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To Whom It May Concern:

It has been my honor to work in various capacities with James Laero. As a coworker I saw firsthand as he developed the successful marketing and business development processes for many different fields. I learned many things by watching him, developing and extending my own vocational abilities from opportunities he made for team members. Several things about James stand out: character, vision, his communication abilities and management presence.

On project after project, Mr. Laero demonstrated a strong grasp of marketing. He has a detailed understanding and skill in the use of marketing tools, as well as in digital-age terminology and systems. He was there on the ground floor when information technology broke into mainstream use and pioneered its use locally - including one of the first global websites for non-profit groups and was among the first to use locally produced video content in web casting. Though he's produced all types of media from print to video to the web to email, the digital revolution is only a vehicle for him. He knows his target demographics and how to communicate to them. James is skilled at overseeing market development to adroitly position a company's product mix. He is keenly adept at developing the brand's relationship with customers and has, from the first day I worked with him, kept that customer relationship primary in our company and kept those of us who deal with the public, focused on serving them.

James Laero does well at these things because he is an excellent communicator. What sets him apart is his ability to articulate a concept using several different types of media. He is an accomplished writer, having written many motivational pieces and also as the editor and a columnist for our print magazine. He contributed articles for a 288-page history book about the town of Vandergrift, *Something Better Than The Best*, while also serving as its main editor and doing a major style re-write of the entire book. James's editing abilities also extend into photos and videos as well. A stellar photographer, he has taken thousands of action photos of athletes and athletic contests on top of regional scenery shots and individual profiles. But James is also a master at the premier photo-editing program, Adobe Photoshop, and in his hands, imagery become dynamic resources in marketing media. He is excellent at presentation and has an extraordinary sense of what appeals to the eye - and ear as well. James has nearly three decades of public speaking experience, with a clear and disarming cadence that draws the listener in and connects. It is a style that I have personally witnessed in his inspiring motivational speaking engagements.

In all these things, I watched James Laero birth and carry out many huge and complicated projects with only limited resources and manpower. It has to do with his vision. Not to sound trite, but he *really* is a man of vision. He's got foresight. He can note prevailing atmospherics of a market and formulate a plan that will produce results. James is acutely able to look at a project and its desired end-result way down the road and then quickly see all the many parts it is going to take to pull the project together. He has a wisdom and understanding that is especially sharpened for marketing because he knows all the parts

intimately and is skilled in them. He's an expert at allocating resources to achieve the best result, partly because he is able to read a person's strengths and play to them. He delineates the responsibilities clearly for all parts of the team, and creates opportunities for them to advance in their craft. He truly cares about the customer/client, but takes care of his team as well. This gives James Laero an added edge when it comes to management: an ability to coax the best out of his team. His individual relationship with them on a personal level breeds loyalty that produces blood, sweat and tears.

What I've written about James above is what I have been privileged to see on a daily basis the last two decades. It all adds up to one thing: character. James Laero has great character, and is a proven man. He does what it takes to be prepared, he does what he says he will do, does what it takes to get the job done, and does not rest until the matter is taken care of. He is not a man who is easily discouraged and knows how to fight against overwhelming odds. He is a man of fortitude and great diligence. He perseveres and runs the race in such a way as to win the prize, yet somehow takes care of those around him along the way.

I know this because I have run that race with him, and I have seen him win it many times. I have even crossed the finish line with him because he made sure his whole team won the prize. Therefore, this thing I know: James Laero is the man you want in the race with you, running towards the goal. Leadership and integrity are hard to find. You want this man on your team.

Sincerely,

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