

NEWSLETTER

September - December 2015



Welcome Back – Exciting Things Ahead

By the time you receive this newsletter, we will have welcomed our largest student body in Bruce-Guadalupe Community School history to our campus, with more than 1,250 students! While a new school year signals the end of summer, it is the just the beginning of an amazing future for these students who arrive with energy, enthusiasm, and an eagerness to learn! We also welcomed back our excellent school staff and many new faculty members to help us fulfill our mission of providing the best education possible for the community.

It is also an exciting time, as we completed another milestone in our Building on Success Capital Campaign. We have just a little more than \$1 million left to raise in our largest capital campaign yet, set at \$8 million. This campaign is helping us expand total school enrollment to 600 additional young people with the construction of a 36,000 square feet addition on the UCC campus and the repurposing of another facility on campus to accommodate a new middle school that will ultimately serve 250 young people and open in the fall of 2016.

UCC is proud to announce the new school will be named **UCC Acosta Middle School**, in honor of the amazing contributions of Shorty and Dora Acosta. Plans are underway to develop the curriculum of this new middle school, which will focus on inspiring creativity through instruction framed around technology careers and skill trades. We live in a society of ever-changing technological advances where many jobs are based on technical instrumentation and/or robotics engineering. The new school aims to provide these young people with experience in developing coding and programming, as well as learning about engineering and concepts of research and design to explore their own interests and abilities within these contexts.

We will begin enrollment for the UCC Acosta Middle School later in the fall when we start our open enrollment process. Just as we did these last few weeks, we are eager to welcome even more students to join us on their educational journey, and we appreciate your continued support to educating our community's future leaders!



From Teaching to Trails – Bike Camp a Success!

This summer, 17 Bruce-Guadalupe Community School (BGCS) students and alumni participated in the first ever Bike Camp. The program was a collaboration with the Friends of Hank Aaron State Trail, Wisconsin Bike Federation, and the UCC Healthy Activity Partnership Program for Youth (HAPPY). The free two-week program taught bicycle safety in active and hands-on activities. Bike Camp began in the classroom and progressed to on-bike practice on a playground. After a few days of instruction, the children bicycled on nearby streets. Once all students demonstrated safe street riding skills, the entire class took daily bicycle field trips to the Hank Aaron State Trail. Instructors also discussed healthy eating, an important concept for the HAPPY program. The goal of the camp was to teach students about biking and safety rules while building their confidence and increasing their physical activity as a childhood obesity reduction and prevention initiative.

Response from BGCS students and families was overwhelmingly positive and grateful for the opportunity. The students had perfect attendance, and parents were supportive and helpful. The transformation throughout the program was obvious, as students who had never biked before built up the strength and confidence to bike 12 miles and encourage their families to bike by showing them the trails where they can safely ride as a family.



Alumni Feature: Blanca Sierra Where Are They Now?



As a young child, Blanca's parents enrolled her and her four older siblings at Bruce-Guadalupe Community School (BGCS). A Spanish-speaking family of immigrants new to Milwaukee, the family found a sense of home at the United Community Center.

Blanca still remembers her two favorite teachers from her time at BGCS. "Mr. Paredes was a real inspiration for me. And when I was in middle school, Ms. Ryan always pushed us to go forward and would go above and beyond to help us."

Blanca excelled at BGCS, attended Dominican High School, and ultimately enrolled at Alverno College, staying engaged with UCC along the way. Starting at age 14, she spent eight years volunteering at UCC and BGCS. Upon entering college, she also enrolled in UCC's Abriendo Puertas (Opening Doors) program.

Thanks to the support of many volunteers and donors, Abriendo Puertas supports first-generation undergraduates to remain in, thrive, and graduate from college through one-on-one advising sessions, professional development training, workshops, and networking opportunities. Blanca found the experience invaluable, stating the program "has given me and so many others help with scholarships, mentors, and guidance as to how we should approach career-related decisions."

"This program has had a big impact on my life and the lives of my classmates. My parents couldn't help me navigate the college application and enrollment process, but UCC's programs filled the gap, and I was able to succeed."

Blanca graduated from Alverno in December of 2014 with a degree in accounting. After interning at Northwestern Mutual during college, she is now working fulltime as a Mutual Fund Accounting Analyst and is looking forward to opportunities in the Finance field.

Blanca's advice to current BGCS students?

"Stay connected and involved with UCC after graduation. UCC is an organization that truly cares for its community and wants to see the Latino community prosper. They spend so much time, effort, and money to help their students in any possible way they can."

Feliciano Looks Ahead to 2016 Olympic Trials



Luis Feliciano has been a part of the UCC Boxing Program's thirty year-plus legacy since he was just eight years old. A lot has changed in his life since he first entered the gym. Under the guidance of UCC Boxing Coach Israel "Shorty" Acosta, Luis is now the reigning national amateur champion at 141 pounds and ranked number one in his weight class by USA Boxing.

This year, the culmination of the time and hard work Luis put into his training over the years is paying off. Luis finished second in the Pan American Games qualifiers in Tijuana in June and competed in the Pan American Games in Toronto in July, beating a competitor from the Bahamas in the first round and losing in the Quarterfinals to an athlete from Cuba. Most impressively, all of this comes on the heels of his recovery from rotator cuff surgery, which he underwent last year, and his graduation from Marquette University with a degree in criminology and law studies in May.

Luis now has his eyes set on the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and he will compete in the trials in December. Luis believes that he is reaching the height of his capabilities and credits his coaches and UCC in his development. "UCC has a very special place in my heart, and the boxing program has kept me out of the streets and away from trouble. Shorty is like a second father to me, and he has taught me so many things, inside and outside the ring. Shorty and UCC have been blessings in my life, and UCC will always be home for me." **Best of luck, Luis! We're all cheering for you!**



The JCC Maccabi Games Visits UCC!

On August 5, the UCC campus and Walker Square Park were filled with activity as almost 200 volunteers came to create a campus and community transformation. The event was part of the recent 2015 Maccabi Games, hosted by the Jewish Community Center (JCC) in Milwaukee for 1,000 Jewish teens from around the world to participate in Olympic style athletic competitions. The week-long event includes one day of service, JCC Cares Day. With financial and volunteer support of Northwestern Mutual Foundation, the JCC Cares Day at UCC included a variety of campus and community beautification projects that will make a lasting impact! One significant project was the installation of public exercise stations in Walker's Square Park and park beautification projects to encourage additional use of the space by UCC and community families. We are thankful to our partners at JCC and Northwestern Mutual for their support of the community! Check out the photo highlights of the big day.



Adding a splash of color to the UCC Campus, volunteers helped paint three murals around the facility.

Volunteers in the park planted flowers, assembled picnic tables, spread mulch, and helped paint the park pavilion.

Milwaukee County Executive Chris Abele, Mayor Tom Barrett, and several media sources came by to check out the excitement!

UCC Offers Fitness On-Demand with New Wellbeats Studio Room

Last spring, UCC began offering members of the UCC Cesar Pabon Fitness Center on-demand fitness classes – the class you want, when you want it! The Wellbeats Studio Room offers a variety of classes that will fit any need and lifestyle. In an industry where creativity reigns, and every week there is a hot new class being touted as the best way to create a metabolic burn, lose weight, or get fit, Wellbeats' original programming follows industry trends, while always keeping an ear towards the customers and creating programming that's appropriate for the needs of a variety of individuals.

More than 50 regular users take the classes in a special fitness room with a large projection screen television to play the programs. Wellbeats prides itself on an incredibly successfully filming style, which is to create as close to an authentic live experience as possible. Their instructors are trained to describe and correct movement as if they were standing next to you.

Wellbeats classes at UCC include Kickboxing, Cycling, Zumba, Stomp, Fusion Mind (Yoga, Pilates), Training, Circuits, and many more. Current users love the flexibility this on-demand style of classes offers! No more waiting for the instructor or the classtime they want. Try out the new wellbeats studio room by contacting Cesar Pabon Fitness Center at UCC!



Triathlon Club Competes at National Event

For 16 Bruce-Guadalupe Community School (BGCS) students and their families, this summer marked a great accomplishment as these students competed in the USA Triathlon Youth and Junior National Championships in West Chester, Ohio. BGCS 7th and 8th graders competed alongside youth from around the country who traveled to Ohio for this event. Many older competitors will go on to receive running or swimming scholarships at the collegiate level. BGCS students trained since February, and for many of them it was their first participation in a team sport. The team motto, "try your hardest and never give-up," took hold as the students challenged themselves to continue to improve athletically, while also helping to raise funds for the trip itself.



Through a partnership with Marquette University and the Youth Empowered to Succeed Program and additional support received from the community engagement committee at General Mills, 70% of the costs were covered. Students and families held several fundraisers to earn the remaining funds needed. Families were very involved in the event and traveled with the students to Ohio to help with transportation, food and meal preparation, and bike and equipment maintenance.

Coaches will continue to teach triathlon team members the values of a team sport with the goal of translating success in sports with success inside the classroom. They also hope to help students realize that determination and dedication to a sport can help with all aspects of life including a focus on academics. Way to go team BGCS!



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LATINO 2015 Fall Preview
of Performances

NOCHE DE GALA

Saturday, September 26
7:30 p.m.
Latino Arts Auditorium & Gallery



**VILLALOBOS
BROTHERS**

Friday, November 6
7:30 p.m.
Latino Arts Auditorium



**ADONIS PUENTES &
THE VOICE OF CUBA
ORCHESTRA**

Friday, December 4
7:30 p.m.
Latino Arts Auditorium



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LASP Students Return from Europe

This summer, five Latino Arts Strings Program students, as members of Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra's (MYSO) senior symphony, travelled to Vienna and Budapest as part of the MYSO 2015 Tour!

The hardworking students spent 11 days in these historic cities. They had the incredible opportunity to visit Mozart's Birthplace, the Budapest State Opera House, and the Haus der Musik (House of Music), among countless other landmarks.

During the trip, students not only experienced the sights and sounds of Vienna and Budapest, but they also performed four times for international audiences. The performances took place at extraordinary venues – from Musikverein, the home of the Vienna Philharmonic orchestra, to Gödöllő, a castle in Budapest.

Muchas gracias to the wonderful donors of this trip! It was truly a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for the students.



Northwestern Mutual Gives Back to Our Students

Students, families, and staff of Bruce-Guadalupe Community School would like to give a big and heartfelt thank you to our friends at Northwestern Mutual for their generous donation of backpacks and school supplies. Northwestern Mutual's Hispanic Employee Resource Group (ERG) and other ERG's worked together over the summer to collect more than 100 backpacks and boxes filled with notebooks, pencils, markers, folders, and other school supplies. Our future leaders now have all of the necessary supplies they need for a new and successful school year. Thank you Northwestern Mutual!



Northwestern Mutual volunteers distribute backpacks and supplies to our students.