



June 30, 2017

Business Publications  
100 4th Street  
Des Moines, Iowa 50309

Sages Over 70 Selection Committee -

I am thrilled to have been asked to write this letter on behalf of Paul W. Danforth, a nominee for the Sages Over 70 class of 2017. I have known Paul since coming to Des Moines in 1988 and from the moment we met, I knew I had made a friend for life and an influential and caring professional committed to providing hope and healing for many.

Paul Danforth is a stalwart in the mental health field and has worked in Polk County as a licensed social worker trained in psycho-therapy for decades. He counsels individuals and families on a regular basis in conjunction with Primary Health Care and Eyerly Ball Community Mental Health Services. With a B.A. from Drake University and a M.S.W. from the University of Nebraska, Paul's long and distinguished career spans nearly 60 years and includes service as a child welfare worker, marriage and family counselor, administrator, private practitioner and adjunct instructor at Drake, Grandview and the University of Iowa.

Paul's commitment to the community has manifested itself in his professional achievements and his volunteer involvement to include board service with the African American Museums, VNS, Planned Parenthood, American Friends Services Committee and Joshua Christian Academy.

Where I have come to know Paul the best is in the church where we both worship, St Paul African American Methodist Episcopal. Paul is both a spiritual leader and mentor to the young and not so young in our congregation. A 75 year member, Paul's service to the church spans 66 years of service as a Trustee or Steward where his wise counsel and steady hand have guided our congregation.

Paul's goal for the people he serves is for them to have peace of mind and internal joy. In his own words, "No matter what their situation or circumstance, peace of mind and internal joy give hope." Paul works with his clients to help them tune in to the way they think and to think more positively. "I can help patients distinguish between what is real and what isn't. Thus, helping lay a foundation for them to develop a positive sense of who they are and begin the healing process."

Paul is a sage, both astute and erudite who has spent his life's work tackling the challenges and addressing the needs of our community's most vulnerable children and families. Paul's integrity in service, strength in advocacy, and breadth in humanity is what sets him apart.

At a time when Iowa's mental health infrastructure is weak and failing to meet the needs of our State's children and families, it is heartening to know that we have a mental health giant like Paul Danforth in our midst to give hope, healing and internal joy.

It has been said that every life speaks to the power of what can be done. Paul W. Danforth's accomplishments during his life and professional career speak volumes about the possibilities of what one can do and for this and so many other reasons he is worthy of the distinction of Sage over 70.

Respectfully –

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Teree Caldwell-Johnson". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a horizontal line that extends to the right.

Teree L. Caldwell-Johnson, CEO