



NEWSLETTER

January - April 2016

A New Year Brings New Possibilities

This time of year always brings about a time of reflection and gratitude for the blessings of the past year. This year is no exception, as 2015, our 45th year of service, was another magnificent year at the United Community Center.

One highlight this fall was being recognized by the White House as a "Bright Spot in Hispanic Education." This designation was given to only three organizations in Wisconsin that are helping close the achievement gap and support Latino educational attainment and excellence. We are proud of this recognition and what it means for the students we serve.

Additionally, we are excited to be nearing the completion of our \$8 million Building on Success capital campaign to expand Bruce-Guadalupe Community School, giving more students in Milwaukee access to life-changing opportunities. We are deeply honored by the generosity and trust so many individuals and organizations have placed in us by financially supporting this campaign. We are optimistic that together we will complete the largest fundraising effort in the 45-year history of UCC on time.

In 2016, we will open the new UCC Acosta Middle School and welcome 50 new 6th graders to this school with a focus on technology and skilled trades to prepare students for careers of the 21st century. This and many other exciting opportunities for us to serve the community

**UCC ACOSTA MIDDLE SCHOOL
OPENING FALL 2016**

It's official! The new middle school will be named the UCC Acosta Middle School in recognition of Dora & Israel "Shorty" Acosta.

UCC is grateful for Dora & Shorty's combined 75 years of service to UCC and the community, and we're proud to name the new school after such gracious, kind, and generous people.

would not be possible without the partnership of so many, including volunteers, corporate partners, and numerous other organizations who help us in our mission every day! It is with gratitude that we begin this new year of celebration for what we accomplished and dream of what else we can achieve together.

Students Experience Medical School at University of Wisconsin-Madison

With an invitation from Manuel Santiago, the Director of Multicultural Affairs at the University of Madison's School of Medicine and Public Health, 50 students from the Latino Arts Strings Program visited Madison recently to participate in Mini-Med School, a day-long, hands-on experience to simulate some of the experiences of Medical School. At Mini-Med School, UW medical students ran a variety of workshops for the Strings students and covered topics such as the exploration of human organs. Medical students also taught a class on how to prepare early for possible acceptance into medical school.

Following the Mini-Med School, the students returned the favor by performing a concert for all of the workshop participants, as well as for other university students and staff. The Dean of the School of Medicine was in attendance and expressed great admiration for the students after hearing the concert. He even extended a personal invitation to the students interested in medicine to return to the school to observe a variety of activities, including medical operations.

For many of the Strings students, their favorite takeaway of the day included touching real human organs. They also felt great pride in the opportunity to showcase their talents while performing for the faculty and university students who worked with them throughout the day.



UCC and Community Care Partner to Serve Elderly

The United Community Center recently celebrated their new partnership with Community Care, Inc. to provide comprehensive, all-inclusive care for older adults in need on Milwaukee's south side. The partnership will help vulnerable older adults get the medical and long-term care services necessary to live as independently as possible and to reduce the need of moving into a nursing facility.



Community Care, Inc. specializes in helping older adults and adults with disabilities live independently. This partnership brings high-quality care and an extraordinary cultural experience to older adults with long-term care needs. Under the partnership, the UCC Adult Day Center will welcome Milwaukee County residents who are enrolled in Community Care's PACE program, also known as the Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly.

"The United Community Center is the premier provider of family and social services for the Hispanic community, and we're excited to give our PACE participants the opportunity to experience this great organization and its outstanding programs," said Kenneth Munson, CEO of Community Care. "This partnership is an ideal match – it optimizes our strength as a national leader in delivering personalized, high-quality coordinated care and the United Community Center's strong reputation of providing outstanding cultural programs to residents in the Milwaukee area."

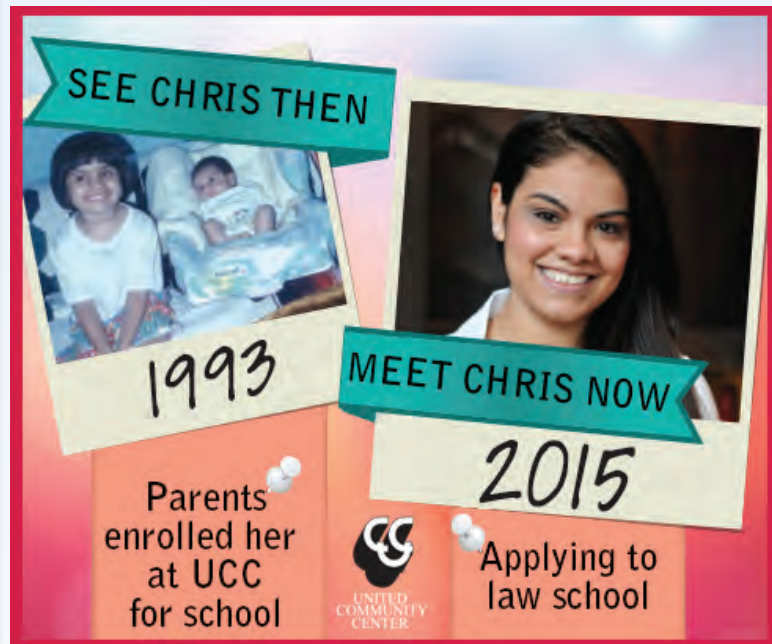
The partnership is the first of its kind for Community Care, which operates Medicare and Medicaid-funded long-term care programs in 14 Wisconsin counties. The Community Care PACE program is available to residents of Milwaukee and Waukesha counties. With fully bilingual staff and a program that focuses on cultural sensitivity and wide range of activities where clients can enjoy socialization and stimulation, UCC will provide a unique benefit to clients of the PACE program while also saving money long term through preventative care and services. Both organizations hope this is just the beginning of a partnership that will ensure our most vulnerable elderly, no matter the ethnicity, receive appropriate and effective care.

UMOS Works with Senior Center to Tackle Stress



Every Wednesday, clients at the Senior Center meet for a program called Charlas de Terapias with UMOS (United Migrant Opportunity Services) educator Carmen Maysonet. The Charlas, which translates to conversations, offer a group environment for clients to talk about anything that is troubling them, whether it's a disagreement with a family member or another client, or even instances of depression, clients' feelings are welcomed with listening ears. Carmen also teaches clients about aggression and the different types one can have, and more importantly, how to address these aggressive situations. Senior Center Director Hector Hernandez says, "[The program] has had a great impact on them. It's a way for them to relieve stress and adds positivity to the center."

Where Are They Now? Chris Rojo



Chris, her parents, and her siblings came to UCC and BGCS as a young family new to Milwaukee in the 1990s.

When she and her sisters enrolled at BGCS, the girls had no idea what the future would hold. They were not strong English-speakers and did not know any of the other students. They joined ESL classes to learn vocabulary and reading with other English-language learners. The sisters soon made friends in their classrooms and found a comfort with English. Their parents were also very involved, developing a camaraderie with BGCS families as part of the Parent Involvement Committee.

With a strong elementary school foundation, Chris's future began to take a more concrete form as she entered Mr. Harris's history class in 7th grade:

"Mr. Harris was my favorite teacher. I'm actually studying criminal justice because of him."

Knowing she wanted to pursue a professional career, Chris needed to work hard and succeed in high school to eventually go to college. She participated in UCC's Youth Volunteer Corps every summer, mentoring younger students and going on college tours throughout the state.

Thanks to her commitment to high school, Chris enrolled at UW-Milwaukee – **as the first in her family to go to college!** She joined UCC's Abriendo Puertas program, which guided her not only in her early college years, but also gave her career advice and mentoring opportunities as she neared graduation. She learned how to write cover letters, network with other professionals, and develop what skills she needed to succeed in the workplace:

"A lot of doors and opportunities have opened up for me."

In college, she interned at Milwaukee's District Attorney's Office and at the Wisconsin Department of Justice, where she worked alongside federal agents and looked over crime cases!

So where is Chris today? She is working part-time as a legal assistant, applying to UW-Madison Law School, and graduating college in May! Thanks to her hard work and the support of UCC and BGCS staff, volunteers, and donors, Chris is on her way to an amazing future her family only dreamed of twenty years ago.

Volunteers Give Back This Fall

As we welcome the New Year and look forward to the spring, United Community Center would like to reflect on the generosity of all the volunteers who donated their time, energy, and efforts to make this past fall and holiday season a success. With your help and support, we accomplished more than 28 projects for our students, seniors, and community.

UCC was fortunate to host the annual United Way Season of Caring with twelve volunteer projects taking place in the Senior Center, Adult Day Center, and Bruce-Guadalupe Community School. We had more than 95 volunteers from nine corporate partners participate in these events. Thanks to companies like Rockwell Automation, Robert W. Baird & Co, Inc., Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare, and so many others, we were able provide literacy events to our younger students, give a career presentation to our middle school students, and even take our seniors on a memorable field trip to the Milwaukee Public Museum.

We also had wonderful group of career coaches and mentors that volunteered in UCC's Abriendo Puertas (Opening Doors) program to help our college students on their journey to finding their careers. Volunteers spent time with these young and upcoming professionals sharing their expertise, advice, and personal experiences on how to be successful.

Muchas Gracias, a huge thank you to all of the remarkable volunteers that made a difference in our community by participating in our projects and events this past year. We hope to see you and your friends again in 2016!



State Representative Dale Kooyenga makes reading fun for our preschool students.



Volunteers from Robert W. Baird & Co., Inc. help students in the Homework Help Afterschool program.



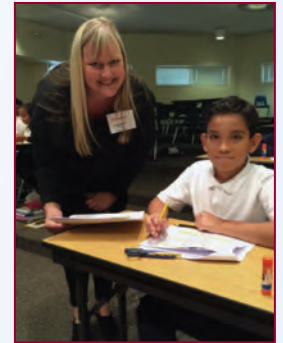
Divine Savior Holy Angels volunteers host a special spa day for our seniors.



University School of Milwaukee volunteers help students create spooky Halloween crafts.



US Bank takes our seniors on a memorable field trip to the Milwaukee Public Museum.



Thanks to the United Way Season of Caring, The Bon-Ton Stores, Inc. help our students explore different career paths.

Save The Date

Please join us for these upcoming events:

- All volunteers are invited to attend our annual Volunteer Celebration to be held on February 25th from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
- Help our students explore different career paths during the Middle School Career Day to be held on March 22nd

For more information on these events, please contact Joanna Rivas at jrivas@unitedcc.org or (414) 384-3100

Creativity and Exploration Explode as Students Work with Chromebooks

This year at Bruce-Guadalupe Community School, every 8th grade student received a Chromebook to bring to and from school every day and utilize daily in class and with homework. After just one semester, the educational experience has changed dramatically for both students and staff.

Students are now able to explore more information on topics studied in class, they problem solve independently and are becoming more comfortable emailing teachers questions about homework. Students have demonstrated they can own their learning and take responsibility for finding a solution. Students are so excited about the new technology, many are showing more initiative in class, as well as keeping up with work while absent and monitoring homework and grades. Staff have noticed that the time saved in grading homework and papers by utilizing online quizzes and homework, helps them be more efficient and effective as educators. Many staff are excited to plan more in-depth lessons with innovative and new projects for students to explore.



Additionally, the ability to provide almost immediate feedback to students helps the student and the teacher understand where more time might be needed on a specific concept.

With many high schools moving to online and 1:1 computer based learning, Bruce-Guadalupe students will be prepared for their next academic step. The days of waiting for the laptops and finding time in the computer lab are over.

The possibilities for what can be explored with this 21st century new learning tool are endless.



**CENTRO DE LA COMUNIDAD UNIDA
UNITED COMMUNITY CENTER**

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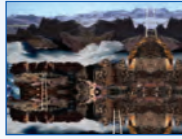
LATINO 2016 Spring Preview

**GARDENS, GODS, AND GRIDS:
RETRACING NATURE, CULTURE,
AND INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE
AMERICAS**

by Dara Larson

On display through February 26

Latino Arts Gallery



**ANNUAL GUITAR FESTIVAL
CONCERT**

Saturday, February 20 7:30 p.m.

Latino Arts Auditorium



TROPICALISIMO

by John Serigny

Opens Friday, March 11

Latino Arts Gallery



GREGORIO URIBE BIG BAND

Friday, March 11 7:30 p.m.

Latino Arts Auditorium



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THE LATINO ARTS
STRINGS PROGRAM

PRESENTS

THE ANNUAL
**GUITAR
FESTIVAL**

SATURDAY
FEBRUARY 20

COMPETITION
MASTER CLASS
CONCERT

REGISTER ONLINE TODAY:
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Latino Arts Celebrates Cuba

To close the Fall 2015 season, Latino Arts spent the first week of December spotlighting Cuba. The celebration began on Wednesday, December 2 with Lunch & Learn: The Current State of Cuba, a panel discussion moderated by TMJ4's Charles Benson regarding Cuban culture and the progress that has been made in repairing U.S.-Cuban relations. Latino Arts Board Member Raúl Galván and Madison's "Patron Saint of Cuban Music" Ricardo Gonzalez spoke of their experiences with culture, politics, and the everyday life of Cubans. The sold-out audience eagerly asked questions to understand what the future holds for Cuba.

On Friday, December 4, Adonis Puentes & The Voice of Cuba Orchestra played a two-hour concert with a set that wove Adonis' passionate, hypnotic Salsa and Son vocal melodies through the band's Latin Jazz rhythms. The performer took the captivated audience on a journey through Cuba's musical history, from its roots through more contemporary offerings like that of the Buena Vista Social Club.

Latino Arts is dedicated to bringing cultural awareness, artistic educational experiences, and high-quality programming to the community, and this spotlight on Cuba proved a welcome series that navigated the line between educational and entertaining!

