

TRIUMPH

Highlighting Personal, Family, and Community Victories



Fall/Winter 2010

MISSION: INCREASING THE ABILITY OF CHILDREN, YOUTH, ADULTS, AND FAMILIES TO SUCCEED IN A DIVERSE COMMUNITY

GSRP Graduation



Our Great Start Readiness Program classroom (preschool), funded in part by the State of Michigan, had a very successful year. To be eligible for the 29-week program, children had to meet certain criteria or risk factors, including low family income.

UMCH provided a developmentally and culturally appropriate environment that was nurturing, stimulating and emphasized active, hands-on

learning. Sixteen preschoolers worked hard and graduated in August 2010, and are now developmentally on track and ready for Kindergarten! According to a Literacy Accomplishment Checklist (standardized screening tool), 100% of the children attending the UMCH Child Development Center for 9 months or longer met or exceeded age-appropriate literacy and language skills. On average, the children improved their scores 40% from mid-year to the end of the year.

We are so proud of each child and family for their accomplishment!

SCHOOLS OF Hope



UMCH is a "Schools of Hope" provider at Dickinson and Cesar Chavez Elementary Schools. This

program, funded by Heart of West Michigan United Way, is a literacy program specifically for students in 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grade who are 1 to 2 grade levels behind in reading. At these sites, our instructors work with 50 children to close the 3rd grade reading achievement gap.

The program takes place Monday through Thursday from 3:30-5:30. Each day consists of teacher reading, independent student reading, vocabulary and comprehension activities, writing, and word games.

Fact: Ratio of books available to children in middle-income neighborhoods: 12 : 1 and in low-income neighborhoods: 1 : 355. (Neuman et al., 2001)

During the 2009/2010 school year at Dickinson Elementary, UMCH's literacy program scores showed over a one grade level reading improvement in each child in a 6-month time period.

To become a reading mentor, please contact Rose Simmons at UMCH or visit www.hwmuw.org/Schools_of_Hope.php.



From our house to your house, from youngest to oldest,
THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT AND GENEROSITY THIS YEAR!

UMCH Leadership Staff

Richard V. Clanton, Chief Executive Officer
Dr. Nkechy Ezech, Executive Director of Advancement & Special Projects
Rose Simmons, Director of Programs
Ron Eberhardt, Director of Finance
Bev Crandall-Rice, Director of Development
Anita Christopher, Director of Community Relations & Senior Development

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Beverly Gassdorf Nichea Guy Ruth Whaley

A Letter FROM OUR CEO



Richard Clanton, CEO

It's the time of year that we reflect on the past year. UMCH can feel proud that we continued to support hundreds of low-income families' needs in 2010 through priority programs and services.

We have also:

- Communicated outcomes through our agency's annual report (available on our website).
- Held an inspiring and highly attended, "Make it Count" Fundraising Luncheon event.

- Met current human resource needs through a Nonprofit Technical Assistance grant.
- Strengthened our future sustainability through support of Cascade Engineering and the Keller Foundation to complete a viable Business Plan.

Together, we are truly making a difference in countless lives everyday. For this, we thank you! I also invite you to visit UMCH so that you can see first-hand our exciting programs and services and meet some of our dedicated employees and program participants.

Thank you for your continued support of United Methodist Community House.

Funders

MAY - DECEMBER 2010

- ACSET/Michigan Works
- Area Agency on Aging Western Michigan
- Amway One by One
- Department of Education, State of Michigan
- Department of Human Services
- Doug & Maria DeVos Foundation
- General Board of Global Ministries
- Grand Rapids Housing Commission
- Grand Rapids Public Schools
- Heart of West Michigan United Way
- Keller Foundation
- Meijer, Inc
- Michigan Department of Transportation
- Non Profit Technical Assistance Fund
- W.K. Kellogg Foundation

For a complete list of UMCH funders and donors, please visit us online, under the "About Us" section at www.umchousegr.org.

2010 Summer KIDS CAMP

UMCH had approximately 102 children ages 5-12 participate in summer day camp programming (on & offsite). For the 2nd year UMCH managed Camp Optimist, a 120-acre woodlands of beautiful scenery, environment, and facilities located west of Standale. The program provided a safe and supervised environment, available Monday-Friday, 6 AM - 6 PM.



What the kids had to say...

"Camp Optimist was a huge adventure everyday! We loved swimming and playing there. I love camp!"

"UMCH was fun! We go to the gym, game room and computer room. I love UMCH."

"Camp Optimist was So So So fun. UMCH was fun. Summer without camp it was so so so not fun."

"I like Camp Optimist because we go swimming and I like the trails in the woods and I like the pool table."

"Summer without UMCH ... I'd probably be bored and watch TV all day. Thank you UMCH!"

B2B MIDDLE & HIGH



As a pilot site for the "I Believe, I Become" Program, UMCH began programming for 58 middle and high school-aged youths. This program augmented their educational opportunities and taught employment and life skills to serve them throughout their lives.

In GRPS, achievement tests show that after working hard all year, some students lose up to 40% of their learning during summer vacation. Additionally, in the summer, low-income students lose more than two months in reading achievement, despite the fact that their middle-income peers make slight gains. (Cooper, 1996)

Thanks to an infusion of private local funding, 578 middle and high school students in targeted Grand Rapids neighborhoods received a "summer experience." Some students experienced the arts, outings, field trips and college visits, while others were offered part-time jobs... all designed to combat a phenomenon known as "summer learning loss."

UMCH was one of 14 organizations selected to design and deliver an experiential summer learning program. This program was made possible through a collaborative effort of Grand Rapids Public Schools, Grand Rapids Student Advancement Foundation, Area Community Services Employment and Training Council (ACSET), W.K. Kellogg Foundation, and the Douglas & Maria DeVos Foundation.

"This was a great opportunity for our youth, the future of our neighborhoods and our community," said Dr. Nkechyi Ezech, "These comprehensive summer programs provide a great way for students to catch up, embrace new experiences and make good decisions for the future."

100 YEARS OLD & *Giving* BACK



Mr. Andrew Cross

Senior Center participant, Mr. Andrew Cross, turned 100 years old on August 24, 2010. United Methodist Community House had a wonderful celebration with him. He usually worked two jobs to make sure he provided for his large family of 11 children. He retired from the C&O Railroad and began receiving his pension 40 years ago.

Mr. Cross continued to work well into his 90's and was invited to the White House by

President Bill Clinton to recognize seniors in the workforce. His response to the question of "How are you today?" is "Well, it's another Thanksgiving day isn't it?" He still goes for his daily walk each morning and is in excellent health.

Congratulations Mr. Cross!

First Step HOUSE



FIRST STEP HOUSE

Transitional Housing and Support for Women in Recovery
P: (616) 452-3226
ext. 3037 or 3028

SUCCESS STORY

My name is Robbie Smith and here is my story...

I came out of Huron Valley Prison on May 11, 2010, with nowhere to go. I was homeless, penniless, with no family to welcome me home after 3 years.

I've been through the abuse and lifestyle of the streets and addiction and now needed a change. Well, here it was... a Christian-based recovery house with people with the same history or close enough to it as mine. Persons I could relate to and really talk to.

I've grown to realize the person I want to be since being at the UMCH First Step House. It is not who I once was but the clean and sober person I know I can be; that I can achieve anything I set my mind to. I now have a decent job and have the support and encouragement that I need.

What I know to be true is that my prayers were answered for a safe place to lay my head. There are many people I want to give thanks to for their support and encouragement, but I want to thank all who help out to keep this program going.

WHAT'S *New*

NEW BOARD MEMBERS

(Since May, 2010)

Corey Baker
July 2010, Fifth Third Bank

Saraya Crawford
September 2010, Fifth Third Bank

Jeffrey Sluggett
July 2010, Law Weathers

Sylvia Taylor
December 2010, Retiree US Post Office

*Welcome to the
UMCH Board!*

Farewell

RETIRING BOARD MEMBERS

(December 2010)

Sandy Sefton
Virginia Gearhart

*UMCH wants to thank
you for your dedicated
leadership and service!*

OUR *Impact*

WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT UMCH?

I like learning. -*Jaylissa, age 4*

I like playing in dramatic play area. -*Sonya, age 5*

Reading books. -*Nathan, age 5*

Playing outside on the playground. -*Tierra, age 4*

My teachers and friends. -*Tamera, age 4*

I am just happy here. -*Devin, age 5*



HEART - HEART *Bingo* BONANZA



(Left) Volunteers assisted seniors whose eyesight has grown dim and those who need help with reading.



(Above) Everyone's a winner at the "Heart to Heart Bingo Bonanza." Mrs. Nash receives her gift bag!

(Left) The bags were gender specific. Mr. Baker enjoyed the Bingo and a wonderful Hawaiian style lunch.



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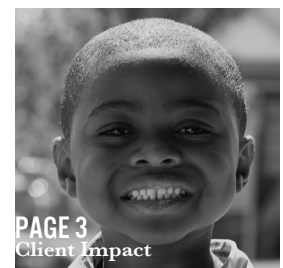
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INSIDE THIS ISSUE...



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Like: **UMCH-United Methodist Community House**

HELP US HELP OTHERS, *Donate* TODAY!

ONLINE GIVING

UMCH has the capability to accept donations online via credit card. To access secured online giving, please visit www.umchousegr.org and click on the button at the upper left hand corner.



You do not need a PayPal account to donate. Check it out - it's as easy as 1, 2, 3!

GET INVOLVED

1. UMCH Agency Tours!
 2. Agency Wish List!
 3. Volunteer Opportunities!
- Such as:

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Mentors | Special Events |
| Tutors | Reading to Children |
| Child Care | Bulk Mailing |
| Yard Work | General Cleaning |

WAYS TO DONATE

- Individual Donation
- Corporate Donation
- In-Kind Donation
- Capital Investment
- Endowment
- Memorial or Honorary Donation
- United Way Designated Gift
- Advance Giving- #162871
- Combined Federal Campaign- #86364

The Triumph Newsletter is a United Methodist Community House publication. If you have received this newsletter as a duplicate or in error, please let us know by calling (616) 452-3226.

If you would like to receive this newsletter via email, please contact Kristen Liefbroer (kliefbroer@umchousegr.org).

