

**HIGHLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

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For Immediate Release

Forreston State Bank to help HCC Agriculture program grow — literally

FREEMPORT — Forreston State Bank CEO Jeff Snyder recently announced that the Bank is pledging significant support toward Highland Community College's Agriculture program for the upcoming 2016-2017 academic year. Specifically, they will become one of the key sponsors of instructional activities on the Agriculture program's test plot located on farm property owned by the Highland Community College Foundation adjacent to campus.

Agriculture instructor Justin Ebert and his students are currently utilizing the property as a "land laboratory," enhancing student learning by their active participation in soil mapping and testing, land use evaluation, and crop scouting.

As the use of the test plot continues to develop, the financial support of donors like Forreston State Bank will enable Ebert and his students to study hybrid comparisons, the effects of different fertilizers, erosion control, and more.

"We are, of course, aware of what an important economic driver agriculture is for our region," said Jolene Bohnsack, senior vice president at Forreston State Bank. "It is good to see the recent enhancements and new energy in the Highland Agriculture program. Forreston State Bank is pleased to partner with them to keep the forward momentum going."

In addition to the support for the Agriculture program, the Bank is also in its second year of funding a scholarship for one Highland student pursuing an associates of applied science degree in one of several specific fields — agriculture, automotive technology, manufacturing technology, or wind turbine technology.

Highland Community College is most appreciative of Forreston State Bank's partnership. Both avenues of the Bank's support of Highland and its students show their interest in investing in workforce and economic development in the region. With locations in Forreston, Freeport, and Kent, Forreston State Bank supports the communities they serve — member FDIC.

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