

March 28, 2019

The Dr. David B. Carmichael Leadership Award Selection Committee
OK Ethics
P.O. Box 3174
Oklahoma City, OK 73101-3174

Dear Selection Committee Members:

I would like to recommend my colleague, Chris Zach, for The Dr. David B. Carmichael Leadership Award. Chris embodies the principles of integrity and ethical leadership on a daily basis.

Chris serves as the marketing manager for our BKD Oklahoma offices in Oklahoma City, Tulsa and Enid. He is a man of deep faith, which guides his thoughts and actions at home and in the workplace. One of the five pillars of BKD's values is *Integrity First*. Integrity First means that integrity trumps economics every time. His position at BKD allows him to educate prospective clients, referral sources and business leaders on BKD's strengths and value proposition that is beneficial to our clients. Chris strives to build trust with these individuals and to accurately represent the capabilities of our firm and how we may be of service to a client's specific needs. He does not waiver from that honesty, "stretch the truth" or misrepresent the firm's or an individual's capabilities. Chris demonstrates that same sense of responsibility with his coworkers, and it is critical for him to command the respect of his peers and the leadership group within our firm. Chris is a committed professional depended upon to consistently perform at a very high level and to position those around him to successfully carry out their job responsibilities.

Chris, by nature, is a server and connector. He thrives on building up others for success, whether it is his colleagues, local charitable organizations or others in need. Chris is very passionate about mentoring, sharing his experiences with others and challenging younger people to set high standards for themselves and stretch their talents. As previously mentioned, Chris is a man of deep faith. He had a difficult upbringing and uses those experiences and his faith to positively impact the lives of others. For many years, Chris has led a small group of high school boys in fellowship, bible study and personal development activities on a weekly basis throughout the school year. Chris believes his spiritual gifts are wisdom, encouragement and mercy and utilizes those gifts to share personal life lessons learned, give uplifting reinforcement and provide a place of acceptance for adolescent men who often are struggling to navigate their development at such a pivotal time in their maturation process.

Chris is known throughout BKD Oklahoma as one of the leaders of our charitable and philanthropic efforts, and he is the go-to for such initiatives and ideas. His involvement and activities are too voluminous to list, but a few examples that highlight his passion and commitment to serving his community include coordinating BKD Oklahoma City's office-wide United Way Day of Caring activities on an annual basis, serving on the leadership council for the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma, fundraising for Ronald McDonald House and serving as a member of Leadership Oklahoma City's LOYAL class (Linking OKC's Young Adult Leaders). Additionally, Chris works with many of our younger professionals to encourage their commitment to philanthropic activities by making connections that provide an avenue for them to volunteer time and serve on the boards of directors for many non-profit agencies across Oklahoma City, Tulsa and Enid.

Chris' role requires him to effectively work with a very diverse mix of personnel across our three offices in Oklahoma and across the firm, including client service professionals ranging from entry-level associates to partners, human resources, recruiting, information technology and administrative support staff. We are a generationally and gender diverse team, which naturally results in different operating styles and personal beliefs. Chris expertly builds relationships and trust with all these individuals to allow them to perform effectively as a cohesive team. This diverse interaction has provided Chris the opportunity to expand his horizons and see different perspectives brought by team members and appreciate and value the diversity of thought.

Also, Chris has been recognized by various peer groups for his contributions to professional and charitable organizations, including the Oklahoma Society of CPAs' Trailblazer and Distinguished CPA awards, Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma's Community Service Award and BKD Oklahoma's Wow! Award.

For all the reasons I briefly touched on above and the countless other examples I could provide, I believe Chris deeply demonstrates a commitment to excellence in our profession and exemplifies the ethical character and values we all strive to emulate. Chris is a very deserving candidate for The Dr. David B. Carmichael Leadership Award.

Sincerely,

BKD, LLP



T. Carley Williams, CPA
Managing Partner | Oklahoma City, Tulsa, Enid

TCW/jbs