



University Community News

Volume 11

Restoring hope . . . one life at a time.

Issue 3

Board of Directors

Jerome Van Gulp, President
 Stan Strickland, Vice President
 America Van Gulp, Secretary
 Mary Bruder, Treasurer
 Molly Cox, Friendship Bridge Dir.
 Judy Morales
 David Ogburn
 Tony Stewart, Citylife church Pastor

Leadership Team

Joyce Griffin
 Mary Pass
 Paul Pass
 Betty Pitts
 Alvinia Robinson
 Walter Robinson
 Linda Rodriguez
 Carl Sanders
 John Thacker
 Ozie Brown
 Angel Rodriguez

Funding has been provided by:

Burton Family Foundation
 citylife church
 Rainmaker Entertainment
 The Radiant Group
 USAmeriBank
 Anonymous

Additional funding is received from
 community friends and supporters

University Community Ministries, Inc.
 P.O. Box 280024
 Tampa, Florida 33682
 813-935-8400 / 813-968-4140FAX
info@universitycommunityministries.org
www.universitycommunityministries.org

*Merry Christmas and Happy New Year
 from University Community Ministries, Inc.*

*During this Christmas season,
 our thoughts turn gratefully
 to those who have made our
 progress possible. It is in this
 spirit we want to sincerely
 extend our deepest thanks to
 each of you who have given
 through your prayers, time,
 and resources which make it
 possible for UCM to continue
 to restore hope... one life at a
 time.*

*We pray God bless you and
 your family with a very
 Merry Christmas and a
 Happy and Prosperous New
 Year!*

*We Love and appreciate you!
 America and Jerome Van Gulp*



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

IN THIS ISSUE

JUL - DEC 2015

| OUTREACHES | Page |
|-----------------------------|------|
| 2015 Restoring Hope Banquet | 2 |
| Friendship Bridge | 2 |
| 2015 Heart of the Harvest | 3 |
| 2015 Family Fun Day | 3 |
| UCM | Page |
| Needs/Announcements | 3 |
| How You Can Help | 4 |
| Did You Know | 4 |



2015 UCM "RESTORING HOPE BANQUET"

On behalf of University Community Ministries, Inc. we would like to say a big "THANK YOU" to all of you who contributed to our eighth annual "2015 Restoring Hope Banquet" held on Thursday, September 24th at the Embassy Suites USF Hotel. This year's banquet was the best ever. We could not have done it without your prayers, volunteer service, and financial support.

This year's banquet started off with some delicious hors d'oeuvres prepared and served by the gracious staff from the beautiful Embassy Suites USF Hotel. As everyone began to fill the banquet room we were all blessed by the beautiful music provided by Chris Spencer and the Restoring Hope Banquet Band.

Our own Pastor Tony Stewart from citylife church attended the banquet and gave the invocation.

UCM's President, Jerome Van Gorp, shared the vision for the "Burning Bush Rescue Mission" and presented a rendering of the BBRM upon completion.

This year's Operation Jumpstart (OJ) Homeless Outreach Program "Volunteer of the Year Award" went to Albertine Tumba. Albertine has been an amazing gift from God to our OJ Program for the last four years. Albertine gives tirelessly to the work of the ministry. Every Saturday she wakes up very early in the morning to pray and begin cooking the wonderful hot meal that will be served to our homeless and needy friends in the northeast Tampa community. She also maintains UCM's house of ministry known as the "House of Hope" as well as overseeing the sorting and distribution of clothing. Albertine is also in charge of UCM's quarterly newsletter. We all love Albertine and thank God for her always.

In the absence of Molly Cox, Director of the Friendship Bridge Senior Citizens Program, Margaret Genung presented the "Friendship Bridge "Volunteer of the Year Award" this year to the beautiful Ms. Ozie Brown. Ms. Ozie has been a member of citylife church (previously known as University Church of God) for approximately 37 years and has been attending and serving Friendship Bridge with the gift of worship for two years. Margaret also shared her testimony on the value and benefit of attending Friendship Bridge. Molly has a wonderful team who works hard each month to prepare a wonderful delicious meal and serve it to the senior citizens who attend the monthly meetings at citylife church. They are all deserving of the award and much more. Thank you all for your sacrifice of time, love and service.

We hope to see you all at next year's "2016 Restoring Hope Banquet".

In His Love and Service,

The University Community Ministries Board

James 1:27 "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this: To look after the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world".

Matthew 25:34-40 "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.' "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' "The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'

FRIENDSHIP BRIDGE (Senior Adult Events)

TOP 10 Benefits of Friendship Bridge

The monthly luncheons at citylife church in Tampa draw 60 to 75 seniors who are seated at circular tables. An observer can tell that the experience for these seniors provides a number of benefits.

1. **Getting out of their residence and meeting other people.** For those who spend many hours alone or with limited company, the warm atmosphere is truly a pick-me-up.
2. **The kindness of servers.** Volunteers bring food and beverages to the tables. Their warm smiles and friendliness are comforting to seniors who may have difficulty in walking or standing.
3. **Sharing common experiences with others in a similar age group.** Seniors know that their lives have changed in many ways. Physical limitations and health concerns play a larger part now, so being with others who understand that, who may say "I've been there, too" is a source of another pick-me-up.
4. **Lively conversation.** The simple act of dialogue in making friends at the lunch table or catching up with old friends on what's been happening is

stimulating, particularly for those seniors who spend a lot of time alone.

5. **Singing.** Seniors enjoy singing together, singing familiar songs they remember from their lifetime. Patriotic songs, Christmas carols, even "Happy Birthday" bring big smiles as the whole group joins in.
6. **Games.** When the after-meal program includes age-appropriate games, seniors laugh and join in for some friendly competition. When prizes are awarded (although games can still be fun without prizes), that's a highlight of the day for winners.
7. **Finding out that someone cares for you.** For some seniors, it's a revelation to suddenly become aware that other people are interested in their welfare and want to be part of their lives. Friendship Bridge luncheons provide opportunities for the healing touches of friendship.
8. **Seeing your name in the newsletter.** The monthly newsletter ("Senior Link") that goes out in the mail before each luncheon now contains articles of interest, including some that quote seniors who attend. One example is an article for the January issue which will quote seniors on "Something I want to do in 2016".
9. **Luncheon food that is attractive and delicious.** Some seniors, based on their individual living conditions, probably eat simply or in some cases, even irregularly. The food at Friendship Bridge is lovingly prepared by volunteers and includes an entrée, salad, vegetables, dessert and beverage. Anyone who wants "seconds" is welcome to have them. The price of the meal is kept to a reasonable amount that the seniors can afford.
10. **A reminder that their lives are important to God.** The atmosphere, the program, the music, the loving attention of the servers all contribute to a solid reminder that each individual senior is someone that God loves. The "message" is acted out in hundreds of ways during the two hours of each monthly luncheon. And that benefit is the most important one of all.

By Dr. Patricia Fulton



2015 "HEART OF THE HARVEST" Thanksgiving Dinner



The 2015 "Heart of the Harvest" Thanksgiving Dinner was held on the grounds of UCM's House of Hope, 8512

Mitchell Avenue in Sulphur Springs on Saturday November 21, 2015 from 1:30 pm until 3:00 pm.

A team of 51 volunteers and their kids from several churches in the Tampa Bay area, namely citylife, Watermark, LifePoint, LifePoint Sulphur Springs Baptist, and Idlewild Odessa Baptist, put together an amazing Thanksgiving feast for approximately 100 of our homeless friends and needy families in the community who joined us for a hot meal and a great time of fun and fellowship. The compliments on the meal and the event were many from our guests and volunteers. Even though there were at least four other thanksgiving dinners being hosted by other churches in the surrounding area, we were blessed and encouraged by the great turn out. Not only were we able to feed them a hot meal but also had the honor to sit and eat with them and hear their stories. It is amazing how a listening ear, a kind word, and a gentle hug will turn sorrow into gladness and discouragement into hope.

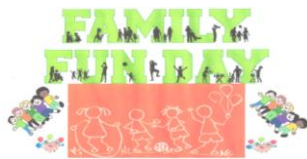
As an added bonus, the citylife ThanksForGiving Outreach provided UCM with twenty (20) Thanksgiving baskets which were hand delivered the next day by America and Jerome Van Gorp to our needy families and neighbors in the area who otherwise would not have had a Thanksgiving meal this year. Everyone was so very thankful! THANK YOU citylife church!!!

University Community Ministries would like to extend a huge "THANK YOU" to all of our donors and volunteers for your generosity, kindness and hard work in making our 2015 Heart of the Harvest Thanksgiving Dinner a big success. You are an "AMAZING" team!

We thank God for all of you who support UCM and the OJ Homeless Outreach Program through your finances, giving of your time and most importantly your prayers. Without you it would be impossible for us to restore hope...one life at a time to the hurting and needy in the Tampa Bay area.



UCM/Operation Jumpstart 2015 "Family Fun Day"



On Saturday August 8, 2015 University Community Ministries (UCM) and the Operation Jumpstart (OJ) team held their third annual "Family Fun Day" at the UCM House of Hope located at 8512 N Mitchell Ave. The prayers, contributions, time and service of the volunteers created a fun and successful Family Fun Day for the Sulphur Springs community.

This year, we issued 21 vouchers for school uniforms to the parents of students who attend Sulphur Springs Elementary School. The parents of these students will attend the Sulphur Springs Elementary School Open House on August 21st to redeem their voucher.

In addition, a UCM Board Member and OJ volunteer was instrumental in raising an additional \$3,000 toward school uniforms for the kids in the Sulphur Springs Community. UCM is excited about building a relationship with the Sulphur Springs Elementary School to assist in developing young men and women in our community.



Because of your support, we were able to serve over 181 people made up of 91 families, 44 single adults and 46 servant

volunteers at the UCM House of Hope. We gave away 71 back to school back packs filled with school supplies to the kids and gave out \$280 in door prizes. Several volunteers spent the day talking with various families, serving snow cones and popcorn, running various games, distributing free clothing, flipping hot dogs and hamburgers, and painting kids' faces. We demonstrated and showed the community the love of God and reminded them that Jesus loves them! Pastor Josh Callahan, from Acacia Grove Church shared a powerful but brief portion of his testimony encouraging the people to trust in God. Everyone appeared to have a great time. The event was to last until 2:00 pm but unfortunately the weather released a heavy thunderstorm that required us to shut down and close the event early at 12:30 pm.

The Family Fun Day volunteers had a wonderful time serving and sharing with our homeless friends and families in the community.

We sincerely thank LifePoint Church, Acacia Grove Church and citylife church who helped us

financially and provided us with tents, chairs and tables for our event.

We thank God for our DJ Phillip Giguere for providing the music and each of you who supported UCM through your finances, the giving of your time and most importantly your prayers. Without you it would be impossible for us to restore hope...one life at a time to those in the Tampa Bay area.

1 John 3:17 Reminds us "Whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?"



NEEDS

UCM needs your time and talents – volunteer today! Call the UCM office at (813) 935-8400 or email us at 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 to be placed on the emailing list and removed from our mailing list.

CHECK US OUT!

Visit UCM's website at www.universitycommunityministries.org for the latest news and events. Your comments are welcomed and encouraged.

You can also like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/UniversityCommunityMinistries

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 or fax to (813) 968-4140. We would love to hear from you!

A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE FLORIDA DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL FREE WITHIN THE STATE 800-435-7352. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE.



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 4,426 meals last year to the hungry and needy in our community, handed out over 200 blankets to our homeless neighbors, and gave away 75 back to school back packs with school supplies to the kids in the Sulphur Springs 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**

NONPROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
TAMPA, FL
PERMIT NO. 1891

info@universitycommunityministries.org

P.O. Box 280024
Tampa, Florida 33682

University Community Ministries, Inc.
Restoring Hope . . . one life at a time.

