2019 ANNUAL REPORT

COMMUNITY, FAITH, & RESPECT HAPPEN HERE

Your support makes it possible!
COMMUNITY
In spirit and action UCOM embraces diversity and inclusion, equality and interdependence.

FAITH
Our faith prayerfully provides hope that our efforts in common with our neighbors' will bring a brighter life.

RESPECT
We respect and appreciate differences and similarities in all people, and work to empower each person to attain their God-given potential.

MISSION
United Church Outreach Ministry values individuals and builds community in southwestern Kent County by providing material and educational assistance to meet basic needs, improve quality of life, and promote self-sufficiency.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT UCOMGR.ORG/MISSION
COMMUNITY EDUCATION OFFERINGS EXPANDED IN 2019 WITH THE WALKING CLUB, NEIGHBOR LED COOKING CLASSES, AND MORE PEOPLE PARTICIPATING IN GROWING GREEN NEIGHBORS GARDENING CLUB THAN EVER BEFORE

EAT YOUR WAY TO HEALTH COOKING EDUCATION WAS SPONSORED BY UNITED HEALTH CARE WHILE SPECTRUM HEALTH TAUGHT MONTHLY NUTRITION CLASSES. NEIGHBORS ARE GRATEFUL FOR THOSE INVESTING IN THE HEALTH OF THE COMMUNITY.
"WHEN YOU SUPPORT UCOM, YOU'RE SUPPORTING AN OUTSTANDING CAUSE THAT PROVIDES VALUE TO YOUR NEIGHBORS. IT'S NOT JUST FOOD BASKETS OR TOYS FOR TOTS SIGN UPS AT THE HOLIDAYS. IT'S YEAR-ROUND WITH THE FOOD BANK, CLOTHING CLOSET, NUTRITIONAL EDUCATION, TEACHING PEOPLE TO BUDGET, AND JUST SO MANY THINGS THAT PEOPLE AREN'T AWARE OF."

DAVID HAS BEEN VOLUNTEERING AT UCOM FOR 15 YEARS. BEING A PART OF THE COMMUNITY MEANS A LOT TO HIM.

"THIS IS ONE WAY I CAN STILL KEEP ACTIVE AND DO SOME GOOD. I GET TO BE HELPFUL WITH SPANISH-SPEAKING NEIGHBORS WHEN THEY COME IN. IT'S GOOD PRACTICE FOR ME AND HELPS KEEP ME CURRENT ON MY SPANISH SKILLS."

AROUND 50% OF THOSE WE SERVE ARE HISPANIC. HAVING VOLUNTEERS WHO CAN SPEAK SPANISH IS IMPORTANT AND IS ANOTHER WAY UCOM RESPECTS THE COMMUNITY AROUND US.
The Journey of UCOM Volunteers

How 20,990+ hours of love, kindness, and compassion was poured out on the community in 365 days

1. 49 Key Volunteers answered the call and served 7310+ hours
2. 10 Board Members governed UCOM with 300+ hours of meetings and leadership
3. 11 Tax Prep Workers spent 600+ hours helping neighbors get $250k in returns
4. 179 Court Services workers served 5665+ hours giving back to the community
5. 6 community groups with disabilities spent 725+ hours learning skills and making the community brighter
6. 8 Mission/Youth Groups sent 114 people to give 1000+ hours of love
7. 13 AARP or ReEmployability Workers trained for new skills by giving 4880+ hours
8. 7 DHHS Community workers contributed back to their hometown with 510+ hours of service
"I'VE BEEN VERY BLESSED IN MY LIFE. WHEN I RETIRED I DECIDED I WOULD GIVE BACK AND I'VE CHOSEN TO DO THAT BY VOLUNTEERING AT UCOM. THEY ALWAYS SAY YOU GET MORE OUT OF GIVING THAN YOU THINK. AND YOU DO!"

SANDY CAN BE FOUND ON MONDAYS TALKING TO NEIGHBORS IN THE INTAKE OFFICE. SHE ListENS TO NEIGHBORS'S NEEDS AND HELPS THEM LEARN ABOUT THINGS GOING ON AT UCOM THAT MIGHT HELP THEM.

"I HAVEN'T HAD A LOT OF FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES," SHE TOLD US. BUT HER COMPASSION FOR OTHERS WHO ARE FACING CHALLENGES IS BOUNDLESS. SHE FITS IN WELL WITH OTHERS WHO SHE SAYS ARE "COMMITTED AND CARING." VOLUNTEERING AT UCOM FOR SANDY "HAS BEEN A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE ALL AROUND."
In 1969 a group of concerned congregation members at Smith Memorial Congregational began serving hot lunch to the local elementary school students. As the years went by and the needs of the community changed, many churches combined their passion and commitment for service and UCOM was born. Today, numerous congregations support the mission through food drives, financial support, prayers, volunteerism, and more.

3 churches serve as delivery pantries for neighbors with transportation barriers
2 churches serve as personal hygiene pantries for neighbors
1 church serves as a baby pantry supplying 120 families a month with diapers, wipes, and other baby care needs
Workforce Development

Empowered Neighbors Becoming Employed Neighbors

Through career exploration, job coaching, skill mining, goal setting, and access to training scholarships, neighbors overcome barriers to higher wage positions. They practice interviews and professional communication skills, build their resume, receive interview clothes, and move up the ladder towards financial stability.

99 individuals connected with Workforce Development services in 2019. 67 of them participated in focused career coaching to attain a next-level career.
A PLACE OF RESPECT

"PEOPLE LEAVE HERE REALLY HAPPY BECAUSE THEY SHOP FOR WHAT THEY NEED INSTEAD OF HAVING PEOPLE JUST PROVIDE THEM WITH RANDOM THINGS LIKE I'VE SEEN OTHER PLACES.

THANK YOU TO EVERYBODY AT UCOM. YOU'VE BEEN GRACIOUS AND I APPRECIATE IT!"

DEREK CAME TO UCOM AS A PATH VOLUNTEER, NOT BELIEVING HE WOULD BE TREATED WITH A LOT OF RESPECT. "I THOUGHT I WOULD COME HERE AND WORK, WORK, WORK," HE SAID.

HE WAS SURPRISED BY WHAT HE FOUND. DEREK QUICKLY LEARNED THAT STAFF AND OTHER VOLUNTEERS CARED ABOUT HIM AND HIS FAMILY. "SHAWN HAS BEEN GENEROUS AND HELPFUL WITH MY CHILDREN. I APPRECIATE EVERYTHING SHE IS DOING HERE."

HE APPRECIATED HOW PEOPLE TOOK TIME TO LEARN WHAT HELP HE NEEDED AND TREATED HIM WITH KINDNESS. UCOM VALUES MEAN EVERYONE IS SEEN AS A UNIQUE INDIVIDUAL WHO DESERVES RESPECT, KINDNESS AND CARING.
Financial literacy students range from high school students planning their open house at a one-time workshop to community members attending a ten-hour comprehensive class. They learn about budgeting, smart use of credit and spending, saving, banking, and more. They invest their time in themselves to improve their futures.

158 neighbors participated in at least one aspect of financial literacy education in 2019, totaling 255 service encounters.
Eat Health Live Healthy supports better health through diet and fitness, focused on nutritious, fresh and when possible local food. Neighbors in need can visit the Healthy Choice Pantry once monthly for no-cost, healthy foods, based on family size. They can shop the Farm Stand for low-cost locally grown produce. In summer and winter of 2019 they participated in Farm 2 Family, purchasing Community Supported Agriculture shares to expand their produce eating. Or they could join Growing Green Neighbors community gardening group with backyard plots or in the shared space at a local park. Your support of neighbors’ desire to eat well means so much!

1681 households combined for 19,043 visits to the food pantry in 2019. The average household visited of 3.69 times. During these visits, enough groceries were provided to create 399,903 meals for families.

2131 transactions were processed at the Farm Stand in 2019
I'm part of the solution to poverty

- Wellness and Physical Activity Classes
- Facilitating Community Organizing
- Farm Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Market
- Healthy Choice Food Pantry
- Nutritional Options for Wellness Food Pantry
- Urban Gardening
- Healthy Cooking and Nutrition Education
- Job Coaching and System Navigation
- Financial Literacy Programs

UCOM
Resources for living. Hope for life.