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United Way of Hastings Builds Webs of Support Across Community Through 2018 Grant Allocations

(Hastings, MN) – The United Way of Hastings (UWH) is proud to announce the release of over \$70,000 in grants to local agencies and programs in Hastings for 2018. As the “Heart of Hastings” focusing on Education, Health, Income, and Youth, UWH builds capacity in the community across several dimensions.

UWH Board President Peggy Horsch commented, “Every donated dollar stays right here in Hastings to strengthen the organizations who are doing critical work to serve all our neighbors. Our pledge is to be at the heart of coordinating this work so that each dollar has significant impact and is producing the greatest result.”

2018 UWH Grant Allocations

360 Communities: Partners for Success and Hastings Lewis House
Boy Scouts, Northern Star Council Youth Development
DARTS
District #200 Hastings Community Ed: Disabilities Program
Friends of the Mississippi River: Vermillion Watershed Stewards Project
Hastings Family Service
Hastings Schools, Elementary Schools: Empower Me
Hastings Schools, Elementary Schools: Summer School snacks
Hastings Schools, High School: Field Biology class
Hastings Schools, High School and Middle School: Special Friends
Hastings Schools, Middle School: Positive Behavior Intervention and Support program
Hastings Schools, Middle School: Summer Wedge program
Legal Assistance of Dakota County
ProAct
United Heroes League

While this funding helps a variety of organizations supporting many facets of our community, partnerships where youth are involved remain a top priority of UWH. In fact, United Way of Hastings’ key youth development initiative, the “Helping Kids Succeed” model, launched a new vision this past year committed to helping every child in Hastings be strong, resilient, and connected.

There is no better place to start than with our families and schools. The Hastings School District continues to support our promise through curriculum development and grant support from the UWH. Grant dollars have assisted the district’s Summer Wedge program, OASIS, Promise Fellows, Empower Me, Webs of Support, Positive Behavior Interventions, and a 360 Communities social worker.

Hastings Middle School Principal, Mark Zuzek states, “At the middle school alone, every student will be directly taught the importance of building a strong web of support and identifying adults who can serve as ‘anchors’ for them. Anchors are adults who provide conditions and opportunities for kids to be connected, and who model positive qualities we want young people to have. As kids

grow older, anchoring relationship help them make wise choices and aspire to higher success.” UWH’s own team of teen leaders are conducting the Helping Kids Succeed training for younger students and sharing their personal web-building experiences.

By helping children and youth create strong, healthy webs of support with anchors, we help increase safety and reduce violence. Strong webs of support act as protective factors for kids. Repeated studies show young people with strong webs of support are much less likely to engage in risk taking behaviors (such as violence, bullying, drug and alcohol use) and more likely to demonstrate healthy, positive behaviors (like helping others, maintaining good health, valuing diversity, delaying gratification).

Helping young people develop webs of support benefits the larger Hastings community. “In the wake of mass school shootings, proactively connecting youth and identifying those individuals that lack support systems is the first step in intervention,” says current UWH Board Member and Hastings Police Chief Bryan Schafer. “Over the past 10 years, UWH has allocated over \$1 million dollars to over 100 agencies to build capacity in our community and improve the quality of life of its citizens. UWH works in partnership across the community to help both kids and adults enhance their webs of support.”

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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