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May 24, 2019

Attn: Iowa Business Record
Re: 2019 Women of Influence

Often, people of influence within a community are thought to be those who raise the most money or have the biggest presence. However, other times, people of influence are those who have a quiet role in impacting the lives and careers of others--building leaders for our communities, counties, and state. I would like to tell you about one of "those" influencers.

Kay Neumann-Thomas has served the Iowa Association of Business and Industry (ABI) Foundation as the Vice President of Programs for several years before taking a recent family-obligated retirement. She has willingly returned to the ABI Foundation in a part-time consultative role, developing a program to reinvigorate and reengage alumni of the leadership programs.

I met Kay in the fall of 2011 when I became a member of the Leadership Iowa Class of 2011-2012. I was immediately struck by Kay's passion for her work, our class members, and the success in and assurance of developing Iowa's future leaders. She has an unwitting way of assuring civil discourse in difficult topics, perceiving others' talents and abilities, and steering a group of individuals with strong beliefs and personalities toward a better appreciation and understanding of one another and the issues we face throughout our state.

As a woman of influence to hundreds of Business Horizons, Leadership Iowa University, and Leadership Iowa class members, Kay has been a mentor, a friend, a colleague, and an advisor. She has faced personal adversity without letting that affect her work, which demonstrates the highest level of role modeling to those around her. She plays a role behind the scenes in educating youth and adults on both the pressing issues and often unrecognized successes in our communities.

Kay's job responsibilities are defined. However, the personal attention and detail to those responsibilities, and to the people with whom she interacts, go far beyond the definition of her job. Kay's ability to engage state and local leaders and influencers, educators and entrepreneurs, and sages and savants into the state-wide leadership programs she directed speaks highly of her impact within the state.

Please join with me, and hundreds of others, who certainly feel that Kay Neumann-Thomas is an ultimate example of a Woman of Influence across the state of Iowa.

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