

# At the Heart of Community



**UCM**

**United Community Ministries**  
FY16 Annual Report

# WHO WE ARE

UCM was formed nearly 50 years ago with \$7,000 by a group of residents concerned about families and children in need. UCM has grown into an organization with more than 70 employees, a \$5 million budget and continues to be supported and staffed by people motivated by concern for people with unfilled basic needs.

We are working moms who escaped poverty and want to show other folks the way to financial stability. We are bankers and accountants who find investing in people more fulfilling than buying expensive toys. We are dentists, professors, retired military, and young college grads who share the belief that by coming together to lift up people who are helpless and hopeless, we are all enriched. UCM is a trusted partner to government agencies, foundations, corporate and private donors, community volunteers, and faith communities. Our mission is to boost people — not profits — so our bottom line is how much we instill hope where there was none, and how much brighter the lives are of those we serve: That is why we raise funds, employ staff, welcome volunteers, and open our doors each morning.

## MISSION, VISION, VALUES

**Mission:** United Community Ministries mobilizes the power of community to equip, educate, and empower people to measurably improve their lives.

**Vision:** No member of our community will ever be hungry, homeless, helpless, or hopeless.

### Values:

- **PASSION** is an integral driver of who we are and how we serve.
- We promote mutual **RESPECT** by valuing the diversity, strengths, experiences, and perspectives of all.
- We work with **INTEGRITY** to remain consistent with UCM's mission.
- We employ **PROVEN** approaches to effect change and improve quality of life for the people we serve.
- We strive to **EMPOWER** the community — the people we serve, volunteers, and supporters to reach their full potential.

# LEADERSHIP

Dear Supporters,

United Community Ministries, Inc. has been dedicated to providing comprehensive programs and services to Fairfax County's most vulnerable families. During fiscal year 2016, UCM served more than 9,700 individuals through programs ranging from stable housing to survivors fleeing domestic violence to after-school tutoring for area youth. We take pride in transforming the lives of the people who walk through our doors each day with a renewed sense of promise. We work hard to ensure that the future is brighter for all residents in our community, and that every family has a safe and affordable home to live, healthy food to eat, and the training and education needed to attain financial security.

UCM's success wouldn't be possible without the support of our volunteers and donors who devote their time, talent, and resources for the betterment of our clients and community.

With gratitude,  
Janet Heddeshheimer, Acting Chair

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# WHAT WE DO



## UCM EARLY LEARNING CENTER (ELC)

Our full-day preschool program for children ages 6 weeks to 5 years creates positive experiences that encourage curiosity using *The Creative Curriculum*® for all ages, exceeding the Virginia Star Quality Initiative standard. The ELC provides

developmental screenings and assessments, health screenings, and lunch and snacks. Eligible families receive reduced tuition rates.



**100%** of Pre-K students were developmentally ready to enter Kindergarten.

The ELC increased capacity to **90 children**.



## HEALTHY FAMILIES

Healthy Families is a nationally recognized child abuse prevention program that provides at-home support and education to new and expecting at-risk parents. Families are better able to raise safe and healthy children who are ready to succeed in school and life. Home visits begin prenatally or just after birth and continue until the child reaches three years old.



No case of child abuse or neglect was found in **137 families** served.

**14 families** were graduated.



## STEPPING STONES

Caring counselors help our neighbors experiencing financial crisis. The program provides physical, emotional, and financial support to individuals and families struggling to afford food, rent, utility bills, and prescriptions.

The UCM Cynthia Hull Food Pantry does not simply distribute food; it provides the sustenance needed to improve quality of life. Families avoid eviction, parents are able to feed their families, families receive referrals to other needed services, and health outcomes are strengthened.



**5,670** individuals received emergency food.

**220** families received eviction prevention services.

**378** individuals received emergency utility disconnection prevention.



## FORWARD STEPS

The youth leadership program at the two UCM centers — Creekside Village and Sacramento Neighborhood — provides enriching after-school activities in a safe and inviting environment. Students in first through eighth grade participate in a variety of programs such as STEAM-related learning, addressing community challenges, homework help, and mentorships. Youth develop social and leadership skills with the goal of helping them identify strengths and accelerate their potential for school and life success.

## Andrea's Success

After her father had been murdered, Andrea\* fled El Salvador and moved to the U.S. to join a mother she hadn't seen in years. Andrea's mother, who was enrolled in ESL classes at the UCM Progreso Center to improve her literacy skills and better communicate with her daughter and her teachers, soon began the process for Andrea's citizenship. Throughout the trauma of losing her father and moving to an unfamiliar country and school, Andrea maintained excellent grades and was consistently on the honor roll. Eventually Andrea was granted asylum. When Andrea learned she could stay in the U.S. with her mother, she told us, "I can't believe this day finally came!"

\*Name changed to protect client identity.



students passed the exam to become new U.S. citizens

## PROGRESO CENTER FOR LITERACY & CITIZENSHIP

Trained volunteer teachers empower adult students through

comprehensive classes in English as a Second Language (ESL) and in U.S. citizenship and history. Adults with limited skills and literacy acquire the skills necessary to function and thrive in today's labor market. Pro-bono services include legal consultations, assistance to complete required immigration documents, representing clients in court, and referrals to other resources.

## ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIPS

Higher education means higher wages and is a key connector to financial and family independence for low-income youth and families. UCM provides two scholarship opportunities that focus on keeping vulnerable youth moving forward to self-reliance and



**10** graduating seniors were awarded scholarships.



### **Natasha's Success**

Abused by her husband and out of work, Natasha\* came to the UCM Stepping Stones program desperate to feed her children. "I walked into the office on the verge of tears. UCM gave me the help I needed to survive — everything from money for utilities to school supplies. They saved the day. It's because of them I made it through and donate back to UCM whenever I can."

\*Name changed to protect client identity.



life success. The Battelle-UCM Scholarships encourage graduates to attain higher education, with a focus on STEM studies (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) and the potential for future employment success. The Lois Valencourt Scholarships enable students to pursue vocational training and career advancement after high school graduation. Most of the awardees are the first in their families to attend college.

## **BACK PORCH THRIFT STORE**

Our store offers quality clothing, furniture and other household goods at reasonable prices. UCM program participants are eligible to receive vouchers for basic necessity items as well as store discounts. Store proceeds stay in the community to support UCM's mission.

## **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CENTER**

The center provides educational services to increase the employability of high-barrier adult job seekers, so they can better provide for their families. This includes computer literacy training, employment counseling, placement services, and collaborations with Computer CORE and other community partners.

## **OPPORTUNITY NEIGHBORHOOD (ON)**

The Opportunity Neighborhood model delivers a seamlessly linked, cradle-to-career pipeline of programs and services that focus on improving the lives of children and youth. ON has identified five focal areas: (1) family and community engagement; (2) connected and motivated youth; (3) school readiness, early childhood education, and literacy; (4) service access and navigation; and (5) workforce readiness and student career success. Embedding these five ON focal areas in all of our programs, UCM reduces barriers and provides a continuum of trauma-informed care to address challenges related to family crisis, housing instability, caregiver stress, community violence, and more.

# COMMUNITY SUPPORT

## Volunteers

Volunteers are truly the heart and life blood of our work to break the cycle of poverty. 1,200 volunteers dedicated nearly 40,000 hours to UCM, equivalent to nearly 19 full time employees.

## Fundraisers and Events

Special events are held to celebrate our community and foster the spirit of our mission. They raise vital funds to support the people we serve. Here is a sample:

- ★ 2016 Gala Viva Las Vegas: \$185,000 raised.
- ★ Capitol Steps Benefit: \$72,000 raised.
- ★ Early Learning Center 30 Year Anniversary Celebration.
- ★ SOUPer Saturday at the Torpedo Factory Arts Center: \$3,600 raised.
- ★ Weichert Realtors/ Alexandria Old Town collected more than \$900 and 360 pounds of food at its Spring UCM Collection Drive. Hundreds of businesses, community and civic groups, schools, and faith communities hosted drives as well.
- ★ The Stamp Out Hunger community food drive in May collected 9,100+ pounds to stock the UCM Pantry.
- ★ Seasonal drives benefitting youth and their families: 859 students received backpacks and school supplies. More than 1,000 children received holiday gifts.

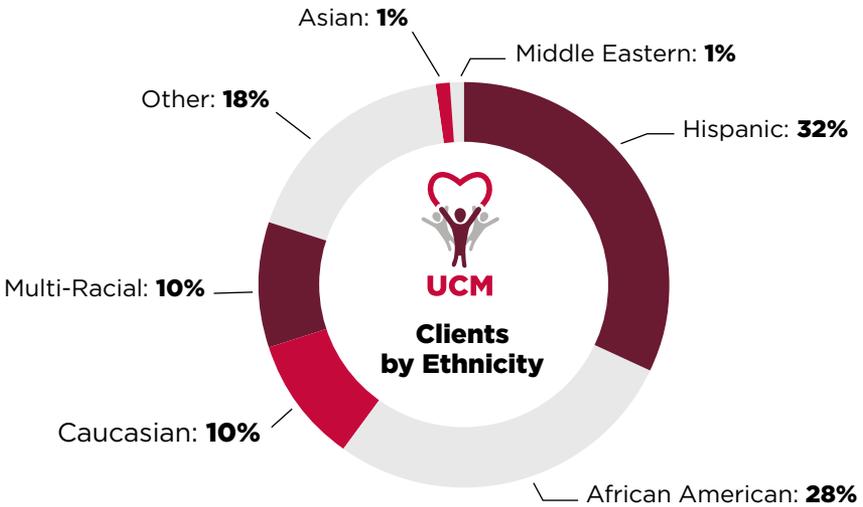


# WHO WE SERVE



**75% of clients** live at or below the federal poverty level (\$24,600 for a family of four).

**56% Female / 44% Male / 40% are Children**



**9,700**  
individuals served



**3,700**  
families



**\$0.89** of every dollar donated goes directly to support innovative programs that transform lives.



# FINANCIALS

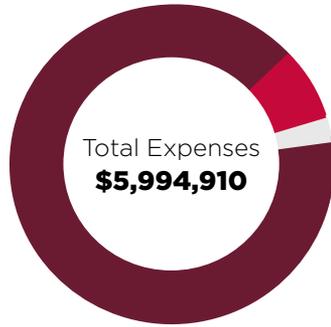
## Where Our Funding Comes From



- Contributions  
**15.9%**
- Government Funding  
**23.7%**
- Foundation Grants  
**4.2%**
- Special Events  
**3.4%**
- Program Service Fees\*  
**20.9%**
- Thrift Store Sales  
**6.3%**
- In-Kind  
**25.1%**
- Other  
**.06%**

\*e.g., ELC tuition fees.

## Where Our Funding Goes



- Programs  
**88.5%**
- Development  
**6.7%**
- Management & General  
**1.9%**



## WE COULDN'T DO THIS ALONE!

The generosity of donors, volunteers, staff, and dedicated members of our community are responsible for UCM's accomplishments and client successes. As a result of the thoughtfulness of our donors, we can continue to empower, transform, and enrich the lives of neighbors in need. Thank you for your support. For a listing of donors, visit [www.ucmagency.org](http://www.ucmagency.org).



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UCM acknowledges the generosity of our community that makes our work possible. For a complete listing of donors, visit [www.ucmagency.org](http://www.ucmagency.org).

**Thank you for your support.**

