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United Way of Hastings Awards Funding to Area Organizations Through its Annual Grants Process

The United Way of Hastings (UWH) Community Investment Committee recently reviewed 20 grant requests from organizations that provide services in the Hastings area. The committee's recommendations for funding were reviewed by the UWH Board of Directors who approved the allocation of \$70,000 to organizations.

To receive funding, organizations must meet allocations guidelines and have an impact on individuals living in the geographic area that includes the Hastings Independent School District #200. Organizations then go through a vetting process by the UWH Community Investment Committee which may include interviewing the organization. "The vetting process through UWH is an important process because it helps to ensure that funds are being allocated to the greatest areas of need in the community and it holds organizations accountable to make an impact with those funds," added Mellick. Prior to funding, organizations sign an agreement to uphold the allocations requirements and partner with UWH throughout the year to collectively impact the community. Organizations and their initiatives approved to receive funding in 2017 are:

360 Communities

- Lewis House - Domestic abuse shelter
- Partners for Success® - Bridges school and home

Black Dirt Theater

- Intergenerational curriculum development

Boy Scouts, Northern Star Council

- Scouting activities and mentoring

DARTS

- Older adult home services

Friends of the Mississippi River

- Stewardship of Mississippi River banks with youth and adults

Hastings Community Education

- Disability Program - Special needs adult work program
- Early childhood scholarships

Hastings Family Service

- Food shelf and summer lunch program

Hastings Prescott Area Arts Council (HPAAC)

- Child and youth scholarships

Hastings Schools

- High School Field Biology - Environmental stewardship with youth and adults
- High School & Middle School Special Friends - Special needs youth work program
- Middle School OASIS - Youth after school program
- Middle School Positive Behavior - Reinforcement of positive behavior
- Middle School Summer Wedge - Summer youth program

Hastings Senior Center

- Older adult transportation and social interaction

Legal Assistance of Dakota County

- Family legal assistance

Lifeworks

- Vocational, educational and enrichment activities for people with disabilities

ProAct

Job training, employment, life skills and enrichment for youth and adults with disabilities

True Friends

Camp and respite care for families and children with disabilities

UWH hosted a recent Meet-n-Greet to provide an opportunity for the UWH Funded Partner Agencies to meet each other and describe their programs being funded by the UWH. The meet-n-greet provided an atmosphere for collaboration amongst the groups. "Although UWH has limited resources as a small nonprofit with an annual budget of approximately \$300,000, one of our strongest assets is collaboration," said Mari E. Mellick, CAE, Executive Director. "UWH continues to be at the table identifying the needs in the community and likewise, can bring groups together to make the most impact in the community. It's not easy to quantify that for people, but the role that the UWH has was very visible at the Funded Partner Agency Meet-n-Greet."



UWH serves as the community chest and keeps its pulse on the needs in the community via the allocations process. To raise visibility in the community, agencies will be using the Funded Partner Agency signage. "For decades, UWH has been a silent donor to many organizations providing services to individuals in our community," said Mellick. "UWH is now working hard to increase its visibility in the community, and part of the help will come directly from the funded groups."

The UWH also funds the following initiatives outside of its traditional grants process:

Financial Empowerment	Provides tools and information to make informed financial decisions
Food 4 Kids	Weekend food packs for students
Give Kids a Smile	Child and youth free dental care
Hastings Beyond the Yellow Ribbon	Military support for families
Hastings READS	Community reading program
Helping Kids Succeed	Youth and adults building webs of support
Imagination Library	Age-specific books for children
Junior Board of Directors	Youth outreach
LIVE UNITED Scholarship	Youth scholarship
Student Hastings Impact Program, AmeriCorps Promise Fellows	Fellows provide student support
United Way 2-1-1 24/7 Help Line	Resource and referral

The UWH is an independent United Way that has worked for over 50 years serving Hastings and the surrounding rural communities within Independent School District #200. Its mission is to build partnerships to improve the lives of people in our community. That is done via community impact initiatives in the areas of Education, Health, and Financial Empowerment with a special emphasis on Youth. Donations are accepted year-round. For more information about the UWH and the agencies it funds, visit www.unitedwayofhastings.org.

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