

**DATE: July 30,2014**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**Lani Forbes – 269-945-4010**  
**Barry County United Way**

## **BARRY COUNTY BACKPACK PROGRAM**

Hastings City Bank is partnering with the Barry County United Way to provide backpacks and school supplies to Barry County children in Kindergarten – 12<sup>th</sup> grade that need that additional support for the coming school year. Last year 360 children received school supplies and a backpack. “We are asking for community partners, as well” said Nancy Goodin, Marketing Director. “Community members who would like to contribute school supplies are invited to drop those off at any Hastings City Bank branch. Our employees are really excited about helping with this special project and we hope our friends and customers will join us in this project, as well.”

"We have seen a large increase in the number of families that are struggling this year so we are very thankful that Hastings City Bank is partnering with us on this project. This program will allow families to focus on their basic needs instead of how to include this added expense in their monthly budget," states Lani Forbes, Executive Director of Barry County United Way.

Distribution will take place the week of August 25<sup>th</sup> to families referred by local agencies such as DHS, Kinship Care, CASA for Kids and Barry County Cares. Families interested in receiving a backpack may sign-up beginning August 13<sup>th</sup> at the Barry Community Resource Connection Fair between 10-2pm, the fair is being held at Hastings First United Methodist Church 209 W. Green St. Hastings. After this event families can contact the Barry County United Way at 269-945-4010 to sign up for the program.

In addition to new backpacks, items needed for each backpack include:

Middle / High School Level

5 – notebooks  
5 – folders  
Calculators  
Pencils  
colored pencils

Elementary School Level

scissors  
pencils  
pencil box  
colored pencils  
colored markers

colored markers  
Back packs  
Highlighters

glue sticks  
Backpacks  
construction paper

Local businesses or individual community members are invited to donate any of these items. The supplies will be organized and distributed by Hastings City Bank employees and members of the Coleman Insurance Agency. Donations may be made until August 25<sup>th</sup>, at any Hastings City Bank Branch. Branches are located in Bellevue, Caledonia, Hastings, Marshall, Middleville, Nashville and Wayland. Donations are also accepted at the Coleman Insurance Agency in Hastings, Middleville Village Hall, Southside Pediatrics, Bradford White in Middleville and the Barry County United Way office in Hastings.

“One of my favorite parts of this program is that the children get choices – they choose which backpack, pencil box, scissors, notebooks, etc. It gives them a sense of ownership and they feel good heading off to school with their choice of school supplies,” states Goodin.

If you have any questions about the program, please call the Barry County United Way office at 269-945-4010.

Hastings City Bank is a full service community bank with seven conveniently located branches in Bellevue, Caledonia, Hastings, Marshall, Middleville, Nashville and Wayland. They are located on the web at [hastingscitybank.com](http://hastingscitybank.com). Member FDIC and Equal Housing Lender.