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(330) 343-3311

January 12, 2010

James R. Castle
President and Chief Executive Officer
Ohio Hospital Association
155 East Broad Street
Floor 15
Columbus, OH 43215-3620

Dear Mr. Castle:

It is my pleasure to provide for you a letter of recommendation for Mr. Lou Masterson of Louis Thomas Masterson & Company. I have known him since November of 2008 after he was retained by Union Hospital in Dover, Ohio, as a consultant for the search for a new CEO. I am a member of the Board of Trustees and served as chairperson of the twelve-member search committee. Throughout the eight-month period during which the actual search was conducted, I worked closely with Mr. Masterson and communicated with him on a regular basis.

Mr. Masterson was a professional in every way throughout this process. He was knowledgeable, perceptive, and thorough. His preliminary discussions were invaluable not only for the search but for hospital long-term planning. He communicated appropriately with all of the pertinent parties. Summaries of meetings were provided by him in a very timely manner. His initial review of all applicants and elimination of those who seemed to be not a good fit with Union Hospital saved the committee considerable unnecessary effort. The screening which involved telephone interviews, in-person interviews, assessments, and questionnaires, was the most thorough I've ever encountered. He was happy to advise as needed, but provided necessary background information so that the committee understood the rationale behind advice. He welcomed suggestions regarding procedures, providing necessary feedback, and was willing to consider various options relative to the way the search was conducted. He was willing to be available at any time, in person, via the telephone, or by e-mail. He responded promptly to queries; moreover, the process never was held up because of constraints at his end. He was careful not to unnecessarily bias the committee. He was able to provide to us his professional expertise which we were eager to have while at the same time allowing us to feel in control of the search. Ultimately, after careful deliberation, the committee made its selection and of this date it appears to me that there are no regrets regarding the selection. Mr. Masterson held a follow-up meeting with the chairperson of the Board of Trustees and me in December and indicated he will stay in touch with the new CEO and the Vice President for Human Resources. His continued communication with the hospital after the search's completion is welcome.

As an administrator in higher education, I was involved in numerous searches over the years, many of which I chaired. Mr. Masterson's involvement in this search relieved me of many of the responsibilities I expected to shoulder as chairperson, including, but not limited to, initial screening, telephone interviewing, travel arrangements, meeting arrangements, document creation, and quantitative analysis. I've already addressed his professionalism. In addition, he was always courteous, considerate, and personable. I would not hesitate to recommend him to any organization to serve in this capacity.

Sincerely,

Agnes K. Swigart