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United Way of Hastings Holds *Funded Partner Agency Meet-n-Greet and Provides Grants*

The United Way of Hastings (UWH) held a special meeting on April 1, 2016, with the organizations that received 2016 grants. The meet-n-greet was held 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 was the first of its kind and it provided an atmosphere for collaboration amongst the groups.

“Although UWH has limited resources as a small nonprofit with an annual budget less than other local organizations, 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 visibly at the meet-n-greet.”

Another highlight at the meet-n-greet was the distribution of grants to the Funded Partner Agencies. The UWH Community Investment Committee reviewed grant requests and interviewed agencies throughout February and March. Approval was received from the UWH Board of Directors to allocate \$95,000 to organizations providing services in the Hastings area.

“I made a point to let the agencies know that funding decisions were extremely difficult this year,” said Mellick. “Overall, donations were down for UWH in 2015 and this directly correlates with the amount that can be funded in 2016 to other organizations. Then coupled with several new organizations requesting funding in 2016, the committee was challenged with tough decisions.” Mellick went on to say that there were some organizations that did not receive funding.

Funded Partner Agencies were reminded that UWH continues to serve as the community chest and has a unique opportunity to keep its pulse on the needs in the community via the allocations process. When funding increases for UWH, funding increases for the agencies. To raise visibility in the community, agencies will be using the new 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.” New requirements for Funded Agency Partners were put in place for 2016 to help acknowledge UWH as a source of funding. “As UWH grows and evolves, this is a natural step for Funded Partner Agencies to establish stronger relationships with the UWH.”

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 are required to provide services in the impact areas of Education, Health, and Financial Stability. UWH also places a strong emphasis on Youth initiatives. Organizations and programs that were approved for funding in 2016 through the allocations process are:

360 Communities: Lewis House
360 Communities: Partners for Success® Program
Black Dirt Theater: Push Play Summer Children's Program
Boy Scouts, Northern Star Council
Community Education: Disability Program
Community Education: Early Childhood Scholarships
DARTS: Senior Citizen Transportation, Home Services, School Buddy Program
Friends of the Mississippi River: Stewardship in Hastings
Hastings Family Service: Social Work and Crisis Center
Hastings High School: Field Biology
Hastings High School and Hastings Middle School: Special Friends Vocational Training
Hastings Middle School: Opportunities After School Improving Success (OASIS)
Hastings Middle School: Positive Behavior
Hastings Middle School: Summer Wedge
Hastings Prescott Area Arts Council: Youth Scholarships
Hastings Senior Center: Senior Citizen Transportation
Hastings YMCA: Youth Outreach
Legal Assistance of Dakota County: Family Law Legal Help
ProAct: Employment Opportunities for Those with Disabilities

The UWH also funds other programs beyond its traditional grants process. Additional programs receiving funding are:

A Healthier Hastings 4All
Alternative Spring Break
Community Partners Collaboration
E-Volunteer Network
FamilyWize Prescription Drug Discounts
Give Kids a Smile
Hastings Beyond the Yellow Ribbon
Hastings READS
Helping Kids Succeed—The Hastings Way
Imagination Library
Income Tax Preparation Referral
Rivertown Days Glow Run
Student Hastings Impact Program—AmeriCorps Promise Fellows
United Way 2-1-1 24/7 Help Line

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. Donations are accepted year-round. For more information about the UWH and the agencies it funds, visit www.unitedwayofhastings.org.

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