

Dear SBA InnovateHER Team,

December 3rd, 2015

It is with great excitement we write this letter of support for Laurel Wider, LICSW and her startup Wonder Crew for consideration to represent our region for the national competition in Washington DC this March.

Valley Venture Mentors (VVM) and the Economic Development Council (EDC) of Western MA partnered to run Springfield's (and Western MA's) first ever [InnovateHER pitch competition at The Western Massachusetts Business Expo](#). Five startups were nominated and selected to pitch from VVM's alumni network to each take the stage on November 4th for 3 minute pitches followed by 10 minutes of Q & A from a [panel of judges](#).

The judges were given ballots that scored each startup's pitch and Q&A based on the criteria: company's measurable impact on women and families, potential for commercialization and fills a need in the marketplace. Although all of the startups scored well the judges unanimously determined Wonder Crew to be the clear winner.

Wonder Crew's successful \$40,000 Kickstarter campaign resulted in over 500 pre-orders from 35 states and 5 continents was a strong signal for both product commercialization and filling a need in the marketplace. Wider made an informed, compelling pitch for empathy focused toys for boys empowering families, children and communities. Wonder Crew also won the audience favorite award and her booth at the expo was swarmed by excited businessmen and businesswomen both parents and non-parents.

Additionally, Wonder Crew's vision for growth is big and bold. Wider's early leads and interest from high level tv companies is exciting. Wonder Crew is not just a toy company it is a movement to help families and children bring empathy and nurturing into their lives and homes through play.

Wonder Crew was founded 18 months ago and has been through both the VVM mentorship program and Accelerator program. What Wider has accomplished in a short time with limited resources has been astounding and is a testament to her passion and commitment to Wonder Crew's mission.

We wholeheartedly support Wonder Crew's candidacy to advance to the national InnovateHER competition. Thank you for creating the opportunity for all of these startups.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Liz Roberts". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Liz" and last name "Roberts" clearly distinguishable.

Liz Roberts

Accelerator General Manager, Valley Venture Mentors