



**UNITED  
COMMUNITY  
MINISTRIES**

*At the Heart of Community*

**ucmagency.org**

P 703.768.7106 F 703.768.4788  
7511 Fordson Road, Alexandria, VA 22306

f facebook.com/UCM.Alexandria @UCMAlex

United Way #8199 CFC #37839

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Editorial Contact:**

Diane Hill, Development & Communications Officer

United Community Ministries

diane.hill@ucmagency.org | 571.255.8978 | mobile 703.597.1830 | facebook.com/UCM.Alexandria/ @UCMAlex

### **2018 Give From The Heart Gala Raises \$180,000 for Families in Need: Proceeds Support United Community Ministries**

**Alexandria, VA (April 18, 2018)** – On Saturday, April 14, The Friends of UCM hosted the 2018 Give From The Heart Gala at the US Patent & Trademark Office, Madison Building. The signature event raised \$180,000 for United Community Ministries, Inc. (UCM) to create brighter futures for families and children in need.

Adam Tuss of NBC4 Washington emceed the evening's festivities, which included cocktails, dinner, auctions, and dancing, plus the presentation of the UCM Gerald W. Hyland Humanitarian Award and a heart-warming testimonial from a UCM client.

"We appreciate the energy and creativity of The Friends of UCM," said UCM Executive Director, Alison DeCoursey. "We are especially grateful to Elin Bohn, President of The Friends, and event co-chairs, Elaine Kolish and Paula Lettice, for their hard work. The Friends have raised nearly \$2.8 million for UCM since the group's inception in 2001. We thank them and all of our generous sponsors, supporters, and guests for making this evening a success."

"It is an exciting time at UCM," Ken Disselkoe, Chair of the UCM Board of Directors, told the crowd of several hundred guests and community leaders. "We're making changes to become the agency our community needs us to be. We have a revised mission of empowering our neighbors in need to transform their lives. Our vision is a community where everyone thrives. We are working to ensure that UCM is a sound social and financial investment that results in a positive return for everyone in our community."

Long-time Mount Vernon residents Joanne and Bruce Malkin were presented with the 2018 UCM Gerald W. Hyland Humanitarian Award. Retired Fairfax County Mount Vernon Supervisor Gerry Hyland, the namesake and last year's inaugural awardee, helped to honor the Malkins in recognition of their commitment to service and dedication to the betterment of others that enriches the community of Alexandria.

"UCM serves hardworking, amazing people who need a hand up," said Bruce Malkin. "Along with our fellow members of Mount Vernon Kiwanis and AAUW Mount Vernon Branch, Joanne and I are happy

*- continues next page -*

to partner with UCM wherever possible to assist to meet the needs of our community, especially our children and young people, who are the future of our country. They deserve the best chance we can give them.”

Guests also heard from Lorraine, a UCM client who shared her personal journey to financial stability and good health. Lorraine lit up the room with her inspiring story: “Without UCM, I would not be the happy, healthy person standing here tonight. Thanks to the fresh food at UCM’s food pantry, I am able to eat healthy even on my limited budget. I am off high blood pressure medicine and no longer diabetic. I am living proof that when you have healthy food, you have energy. Food is energy. Healthy food is even better. I never thought I could be feeling as good as I do now. The UCM team has inspired me with the confidence to take good care of myself and to stick with it. I feel strong and excited about my future.”

“The success of Lorraine and others like her starts with the support of a caring community,” said DeCoursey. “People who come to UCM for help don’t have easily solved problems. They were brought low by poverty, limited education, and grew up in neighborhoods that dragged them down, instead of lifting them up. Through it all, they maintain and cling to what we all cling to – hope for a better future. We consider it our privilege to help them. We thank our caring community of supporters and partners for making that possible.”

**About United Community Ministries**

*United Community Ministries is a community-based nonprofit offering comprehensive programs and services for vulnerable children, youth, and families in Southeastern Fairfax County. UCM empowers neighbors in need to transform their lives, providing a vital connection between people in need and the people committed to helping them thrive. Services include counseling and referrals, emergency assistance, supplemental food, early care and learning, after-school and leadership programs at neighborhood community centers, ESL and citizenship classes, and parent education. Learn more at [www.ucmagency.org](http://www.ucmagency.org).*

#####

**Hyland Humanitarian Award**

04-14-18\_UCM\_Gala18\_photo1-min.png



*Joanne and Bruce Malkin were honored with the second annual UCM Gerald W. Hyland Humanitarian Award at the UCM Gala. Pictured from left: UCM Board Chair, Ken Disselkoen; UCM Executive Director, Alison DeCoursey; retired Supervisor Gerry Hyland; and Bruce and Joanne Malkin.*

**2018 UCM Gala Crowd**

04-14-18\_UCM\_Gala18\_photo2-min.png



*Alison DeCoursey, UCM Executive Director, welcomes guests to the 2018 UCM Give From The Heart Gala, which raised \$180,000 to support families in need in Southeastern Fairfax County.*

