

Newsletter

September - December 2017



Summer Sun Brings Summer Fun

This bittersweet time of year is filled with exciting new beginnings but also marks the end of the long, sunny, summer days filled with fun experiences. While many schools are left with quiet hallways during the summer, our center is a hub of activity from our six week summer school session, to our summer recreation program filled with educational but fun activities, college visits, and leadership opportunities for our students. Check out our "How I spent my summer vacation" spread and learn all about the amazing opportunities and activities our students had this summer.

Now, as we get back to school, we can also look ahead with anticipation and excitement. This fall, we plan to break ground on our new UCC Acosta Middle School which will open in the Fall of 2018 at the southeast corner of 6th and Washington. This new facility will help

us educate 250 more students and expose them to hands-on learning with a technology focus. We are actively looking for funding and program partners for this new school – find out more online at: www.unitedcc.org.

We hope to see you this fall at one of our many events including the groundbreaking for our new school!

Ricardo Diaz
Ricardo Diaz



The UCC Family: A Profile of Service

The core of the UCC mission is to serve the entire family with an array of comprehensive services. This starts with the UCC staff who are part of our family and care for each client with the same passion and dedication that one possesses for their own family. We hope this series will help you understand some of the amazing UCC family members who shape our mission every day!

What is the most satisfying aspect of working at UCC:
My peers in the Human Services Department (HSD) inspire me every day and provide me great satisfaction in this role.

What is the biggest challenge your clients face that you believe UCC is helping them overcome:
In Human Services the biggest immediate challenge that clients face is staying clean from addictions. The HSD is a safe place where staff work tirelessly to help each person individually. They inspire hope that each one of us can make it if we work hard.

How do you balance your personal life and work life at UCC:
I have learned during my journey the importance of practicing self-care, especially in the Human Services field of work. I spend time with my family, go to meetings and stay involved in my recovery by helping to educate the community that people with substance abuse issues do recover and become productive citizens in our communities.

As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up:
When I was little, I loved to dance, and I still do. I used to watch American Bandstand, and Swan Lake, and I wanted to be just like them.

Who is one of your idols or mentors:
I don't have idols. I do however have a mentor. Arthur Byas and Liz Weindorfer were my peer support specialists while I was in Drug Treatment Court. They inspired me to do my best in any situation, good or bad.

Favorite quote or motivational saying:
"The Devil whispered in my ear, 'You are not strong enough to withstand the storm.' Today I whisper in the Devil's ear, 'I am the storm.'" This quote reminds me of where I have been and who I am.

Biggest UCC project you are working on for the future:
Recovery Month - We are going to have an event that will not only commemorate those who have lost their fight to this horrific disease, but will let people know that recovery is possible.

What do you hope people you work with will remember the most about you:
The goodness of my soul.



Laura Haas
Certified Peer Specialist
Employed at UCC: One Year

Mark Your Calendars * Important Dates and Events

- ★ Marquette FREE Legal Clinic | Every Wednesday 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. | Senior Center
- ★ Homebuyer Seminar | Every Thursday 6:00 - 10:00 p.m. | Info at: www.unitedcc.org
- ★ Pick and Save Mobile Market | Last Thursday of Month 11:00 - 12:30 p.m. | Senior Center

Important Dates

- ★ BGCS Family Fun Night | Friday, Sept. 15, 4:00 - 7:00 p.m.
- ★ Noche De Gala | Saturday, Sept. 23, 2017, 7:00 p.m.
- ★ High School Fair | Sept. 28, 4:30 - 7:00 p.m. | BGMS Gym
- ★ Enrollment Open House Kick Off | Saturday, Oct. 7, 9:00 a.m. - Noon
- ★ Parent Teacher Conferences | Nov. 2 & 3
- ★ Latino Arts Dia de Los Muertos Celebration | Friday, Nov. 3rd, 5:00 p.m.
- ★ Breakfast with Santa | Saturday, Dec. 2, 8:30 - 11:00 a.m.
- ★ Holiday Concert | Thursday, Dec. 7 | BGMS Gym

LATINO arts presents **NOCHE DE GALA**

Saturday, September 23 at 7:00 p.m.

Join us for Latino Arts' annual fundraiser in support of culture and arts education!

Live music from N'Samble Latino
Performances by the Latino Arts Strings Program & Mariachi Juvenil

More information at:
www.latinartsinc.org/noche-de-gala



HOW I SPENT MY SUMMER VACATION...



My Summer in the Youth Volunteer Corps

This summer, more than 150 teens flocked to the UCC Campus to spend five weeks in the Youth Volunteer Corps (YVC). As a member of the YVC, these young adults lead recreational activities and act as mentors to Bruce-Guadalupe Community School (BGCS) students during the afternoon Summer Recreation program. Many YVC members are BGCS alumni, like **Denise Cevilla (DC)**, a recent graduate (8th grade, BGCS). Denise shared with us why she chose to spend her summer participating in this unique program, and her most memorable moments with the 7th (and soon-to-be 8th) graders she mentored.

Q: Why did you decide to spend your summer volunteering as part of the Youth Volunteer Corps (YVC)?

DC: When I attended the Summer Rec program [at BGCS] as a kid, I really interacted, connected and created a strong bond with the YVCs. I'm the youngest in my family - I don't have younger siblings. I wanted to get involved in the program to have the experience of being a big sister, and have an impact just like my older siblings and the YVCs had on me. And, to give back.

Q: What was your most memorable moment this summer?

DC: The leadership activities with the kids, seeing them grow and seeing them work as a group. I worked with [and mentored] incoming 8th graders. We were close in age, so it was a lot harder for them to look at me and see me as a role model. But it was easier, in a way, to connect with them and just have that trust level with them. So that was my favorite memory - seeing them work as a group, and interact with each other.

Q: What was your biggest learning experience?

DC: Coming into YVC, I was really nervous because [I was assigned to mentor the 7th graders] and I thought, "Oh no, I'm going to have to deal with these kids not listening to me." But, I was surprised with their behavior. They really took on the role as leaders within the program.

At the end of the program, on the last day, we had a talent show. They came out and said "let's sing something." The day before that, they had nothing planned out, but, they stepped up - and that made me proud.

Several other Youth Volunteer Corps members shared their thoughts as well:

"My most memorable moment from YVC this year was connecting with the kids. I was able to be an example to them, and I learned leadership skills through the process. I learned how to take charge, and put forth my ideas into some of the activities that we did." - Margarita

"I think the YVC Program is going to help me on my college applications, because it will show that I'm not just at home over the summer, doing nothing. I'm trying to do something to help the community by volunteering." - Mileena



Denise Cevilla, Youth Volunteer Corps First Year Member, BGCS class of 2017, who is attending Brookfield Academy this fall helped students prepare for talent show.

Volunteers Help Students Prepare for Their Future

This summer, United Community Center and Bruce-Guadalupe Community School (BGCS) students were fortunate to receive the support of many community volunteers. The graduating 8th grade students embarked on a five week Summer Bridge program to prepare for high school, college, and beyond. Many volunteers from organizations such as BMO Harris Bank, Rockwell Automation, Carroll University and many others participated as career presenters, speaking to students about the important work they do and what it takes to succeed as a professional. Students were also able to visit and tour local colleges.

Some highlights of each volunteer's service includes:

- Practicing public speaking with Mary Alice Tierney of Right Management
- Fun team building exercises and learning about female leadership with BMO Harris Bank Women's Leadership Group
- Touring Rockwell Automation
- Hands on session to learn about Nursing from Carroll University Nursing Program
- And finally, getting to know each other better while learning from all of the fantastic volunteer presenters!

While summer has come to an end and students prepare for the upcoming school year, the Law Office of Odalo J. Ohiku, Prime Financial Credit Union and Michael Best & Friedrich, LLP have made it their mission to ensure that BGCS students have the necessary school supplies and materials they need to succeed and learn this school year.

Thanks to their generosity, we received more than 300 backpacks, notebooks, folders, pencils, markers, crayons and more.

A special and heartfelt thank you to all of the individuals that supported our Summer Bridge program and Back to School Supply drive.



Traveling Outside of Their Comfort Zones

An exciting seven day unplugged journey to the Rocky Mountains this past June helped 33 Bruce-Guadalupe students and alumni challenge themselves to try new things and exist outside of their comfort zones. The trip was a capstone project for the Youth Empowered to Succeed (YES) program, which has been coordinated and funded in conjunction with Marquette University for the past five years. With Estes Park, Colorado as their base camp, the group went on many adventures including white water rafting, horseback riding, rock climbing, and fly fishing. For most of the students this was their first experience participating in these types of excursions.

While the trip also included hiking, campfires, swimming and games, the most valuable take away for many of the students was conquering their fears, trying new things, and challenging themselves physically. Some were afraid of rock climbing, others hesitant and fearful of the rafting. On the last day, the group was challenged with a long hike and then asked to work in teams to make a shelter. Exhausted, the students had to persevere and rely on their friends to complete the task.

It was a trip of a lifetime, one that the chaperones hope sparked interest in new things for the students and most importantly a belief that they can conquer their fears and accomplish great things, even if at first it appears difficult!



Acosta Middle School students learn science and engineering through lego league.

YVC members celebrated a great summer of volunteering with a well-deserved trip to Six Flags

Students participated in an egg drop competition to see which contraption could prevent the egg from breaking when dropped from the UCC roof! It was a fun and exciting science lesson.

Acosta Middle School students getting up close and personal with worms!

Students learn about discipline, respect, focus, speed and endurance through Kickboxing!

Getting friendly with a snake!

Students had a great time touring the Harley-Davidson Museum. They learned about a vital piece of Milwaukee history, global business, manufacturing, and engineering, and had fun posing on the bikes!

YVC group leader and middle schoolers in the Cooking Club show off their homemade treats.

Summer fun at the pool!

Tired students after a jam-packed summer full of fun!