

**MEDIA RELEASE
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To: Ames Media
From: Ames Chamber of Commerce
Date: February 22, 2018
Re: 2018 Leadership Series

EDITOR NOTE: Photo of speaker available upon request

**Ames Chamber of Commerce Announces Leadership Series Launch Event
Featuring Jess Ekstrom**

Ames, IA – The Ames Chamber of Commerce is pleased to welcome Jess Ekstrom, founder and CEO of Headbands of Hope, to launch the 2018 Leadership Series on March 28.

The Ames Chamber of Commerce Leadership Series is a collection of four events held throughout the year to inspire, motivate, and empower community members.

“Our goal is to inspire others to always keep reaching, and to keep you and those around you inspired in 2018,” said Sarah Buss, Director of Sponsorship and Member Programming for the Ames Chamber of Commerce. “The theme of this year’s series is *Soar: to rise or aspire to a higher or more exalted level*. I recently listened to Jess speak, and her story was incredibly inspiring and uplifting. I knew she would be the perfect speaker to kick off our 2018 series.”

Jess Ekstrom will kick off the 2018 Leadership Series with a humorous yet inspiring story about how failure is a part of success. Ekstrom started Headbands of Hope as a junior in college in 2012. For every headband sold, a headband is given to a child with cancer. Ekstrom faced many obstacles as she tried to launch her business, but her resiliency and passion for her project inspired her to keep trying. Since its start, Headbands of Hope has donated over 200,000 headbands to every Children’s hospital in the US and across 15 countries. Ekstrom has been featured on Good Morning America, the TODAY Show, Forbes, and her headbands are carried in two thousand retail locations around the world.

The Leadership Series launch event will be Wednesday, March 28, from 4:30-6:30 p.m. at the Gateway Hotel & Conference Center (2100 Green Hills Drive, Ames). Tickets are \$45 for Chamber Members and \$55 for General Public, and includes appetizers, drinks, and a gift. Employees of members qualify for the member discount. Members are asked to log in to their Member Portal on ameschamber.com to register. A discount is available for those who purchase tickets to all four events of the series (a \$50 savings).

For more information or to purchase tickets, call 515-232-2310 or visit www.ameschamber.com.

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