

May 21, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

It is with great pleasure that I write this letter in support of Kirk Palmer & Associates. We have used Kirk for several senior level searches over the years, and most recently, he and Adelle Kirk partnered with our **maurices** division to fill the position of EVP, Chief Merchandising Officer.

Although this was an attractive position with a successful and growing organization, we knew that one of the most pressing challenges would be finding top talent willing to relocate to northern Minnesota. Prior to launching the search, KPA spent time at the Duluth-based home office to get a sense of both company culture/personality as well as the location. The team did a very comprehensive job sourcing candidates and was able to quickly identify several *A players*. Perhaps more importantly, they went through an exhaustive vetting process to present us with top talent.

Over the past several years, KPA has delivered on their promise. They have an excellent grasp of the industry and I'm always impressed with their speed of delivery, the thoroughness of their process and the quality of the candidates they present.

I find KPA to be an extremely high quality executive search firm. They have always placed excellent candidates within our brands, and it is with no reservation for me to recommend Kirk, Adelle or any of the partners at KPA.

Regards,

David Jaffe
President and CEO