

For Immediate Release

To: All Media Outlets

From: Barry County United Way
& Volunteer Center

Date: April 16, 2013

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Barry County United Way Announces Funded Agencies

“Thanks to over 2,500 donors that supported the Barry County United Way “Give Today, Change Tomorrow” 2012-2013 campaign and the Florence Tyden Groos Endowment Fund, 27 programs will be funded through allocations with an additional 56 agencies receiving designations,” says Cort Collison, Allocations Chairperson.

The Allocations committee presented their recommendations for funding agencies for the 2013 – 2014 fiscal year. “The Barry County United Way Board of Directors approved agency recommendations as presented,” states Collison.

Any 501(c)3 agency was able to submit their application by the December deadline. The allocations dollars were based on their requests.

Funding is divided into four Community Impact areas: Helping youth reach their full potential, supporting families to achieve well-being and success, assisting senior adults find and maintain independence and addressing urgent and emerging needs.

In the area of Helping Youth to achieve their potential, 11 local programs were funded. MSUE - 4H will utilize the \$50,000 in funding to maintain the full time 4-H program staff in support of the 4-H programs. \$15,000 in funding will enable Barry County Substance Abuse to deliver school-based substance abuse prevention programming in all 5 schools in our county and will develop, enhance and implement a community youth-based prevention activities and prevention education for parents of youth. Big Brothers Big Sisters will continue to match adult mentors with youth as well as expand the school based model as they continue at the partner agency status. Christine Anderson, Fund Development Leader for Girl Scouts Heart of Michigan states, “The allocations of \$3000.00 to Girl Scouts Heart of Michigan helps to remove barriers and make the possible a reality for many girls in your community. We truly appreciate the continued support and belief in Girl Scouts.” Leadership Youth Quest will utilize \$4,000.00 in funding towards the 3 day leadership weekend focusing on the strengths the students and how diverse groups of individuals can work together to achieve a common goal. The Barry County Sheriff Department’s School Liaison program was granted funding of \$3,500.00 to continue providing an officer in four schools in our community with the goal of reducing truancy, bullying and implementing conflict management. Thornapple Area Parks and Recreation utilizes the \$7,576.59 in United Way funding to reduce overall registration fees for recreation opportunities and allows them to waive part of registration fees based on economic hardship. Michigan Crossroads Council – Boy

Scouts will utilize their \$4,000.00 in funding to provide opportunities for youth between the ages of 7 to 20 to participate in scouting adventures. The YMCA will continue to expand its after school care program with United Way funding by assisting families struggling with registration fees as well as expanding youth sports programs outside of the Hastings area. Their application states that funds provided through the United Way allow the YMCA to offer programs and services at a reduced rate making these affordable to the general community. With the United Way funding they are also projecting that they will provide a direct dollar fee forgiveness increase in 2013. They received \$75,000.00 in funding. Barry County United Way direct programming for youth includes the Backpack Program and Toys for Barry County Kids.

Supporting families to achieve well being and success had seven programs apply and receive funding. CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) will utilize \$5,000.00 in funding to train additional volunteers who are sworn officers of the court appointed by the judge to represent and advocate for the needs of children in foster care and help the children achieve permanency. The Family Support Center will use a portion of the funding for the CRIB program. This program began in 2007 after identifying the use of unsafe sleeping conditions was causing infant deaths here in our community. They will also use the funding for their education series, the Pierre the Pelican newsletter and "Your Baby's First Year" book for all new parents. The Family Support Center was awarded \$16,000.00. MSUE – Building Strong families will use the \$15,000.00 in funding to continue its program for targeted "at risk" families of 0 to 8 year old children. This programs goal is to promote a child's academic success by focusing on emerging literacy and school readiness. Habitat for Humanity will utilize \$21,500.00 in funding to assist with building two Habitat Homes this year. Partner families will be chosen through a selection process that often sees four times more applicants than they can serve. The Kinship Care program at the Commission on Aging also received funding of \$17,250.00 for the Kinship coordinator position which offers support to families raising relative children. Program assistance includes navigation through the governmental paperwork, referrals for legal and childcare resources, working with schools and serving as an advocate to caregivers.

The Commission on Aging received funding in the area of helping seniors find support and maintain independence. The funding for the InHome Service program provides care to older adults who are unable to perform the personal tasks required to maintain them in their homes targeting seniors with chronic and terminal illness who need assistance. The Meals on Wheels program will continue to provide nutritionally balanced meals delivered weekdays to homebound seniors age 60 and better. Meals on Wheels directly treat the critical issues of malnutrition, hospitalization for the most vulnerable of Barry County's older adults, the homebound elderly, by providing nutritious, accessible and affordable meals. They received \$15,000.00 for these programs.

Addressing urgent need programs that received funding include: The Food Bank of South Central Michigan which will use the \$12,000.00 in funding to supply 17 Barry County non-profits programs with food and other items through its nationwide food network allowing local agencies to get food at a reduced rate of 18 cents per pound and fresh food

for free. Green Gables Haven will utilize \$65,000.00 to continue to provide the only domestic violence shelter in Barry County. Manna's Market provides emergency assistance in the area of food, clothing, baby pantry items and toiletries once per month to families in need. Janyne Flanigan, founder of the program says, "We are thrilled again this year for you allocation to the Market. Your continued loyalty has created a viable agency to help those in need. Manna's Market was awarded \$34,967.00. Eaton Clothing and Furniture will use \$1,000.00 to provide low income qualified Barry County residents with the ability to "shop" once per month for clothing, furniture and housewares. They also provide shoes prior to school starting in the fall and boots as winter approaches. Barry County United Way programs include \$7,090.73 for the Barry County Fresh Food Initiative, Homeless Prevention and Emergency Funding as well as the funding the 211 program at an allocation of \$10,000.00 for Barry County residents.

The Allocations Committee is made up of a diverse group of volunteers that represent all areas of Barry County. They are charged with funding agencies that meet the community impact agenda, the mission statement of United Way and strict financial requirements. "We really appreciate these volunteers. This is the hardest committee to serve on," says Forbes, "The agencies all provide a great service to our community, deciding what level to fund them at is very difficult." Funding requests ranged from \$1,000.00 to \$100,000.00. Thirty one out county not for profit 501(c)3 health and human service agencies were designated dollars by donors totaling \$8,202.00. Twenty five in county agencies that did not request funds were designated dollars by donors totaling \$12,788.50.

If you would like further information on the programs and agencies funded by Barry County United Way, please call Lani Forbes at 269-945-4010.