



**UNITED  
COMMUNITY  
MINISTRIES**  
*At the Heart of Community*

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**THE FRIENDS OF UCM CAPITOL STEPS BENEFIT RAISES  
 MORE THAN \$85,000 FOR FAMILIES IN NEED**



PHOTO 1:  
11-13-15\_UCM\_CapSteps\_photo1.jpg



PHOTO 2:  
11-13-15\_UCM\_CapSteps\_photo2.jpg



PHOTO 4  
11-13-15\_UCM\_CapSteps\_photo4.jpg

PHOTO 3:  
11-13-15\_UCM\_CapSteps\_photo4.jpg



Photos attached as 300dpi+ with email distributed to media.

PHOTO 2 CAPTION: The Friends of UCM hosted the sold-out benefit event. Pictured with the check for \$85,000 raised for UCM are (from left): event co-chair Sandy Doyle; Suzy Coffey, President of The Friends of UCM and UCM Board Member; and event co-chairs Janis Surovell and Kristi Long.

PHOTO 3 CAPTION: A sold-out crowd filled the Madison Auditorium at the US Patent and Trademark Office in Old Town.

PHOTO 4 CAPTION: (From left) Karen Corbett Sanders, Fairfax County School Board Representative-elect for the Mount Vernon District, enjoys the performance with her husband Dan Sanders of Four Sales, Ltd., which was one of more than 35 event sponsors.

On Sunday, November 8, The Friends of UCM hosted a sold-out crowd at the US Patent and Trademark Office for the 24th annual benefit performance of The Capitol Steps. The event raised a record-breaking more than \$85,000 to benefit the mission of United Community Ministries (UCM) to

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provide help and hope to vulnerable individuals, families, and children in the Huntington-Mount Vernon community.

Poverty is no laughing matter, but The Capitol Step's political satire was as hilarious and timely as ever, including skits about the Democratic and Republican presidential hopefuls, Obamacare, and foreign heads of state. Now held in the Fall, the annual event was at its new home venue at the Madison Building, US PTO in Old Town Alexandria. Guests enjoyed a delightful evening with friends and colleagues, including food, beverages, and the chance to win elegant raffle baskets.

"UCM is grateful to all our event sponsors and especially grateful to our hosts, The Friends of UCM, and to our Diamond Sponsors – DIRECTV, Doug and Eileen Kennett, and Elaine Kolish and David FitzGerald – for the enjoyable evening of political satire and musical entertainment," says Nichelle A. Mitchem, UCM Executive Director.

Other lead sponsors included Platinum Sponsors Abigail Arms and Paula Dubberly, and Time Warner Cable – as well as Gold Sponsor Fairfax County Professional Firefighters & Paramedics I.A.F.F. Local 2068. The full list of more than 35 event sponsors is available via the UCM website at [www.ucmagency.org](http://www.ucmagency.org). Media sponsors included the Mount Vernon Gazette and Mount Vernon Voice.

"The Friends of UCM is a group of volunteers providing fundraising and community education about UCM," says Suzy Coffey, President of The Friends of UCM and member of the UCM Board. "Since our founding in 2001, we have raised more than \$2.2 million to ensure that people in our community can turn to UCM for help during their time of need and achieve financial stability. We are so pleased that our Capitol Steps signature event was such a success this year. Thank you again to all our sponsors and guests for joining us and for supporting UCM in so many ways to strengthen and support low-income families."

"This fundraiser would not be possible without the commitment of all The Friends of UCM, especially event co-chairs Sandy Doyle, Kristi Long, and Janis Surovell," says Mitchem. "We cannot thank them enough for their tireless energy and commitment to make the event a success, as well as all The Friends and other volunteers. They each exemplify the caring and can-do spirit in our great community. They are the heart of community, what UCM is all about."

UCM's programs are changing lives every day. "UCM is committed to effecting community change to ensure a better future for the next generation," Mitchem continues. "This year, we are putting a special emphasis on our programs that help people obtain gainful employment and that help children to grow and thrive. Our children's programs provide the opportunity for them to be connected to caring, positive adults who mentor them to ensure their personal, academic, and ultimately career success. UCM gives children and families a fighting chance at creating a better life for themselves. It is thanks to our generous supporters, donors, and volunteers that UCM can continue to be a caring place for neighbors in need. We are very grateful for the outpouring of community support to equip, educate, and empower people to improve their lives."

The Friends of UCM will host its annual Friends of UCM Spring Gala on Saturday, April 2, 2016, at the Madison Building, US Patent and Trademark Office, in Old Town Alexandria. The 2016 theme is "Viva Las Vegas." Event sponsorships with significant publicity benefits are available, ranging from \$500 to \$10,000. For more information about sponsoring the 2016 Gala, contact UCM Development and Communications Director Christine Lucas at [christine.lucas@ucmagency.org](mailto:christine.lucas@ucmagency.org).

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**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 food, financial aid, counseling, and referrals to other resources.
- **Education and Employment.** Services such as job training and coaching, full-day early care and learning, ESL and citizenship classes, and parental education help people achieve stability and self-reliance.
- **Community Engagement.** UCM's neighborhood centers, with after-school programs and leadership training, engage youth and families in skill-building and broader social networks for success.

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, including almost 5,000 children.

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