing to endorse the nomination of **Jim Cownie** for the 2016 Sages Over 70 recognition. Jim is one of central Iowa's most successful and respected business leaders, with a legacy of service as a community-builder, philanthropist and mentor.

Jim and Patty Cownie have generously supported United Way for decades. Jim chaired the 1992 campaign. That year Jim and Patty joined the United Way Tocqueville Society, and they are among the longest-standing members of our most prestigious recognition society. They are the 2006 recipients of the Tocqueville Award, the highest honor United Way bestows to an individual or family for sustained commitment to United Way and our community through service, advocacy and philanthropy.

He is a Des Moines native, and at age 26 was an early pioneer in the cable television industry, founding Heritage Communications. He grew that company into a \$350 million a year business with more than 1 million subscribers in 22 states. He sold the business to TCI, Inc. He elected to stay in Des Moines, and built a series of new businesses, becoming one of the community's leading real estate developers and investors.

As a philanthropist, Jim has made an indelible impact on our community. His generosity created the Cownie Sports Complex in Des Moines, the Patty and Jim Cultural Center at the Iowa State Fair and scholarships for students attending Dowling Catholic High School.

1111 9th Street

Suite 100

Des Moines, IA 50314

515.246.6500

www.unitedwaydm.org

**United Way
of Central Iowa**

LIVE UNITED



Jim's nonprofit and charitable leadership includes chairing the local boards of the YMCA, the Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines, the Greater Des Moines Committee, the Greater Des Moines Partnership, and the Downtown Partnership. Among his many honors, Jim has been inducted into the Iowa Business Hall of Fame and The Cable Center's Hall of Fame. He has been awarded the Spirit of Philanthropy Award by the Association of Fundraising Professionals and the A. Arthur Davis Award by the Greater Des Moines Leadership Institute.

I am personally acquainted with Jim and Patty's children and extended family. Jim has passed along his legacy of generosity and commitment to making central Iowa a stronger community through a commitment to building and sustaining our civic assets. Jim is certainly worthy of the great honor of being named one of the 2016 Sages Over 70.

Sincerely,

Mary B. Sellers

President

United Way of Central Iowa

GREAT THINGS HAPPEN WHEN WE LIVE UNITED