



# University Community News

Volume 10

*Restoring hope . . . one life at a time.*

Issue 2

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## 2014 RESTORING HOPE BANQUET

### SAVE THE DATE!

On behalf of the kids, senior citizens and our homeless neighbors, University Community Ministries, Inc. would like to say a big "THANK YOU" to all of you that support the ministry through your prayers, finances and helping hands with one heart and one love, which is the love of God. The word of God says: "And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is LOVE."

We would like also to say thank you to the Embassy Suites Tampa for their kindness and great service given to University Community Ministries last year. We have truly enjoyed not only their amazing service but the beautiful and elegant atmosphere they created for our event.

University Community Ministries, Inc. cordially invites you to attend our annual 2014 Restoring Hope Banquet held in your honor on Thursday, September 25, 2014 at the Embassy Suites Tampa USF located at 3705 Spectrum Boulevard, Tampa, Florida 33612 from 6:30 pm to 9:00 pm.

Please put the date on your calendar and RSVP to America Van Gorp at (813) 390-0271 or [avangorp@verizon.net](mailto:avangorp@verizon.net). Watch for invitation in August.

*"Defend the poor and fatherless; do justice to the afflicted and needy.  
 \*Deliver the poor and needy; free them from the hand of the wicked"*

Psalm 82: 3-4 (NKJV)

UCM is all about *"Restoring hope . . . one life at a time"*.

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## 2014 BOWL FOR HOPE

By Jerome Van Gorp



The **2014 Bowl For Hope** fundraising event sponsored by Coolidge Realty, Inc. was a tremendous success. This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual bowl-a-thon hosted at Pin Chasers Bowling Center.

A total of 41 people participated in the bowl-a-thon this year. Each bowler solicited sponsors for their two games of bowling and, as of this publication, we have exceeded all our expectation and raised over \$20,000 from the event! Each bowler received complimentary food and drinks and enjoyed a wide variety of raffle prizes throughout the two hour event. It was a great team effort and a big **THANKS** goes out to all of our volunteers, participants and sponsors/donors.



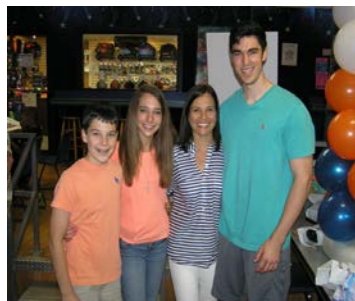
The following companies and individuals were event and/or lane sponsors for this year's event:

Bill Edwards/Edwards Group  
 Dr. Dipak Shah  
**Coolidge Realty, Inc. (event sponsor)**  
 USAmeriBank  
 The Radiant Group, LLC  
 J. Rex Farris  
 Morgan Automotive Group  
 Trey Traviesa/V-3 Partners, LLP  
 Automated Petroleum  
 Hub International  
 Craig Urquhart



Academic Alliance in Dermatology  
 Mike Wagner/ Wagner Property Group  
 Smith Fence Company Group  
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 Weldon Industries, Inc.  
 Tampa Title Company/ Gary Gibbons  
 AEC Services, Inc.  
 Prida, Guida & Company, CPAs  
 American Metals Supply  
 Allan S. Martin  
 Healthedge Investment Partners  
 Bill Garrett  
 Baldwin Krystyn Sherman Partners  
 David & Becky Ogburn  
 Prime Physical Therapy

Also, a special thank you is in order to Anthony Perrone from Pin Chasers Bowling Center atn 4847 N Armenia Ave., Tampa, Florida 33603, who provided a great venue for our fundraiser. We give all praise to God for all of the success of this year's event and a big **THANK YOU** to our Bowl for Hope Chairman, David Ogburn.



## FRIENDSHIP BRIDGE

(Senior Adult Connection)

### Having the Attitude of AGELESSNESS Being a World Changer at 60+

By Molly Cox

Friendship Bridge is all about attitude. We all want to live longer, healthier, productive lives. At any age, God wants us to have an "abundant life". If I look at the physical age of my life, I may become depressed or just sit around in the rocking chair of life doing nothing. However, I do not believe that age should hinder us from doing those things that would give glory to our Father.

Aging is a beautiful part of living. It is about building relationships, planting seeds in the younger generation and being creative – yes, even at our age. I have a plan . . . a plan of being a world changer in this new season of my life. I can do this by exploring new ideas, networking in areas of interest, being willing to get out of the boat on the opposite side I've been hanging on to for many years – in other words, trying new things and being willing to change.

You can start by attending a Friendship Bridge meeting and making new friends or by bringing a friend with you. Maybe it will be someone you just met or a neighbor you've never met or just because you want to try something different.

Recently we had a speaker from a local agency that encouraged senior adults to volunteer. Why not try it! Get out the boat; be adventurous. Maybe you are homebound and you say "What can I do?" At the age of 98, my mom would call people she knew who were sick and pray for them over the phone or just say an encouraging word. Don't just sit around doing nothing - get involved! Being a World Changer is not just for the young . . . it's for everyone!

Friendship Bridge meets monthly at citylife church, 8411 N. Dale Mabry, Tampa.

For additional information on Friendship Bridge/citylife Seniors, call Pastor Molly Cox at (813) 933-3991 or email at [mcox@citylifechurch.cc](mailto:mcox@citylifechurch.cc).



## OPERATION JUMPSTART (Homeless Community Outreach Program)

### Volunteer Spotlight By David Gonzalez

When I was asked to talk about myself and my story, I felt very nervous to share my story with others. I did not want people to look at me differently once they found out exactly what life was like before Christ, citylife church and University Community Ministries' Operation Jumpstart (OJ) Homeless Outreach Program.



I should start by mentioning that I was raised in the Catholic Church and I didn't really enjoy it too much. It was just me and my mom until I was 12 when she met her now ex-husband. I was pretty much sheltered until he convinced her it was good for me to go outside and hang out with my friends and enjoy my young life. What people didn't know was that once I hit the streets, I fell in love with them. I started smoking and selling weed when I was 14 and started running with the wrong crowd. I skipped more days of high school than I attended but still managed to graduate. I only graduated so my mom could see me walk across the stage; it meant nothing to me since I was living so hood rich.

After high school, I stepped into the big leagues of drug dealing when I started selling heroin and by the age of 19 I had a car with \$15,000 worth of work done to it and around \$40,000 to \$50,000 in my bank account. I was living the fast life and enjoying every minute of it. It all came to a halt when I got robbed of over \$10,000 worth of heroin.

I was connected with the Latin Kings and that's where I was getting my drugs from. They would give me the drugs and I would sell them then pay them their money after I sold it. It's what they call a "front" in the streets.

After I got robbed, I had to tell them what happened. They spared my life because I never made a mistake before. However, they did beat me until I couldn't get up from the ground without assistance. My connection with them ended after that. I started selling weed again because that's what I knew. I also continued stealing from stores and robbing people at gun point to make extra money, living with no fear of getting caught or being sent to prison.

I got arrested on my mother's birthday for trying to steal a present for her and it was then that I promised I would never steal from a store or anything like that again. That, however, did not stop me from selling drugs and robbing other drug dealers. What did make me stop was the love of a beautiful woman that I still love till this day, but I messed up and now her heart belongs to someone else, which brings me to how I found citylife church.

After I broke up with the love of my life, I started selling cocaine because I was in a bar every night and I figured I could make some money and always have cocaine when I wanted it. I became very addicted to the drug and stopped turning a profit and made just enough money to be able to continue to get more products.

I eventually found myself broke, homeless and in the streets living motel to motel staying afloat by making drug deals on the side or gambling my last \$20 to hopefully make a flip and pay for my motel room. I got so tired of being broke, hungry and high all the time that I decided I needed to change. I jumped on the bus and went to citylife church. I didn't tell anyone what I was doing. I went by myself and sat in the back row. I had no one. My family didn't want anything to do with me and I felt lonely. I even felt lonely at church because when I got there, my whole row was empty. But after the service and crying my eyes out, I felt refreshed.

I called my mom and begged for forgiveness and told her about this amazing place I found and I got her to come with me and now we go every Sunday and Wednesday together. I wanted to start my own nonprofit to help people like me and that is how I made contact with UCM's Homeless Outreach Program called Operation Jumpstart (OJ). Since that day, I have been a proud member of the UCM OJ Program as well as the youngest and most handsome I should add. That's my story in a nutshell. Thank you for the chance to tell it.

## NEEDS

UCM needs your time and talents – volunteer today! Call the UCM office at (813) 935-8400 or email us at [info@universitycommunityministries.org](mailto:info@universitycommunityministries.org) and let us hear from you!

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

If you prefer to receive the UCM Newsletter via email, then email us at [newsletter@universitycommunityministries.org](mailto:newsletter@universitycommunityministries.org) to be placed on the emailing list and removed from our mailing list.

## CHECK US OUT!

Visit UCM's **NEW & IMPROVED** website at [www.universitycommunityministries.org](http://www.universitycommunityministries.org) for the latest news and events. Your comments are welcomed and encouraged.

If there is anything that you would like to see posted on the website or in the quarterly newsletter, email us at [info@universitycommunityministries.org](mailto:info@universitycommunityministries.org) or fax to (813) 968-8400. We would love to hear from you!

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## YOU CAN HELP

Join UCM in *Restoring hope . . . one life at a time*. As a supporter, you will receive our quarterly newsletter with important messages about our programs as well as success stories about the people we serve. UCM is a non-profit organization. All contributions are tax deductible.

## DID YOU KNOW

UCM served over 4300 meals last year to the hungry and needy in our community?

**YES**, I would like to partner with UCM in *Restoring hope . . . one life at a time*. Enclosed is my gift to UCM in the amount of:

\$500     \$100     \$250     \$50     Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 One Time     Monthly     Quarterly     Annually

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone/Fax \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

I am interested in becoming a volunteer.

### Planned Giving Options:

Please consider a gift to UCM in your will or estate plan.

Please send me information about naming UCM in my will.

I have already made provisions for UCM in my estate plans.

Thank you.

**Make checks payable to: University Community Ministries, Inc.  
PO Box 280024, Tampa, Florida 33682**

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