



**UNITED
COMMUNITY
MINISTRIES**

At the Heart of Community

ucmagency.org

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United Way #8199 CFC #37839

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Girl Scout Troops Support UCM Families in Need



Photo 1: 07-08-16_UCM_GirlScouts_photo1.jpg
Photos as 300 dpi attached to email for media distribution.



Photo 2: 07-08-16_UCM_GirlScouts_photo2.jpg

Photo 1:

Several members of Girl Scout Juniors Troop 4554 are pictured in the main office waiting room at United Community Ministries' Fordson Road location, the site of their Bronze Award project. The Bronze Award is the highest honor a Girl Scout Junior can achieve. Their project included painting the waiting room, purchasing new book shelves and a table, and hosting a drive to collect children's books for the waiting area. When families visit UCM for emergency assistance services, they are invited to take books home for their children's home libraries.

Photo 2:

Pictured with UCM's Volunteer Coordinator Emily Griffin (at far right) are members of Girl Scout Daisy Troop 3954, rising second graders at Waynewood Elementary School. The girls delivered a \$200 cash donation to purchase fresh food for the UCM Food Pantry. After touring the Pantry a few months ago and learning more about people who go hungry in our community, the troop wanted to do more to help. They decided to host a bake sale this spring and donated the proceeds to help feed children and families in need.

"We are so grateful to our young volunteers like these Scouts," says Raymond Shepherd, UCM's new Food Pantry Manager. "Thanks to our partner agencies, we can stretch that \$200 donation with our deep discounts. For example, it can mean a dozen fresh eggs for more than 200 families this week

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An average 400 to 500 families who are struggling to make ends meet depend on our Food Pantry every single week. Especially in summer months, demand for our groceries increases, because children who usually receive free or reduced meals at school are on vacation.”

“We are very grateful to all our collection drive hosts and to all our donors for their ongoing efforts to alleviate hunger here in our neighborhoods,” he continues. “We especially welcome donations of canned tuna, rice, whole wheat pasta, low-sugar cereals, and other heart-healthy food items, including low-salt canned goods like vegetables and sauces, nuts, juice boxes, and energy bars.”

“And in summer time, our client families also really appreciate fresh produce, like the donations from the vendors at the Sherwood Hall Farmers Market every Wednesday. We also receive regular donations of fresh organic produce from Arcadia Farm at Woodlawn. And we appreciate donations of extra fresh vegetables from the home gardens of local community members, who may have planted a few too many squash or tomato plants for their own family. Bring them over to UCM, weekdays between 9am and 5.30pm!”

UCM has many opportunities for individuals and groups of all ages to get involved to volunteer, across all program areas and for all talents and schedules. If you or your group would like to host a collection drive for food donations, new backpacks for the Back to School campaign, used children’s books, or healthy snacks for UCM’s community center programs for children, contact Emily Griffin, UCM Volunteer Coordinator, at emily.griffin@ucmagency.org or 571.255.8973.

United Community Ministries (UCM) mobilizes the power of community to equip, educate, and empower people to measurably improve their lives. For more than 46 years, UCM has provided a vital connection between people in need and the people committed to helping them thrive. Services include:

- **Immediate Help.** For families and individuals in crisis, UCM provides counseling, food, financial aid, and referrals to other resources.
- **Children’s Programs.** UCM provides the next generation with essential education and enriching experiences, including full-day early care and learning, new parent education, and after-school programs for youth leadership development and computer access.
- **Adult Education.** UCM helps immigrant adults integrate into the community and contribute to and share in its economic growth through financial literacy, English as a Second Language (ESL) and citizenship classes.

In Fiscal Year 2015, thanks to generous community support, UCM provided life-changing assistance to 10,200 individuals in 4,000 families in the Alexandria portion of Fairfax County. This included 5,000 children – more than any other private nonprofit agency in the Huntington-Mount Vernon area.

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