



UCM TAPS INTO THE POWER OF ACCREDITATION

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OUR MISSION:

“To assist families and individuals to improve the quality of their lives in a manner which builds their self-esteem and fosters their ability to function at the greatest level of their capacity—socially, economically, and emotionally.”

UCM has been serving the southeastern region of Fairfax County for over 34 years. Throughout that time, the agency’s priority has been to assist families and individuals to improve the quality of their lives in a manner that builds their self-esteem and fosters their ability to function at the greatest level of their capacity—socially, economically, and emotionally. A major component of this endeavor is the emergency food and financial assistance offered to persons in crisis at our main office; however, there are many other components to UCM’s continuum of care within the community including The Workforce Development Center located at 7842 Richmond Highway, The Back Porch Thrift Shop located at 7838 Richmond Highway, The Bryant Early Learning Center located at 2709 Popkins Lane, and the Sacramento Neighborhood Center located at 8792-E Sacramento Drive. UCM’s ability to remain agile and responsive to the needs of the community are due in part to the experience and foresight of UCM’s Executive Director, Sharon Kelso, as well as to the support given by our dedicated Board of Directors and the 100 other talented staff and over 800 volunteers who work at UCM to ensure that the quality of services delivered to our clients are successful.

Earning the status of being accredited by the Council on Accreditation For Children and Family Services (COA) is a significant tool used at UCM to ensure that

the highest standards and practices are a part of its services each and every day. Only 24 organizations in the State of Virginia have been honored with COA’s accreditation designation. The organization is currently undergoing its third round of being re-accredited, a distinction that lasts four years. The community can be proud of the positive image UCM confers on this area and the exemplary management practices that create efficiency and success within our programs. One indication of UCM’s efficiency and sound management practices is the agency’s low management costs. In other words, approximately 88 cents of every dollar spent each year goes directly toward client services – that means UCM only allocates 12 percent of its total expenses toward keeping our doors open to serve families in crisis.

Over the last 34 years, UCM has witnessed dramatic changes in the needs and issues facing our community. The task of helping struggling families meet their basic needs for survival has been a challenge. What started in 1969 as a small volunteer effort, has expanded into dozens of programs and the delivery of approximately 200,000 services a year to over 8500 people in the community. The agency has grown because there are needs in our community and because people care! As we go through another round of accreditation rigors, it is important to keep in mind that the number one priority in all of these efforts is the need to improve the lives of many and the compulsion to make a difference that has lasting affects. ■

UCM is a private, non-profit agency which helps low-income people with emergency and self sufficiency services. Since 1969, UCM has been firmly rooted in the southern Route One area of Fairfax County. Our mission is to assist families and individuals to improve the quality of their lives in a manner which builds their self-esteem and fosters their ability to function at the greatest level of their capacity — socially, economically, and emotionally. UCM provides food, clothing, furniture and infant supplies; budget counseling; financial assistance for rent, utility, and medical bills; job counseling; computer training; mentoring; community outreach; and developmental day care services at the Bryant Early Learning (BEL) Center. Support comes from donations of money, food, clothing, and other goods from individuals, congregations, businesses, service organizations, and schools; from UCM's Back Porch Thrift Shop; and from our dedicated corps of volunteers. Program grants come from private and corporate foundations, the Fairfax County Department of Family Services, the Fairfax County Department of Housing and Community Development, the United Way, and the Combined Federal Campaign.

UCM BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Contributors: Sharon Kelso
Deborah Halla
Tracy Davis
Eileen McNally
Marie Canny
Capri Coleman

Newsletter layout: David L. Barrette

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends:

This is the time of the year that brings out the best in everyone. At UCM we continue to be honored and proud of the fantastic support we receive all year round from the community but especially during the holiday season. The one that just ended is very gratifying. Here are a few of the comments made in letters and notes we received from our donors. I think they reflect the fondness and respect this community has for the work that is done by the staff and volunteers of UCM:

"You do so many wonderful things—we are happy to support you." "We appreciate the work that your organization is performing in our community and hope that this contribution further supports even greater success in the future." "It is a pleasure to enclose a check and to thank you and your staff for the great job you are doing in helping the less fortunate members of our community." "You have great programs." "When our son was ill you helped us in so many ways, we now want to help others."

Thanks to so many of you for reaching out to help your neighbors affected by the flood. Over \$6,000 was contributed. People who had to move out while their apartments are being rebuilt have been helped with security deposits. Others received help with incidental expenses like heat pump inspections, prescriptions and special food needs. We also helped several families through our holiday program. Those who still need assistance can contact Coordinated Service Planning at (703) 222-0880.

People often ask me, how do you know who really needs help and who is just looking for a handout. We have a lot of checks and balances in place to prevent wasting resources. We employ them rigorously, but I suspect that once in a while someone slips through the cracks. That's when our philosophy of grace comes to our rescue. Sometimes it's good to give help to someone who may not deserve it as much as another. You never know when a kindness will change someone forever. After all, the good is in the giving, not the receiving. For the receiver, the nag factor kicks in—they have to live with the nagging thought of having gotten something they really didn't deserve. The nag factor has been known to change a lot of lives!

Our newsletter this month is full of fun ways to help UCM (hope to see you at the Capitol Steps) and lots of thank yous to those who helped us have another highly successful holiday program that provided gifts to more than 800 children. You are indeed the good people of this community. We wish you all a very happy and prosperous 2004.

Sincerely,



Sharon Kelso
Executive Director

DESIGNATE 8199

Don't forget to designate UCM #8199, in your United Way or other workforce campaign!

By designating 8199, you help fund many UCM programs. So remember 8199 when completing your workplace campaign forms. ■



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Friends,

Bryant Early Learning (BEL) Center was established fifteen years ago to provide high quality, affordable child care. This accredited center provides developmental child care to children 6 weeks to 5 years of age. The rented space at Bryant High School is sufficient for care for up to 200 children including the full-time daily program and "Carmen's Kids," an after-school program operating until 6 p.m.

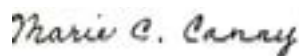
BEL Center serves a diverse population including working poor families who need tuition assistance, teen mothers working on their high school diplomas, and those who can pay the full fee. UCM partners with Fairfax County Public Schools in preventing school dropout among the teen mothers in the Project Opportunity program at Bryant High School.

BEL's program is based on the High/Scope curriculum developed for the Head Start program. The young children in the daily program at BEL receive early screening and intervention for health and developmental and speech problems. Early detection in these areas is important for fostering long-term success for the children.

You can support the BEL Center through financial gifts and donations to the program. The center is in need of a new, large capacity van, an outdoor shed, infant bouncy seats and high chairs. Food handling gloves, latex gloves for diaper changing, baby wipes, terry cloth bibs, and tissues are always welcome.

Thank you for your continuing support.

Sincerely,



Marie Canny,
President, UCM Board of Directors

FRIENDS of UNITED COMMUNITY MINISTRIES
Proudly Present



Sunday, February 1, 2004
4:30 p.m. performance
(Doors open at 3:30 p.m.)

Good Shepherd Catholic Church
8710 Mt. Vernon Highway, Alexandria, VA 22309

Reserved Table Seating is almost sold out! Sponsorships and unreserved general seating are still available.

If you would like more information, please call the Friends of UCM at (703) 768-7106, ext. 346.

LEAVE A LEGACY

Put UCM in your will or bequest! Leave a legacy of generosity by helping to improve the life of someone else!

For more information call: (703) 768-7106, ext. 328, email: developmentofficer@ucmagency.org, or write to:

UCM, Inc.
c/o Tracy Davis
7511 Fordson Road
Alexandria, VA 22306

"SOUPer" SATURDAY

The potters of the Torpedo Factory, together with The Scoop Grill, will sponsor the 10th annual "SOUPer" Saturday on January 17, 2004 from 9 a.m. to noon at the Torpedo Factory, in Old Towne Alexandria. The cost of \$15 includes a beautiful handmade bowl and a ticket for one free serving of soup. Tickets can be redeemed that day at The Scoop Grill, 110 King Street, just ½ a block from the Torpedo Factory. For more information, please contact Eileen McNally at (703) 768-7106 ext. 327. ■

NEED A SPEAKER?

Looking for a speaker to talk to your employees, your church group, or your community service organization about the needs of our local community? Contact Eileen McNally at (703) 768-7106 ext. 327 to schedule a UCM speaker for your next function. ■

UCM WEBSITE

Check out UCM's web page at www.ucmagency.org. UCM's new and improved website was designed by our virtual volunteer Todd Kelley. Todd lives in Spain but continues to make regular updates to the website.

Be sure to check the website periodically for upcoming UCM events and activities. You can also make an online donation to UCM as well as learn about other ways you can help. ■

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

JANUARY 2004

Saturday, January 17 – UCM food drive at Hollin Hall Safeway. The Mount Vernon Kiwanis Club will be collecting food to stock UCM's Food Pantry. Grocery shop for your family and buy a few extra items for the UCM shopping cart.

Saturday, January 17 (9 a.m. - noon) – SOUPer Saturday. The potters of the Torpedo Factory, together with The Scoop Grill, will sponsor the 10th annual "SOUPer" Saturday at the Torpedo Factory in Old Towne Alexandria. The cost of \$15 includes a beautiful hand-made bowl and a ticket for one free serving of soup. Tickets can be redeemed on the day of the event, January 17, at The Scoop Grill, 110 King Street, just ½ a block from the Torpedo Factory.

Monday, January 26, (5 - 10 p.m.) UCM Night at Hunan Royale, located at 8746 Cooper Road (just off of Richmond Highway) in Alexandria. Enjoy authentic, delicious Chinese dishes and a portion of the sales will benefit UCM and its programs. For more information or directions, call (703) 360-2888.

FEBRUARY 2004

Sunday, February 1, (4:30 p.m.) The Capitol Steps. The performance will be held at Good Shepherd Catholic Church and benefits UCM and its programs. Tickets are available for purchase now! If you would like to make reservations or become a sponsor for this event, call Nadine at (703) 768-7106 ext. 346.

For more information on UCM's restaurant activities and events, contact Capri Coleman at (703) 768-7106 ext. 325, or via e-mail at development@ucmagency.org.

HELP THE HOMELESS WALKATHON



UCM staff joined with Christian Relief Services staff to support UCM in the Help the Homeless Walkathon.

We see homeless people every day—sleeping in the parks and on the streets. However, we don't see most homeless individuals because they stay in emergency shelters, hide in abandoned buildings, or live in their cars. Nearly half of the areas homeless individuals are women and children and roughly half of those children are under the age of five.

The plight of the homeless in America has attracted a lot of attention during the past 20 years. But despite a dramatic expansion of programs and services during the unprecedented prosperity of the 1990's, homelessness remains a highly visible—and stubbornly persistent—problem. In 2002, the Washington metropolitan area experienced an 18 percent increase in requests for emergency shelter, according to a recent report issued by the U.S. Conference of Mayors.

Each year, UCM has an exclusive opportunity to participate in the Fannie Mae Foundation's Help the Homeless Walkathon. This event allows UCM to raise money to provide support not only to the homeless but also to those in danger of becoming homeless—as we know, it is easier to pre-

vent homelessness than to find housing for someone who has lost their's.

UCM is truly grateful to its donors who sent in money to help us qualify for matching funds, our corporate partners (UCM Friends of the Homeless, UCM's Coalition for the Homeless, Old



St. Louis Catholic School youth walk to support UCM at the Help the Homeless Walkathon.

(continued on page 6)

SPECIAL THANKS

Many thanks go out to the vocal trio, TreVoché, Bethany Lutheran Church, the sponsors and the attendees for making the TreVoché concert on Dec. 21 to benefit UCM such a success! The event raised \$300 that will go to help families in crisis in our community. Event sponsors included: Beacon Hill Office Depot, Brenner's Bakery, Hollin Hall Automotive, Village Hardware, Belle View Safeway, and Fort Hunt Safeway.

TreVoché is a Washington D.C.-based vocal trio, including Lynn Keen, Martha Wallace, and Sue McKinney. TreVoché provides a variety of entertainment from Holiday Strolling Victorian Caroling to Andrews Sisters style performances, as well as other specialized performances based on the occasion. TreVoché visits with families in their homes and performs for their holiday parties; performs for company celebrations; and even performs before thousands at events such as Washington Redskins Games (performing the National Anthem). For more information, see <http://www.trevoche.com>. ■

HOLIDAY SPIRIT

The spirit of the Holiday Season is about hope. At UCM, we are privileged to be witness to the hope of the people of this community. We witness the hope of all who generously donate to UCM during this time of year to make sure the children and families who use UCM services have a beautiful and wonderful holiday season. We witness the hope of all the volunteers as they give their time, energy and heart to help make a successful Holiday Program each year. And always, there is the hope of the children. Although we do not get to see their reactions when they receive their gifts, we believe that we have made a special time for them. And we hope that this time will help them to maintain hope and have faith that life itself is a gift, and a wonderful thing to be lived. Thank you to all for your generosity this holiday season! ■

Carmen's Kids

After school Enrichment Program

The Carmen's Kids program is designed to meet the special needs of young elementary school children (grades K-3). Our goal is to provide a program in which the child is safe and engaged in learning activities that foster language, individuality, character, and healthy growth and development. Our activities will support the curriculum of the Fairfax County school system while integrating academics, the arts, and cultural diversity.

Hours of operation: School dismissal (3 p.m.) —6 p.m., Monday—Friday

Ages Served: Kindergarten—third grade

Schools served: Groveton, Hollin Meadows, Hybla Valley

Transportation: to Carmen's Kids will be provided!
(from above schools only)

Fees: Carmen's Kids uses a sliding fee scale. Fees will be below SACC rates and based on gross household income. Fees for the School Year Program are due one month in advance from August through May.

Carmen's Kids does not provide drop-in, short term, or partial week service.

The BEL Center (Carmen's Kids) is located at:

2709 Popkins Lane
Alexandria, VA 22309
703-765-0909

Carmen's Kids and the BEL Center are programs of UCM.
United Way #8199

"SOUPeR" Saturday



Come to the 1st floor back hall of the Torpedo Factory from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00p.m. January 17, 2004. For only \$15.00, you receive a handmade bowl of your choice, donated by a Torpedo Factory potter and a ticket for a serving of soup.

Redeem your ticket on that day at The Scoop Grill, 110 King Street. Just a 1/2 block from the Torpedo Factory.

All proceeds benefit United Community Ministries (UCM).

UCM is a qualified 501(c) 3 non-profit human services agency that has served the Northern Virginia area for over 34 years. UCM's mission is to help others achieve self-sufficiency and its programs have helped thousands of individuals help themselves. UCM and its programs are made possible through the generous support of the community. For more information on UCM and its programs, or to make a contribution, provide in-kind goods or services, or volunteer, please contact Capri at (703) 768-7106, ext. 325.

UCM CRITICAL NEEDS

UCM depends on the support of the community to help its neighbors in need. The following items/services are especially needed:

Back Porch - Awning 20 x 10.

Basic Needs - Tomato sauce, beans, canned meats, cereals, rich, pasta, tuna fish, diapers (large), formula (Enfamil Iron).

Basic Needs - Beans, soups, tomato sauce, canned meats, tuna, fruits, jello, pasta, rice, teas, cereal, breads, toothpaste, toothpaste, diapers-size 4 and 5, infant formula with iron, feminine hygiene products, toilet paper.

Homeless items - individual cereals, granola bars, canned fruits, apple sauce, juices, travel toothbrushes/toothpaste, gloves and hats for adults, pots, pens, dishes, winter clothing for homeless, storage unit space for housing clients, twin-size sheets, blankets and towels for BRIDGE clients, lamps for clients, a zillion cheap pencils or pens, beds and

dressers for Journeys program clients, bags of bus tokens, Metro cards with fare (cards must have at least \$1.20 on them to be accepted by Metro).

For Employees - Tea making machine for heating hot water only, two-burner coffee maker for making regular and decaffeinated coffees.

Development - Heavy duty stapler, and fancy serving ware for special events.

Facilities - LCD monitors for staff, 2 computers Pentium II and above no repair needed, paint (for waiting room).

Healthy Families (RT. 1) - A folding cart to move donations and carry things to and from the cars for home visits and meetings.

Workforce Development Center - Diskettes, Metro rail passes for job seekers (\$5.00 cards). ■

KNIGHTS LEND A HELPING HAND

A very special thank you goes out to the Knights of Columbus, Mount Vernon Council #5998 for their ongoing support and generosity. This fall alone, the Knights have been an Eagle Sponsor at the "Puttin' Youth First Golf Tournament" and they donated \$2,000 in order to purchase 236 turkeys for UCM to distribute for Thanksgiving meals.

In addition, on November 8, the Knights, along with the support of the Mt. Vernon-Lee Chamber of Commerce, held their first annual event, "A Knight with the George's," to benefit UCM. It was a wonderful success and we look forward to next year's event.

Lastly, as this newsletter is being written, the Knights, in conjunction with the parishioners at St. Louis Catholic Church, are feverishly collecting toys to fill UCM's Gift Room for our annual holiday toy distribution. UCM could not accomplish so much without the generosity of this community. Thank you to the Knights of Columbus, Mt. Vernon Council #5998 for setting such a fine example and for all you do, all year long. ■



Knight Dick Fallert unloads 236 turkeys for UCM's Thanksgiving distribution.

(continued from page 4) Dominion Title, Christian Relief Services, Local 2068 Fairfax County Professional Firefighters and KSI Management Corporation), those who walked and those who coordinated the numerous miniwalks that benefitted UCM. Our goal was to raise \$100,000 from the walk. To accomplish this, we needed at least 1,250 walkers to designate UCM. Although we have not received the final accounting from Fannie Mae, our internal records indicate that we achieved our goal! We truly could not have reached our goal without the support of ALL of the groups who hosted miniwalks. Thank yous also go to:

Aldersgate United Methodist, Anacostia Senior High School, Aquinas Montessori School, Belle View Baptist, Birney Elementary School, Browne Academy, Bryant Alternative School, BEL Center, Calvary Presbyterian, Church of the Spirit, Curl Burke J&M Swim, Faith United Methodist, Good Shepherd Catholic Church, Heritage Presbyterian Church, Messiah Evangelical Lutheran, Montessori School of Alexandria, Mt. Vernon Presbyterian, Mt. Vernon Unitarian, Mt. Vernon United Methodist, Plymouth Haven Baptist, Pohick Episcopal, Sacramento Neighborhood Center, St. Louis Catholic Church - RE Classes, St. Louis Catholic School, Stratford Landing Elementary School, Washington Mill Elementary School, and Waynewood Elementary. ■

ANNUAL MEETING WRAP-UP

On October 30, 2003 at 7 p.m., UCM held its Annual Meeting. At the Annual Meeting, three outstanding faith organizations were recognized for their support of UCM and dedication to our community: Belvoir Woods Protestant Mission Society; Plymouth Haven Baptist Church; and Rising Hope United Methodist Church

In addition, the Colonial District, National Capital Area Council, Boy Scouts of America was honored for its dedication and service to UCM and our community.

UCM recognized the hard work of our retiring board members: Bob Nayak, Anne Barnes, Huey Battle, Brenda Gail Brown, Robert A. Richard, Rhona Alexander-Powell, Ralph Tindal, and Janet Gilbert.

UCM also welcomed the following incoming Board Members: John Anderegg, Lenore Binzer, Shawnte Cox, Mike Davey, Bruce Engelmann, Bill G. Evans, Harry Hardin, Thomas J. Hirschfeld, Ruth Morduch, and Erinn Madden. ■



UCM presents awards of appreciation to the representatives for the Colonial District Boy Scouts of America, Rising Hope United Methodist Church, Plymouth Haven Baptist Church and Belvoir Woods Protestant Mission Society.

MEMORIALS AND HONORARIUMS

Memorials

- In memory of Wava Beatty (wife) - Marshall E. Beatty**
- In memory of Marge Haley - Belle Haven Women's Club**
- In memory of Betty Jean Finucan - Mr. & Mrs. Robert J. Bolger**
- In memory of Arold G. Campbell (son) - Louise V. Campbell**
- In memory of Ethel & Clyde Thorpe - Wanda S. Dowell**
- In memory of Sara Overbakh - Bernard J. Gartlan**
- In memory of Pat Bosking - Mr. & Mrs. Edward Harris**
- In memory of Pat Carson (sister-in-law) - Jeanne Heyden**
- In memory of Paul Varga - Carol L. Kearns**
- In memory of Patricia Carey & Ken Thompson - Mr. & Mrs. Douglas J. Kennett**
- In memory of Anita Luftig (wife) - David Luftig**
- In memory of Annette Wiley - Deborah Matthews**
- In memory of Patricia A. Sullivan - Brenda McDonald**
- In memory of Vivian Lane - Mr. & Mrs. Michael J. O'Neil**
- In memory of John C. Pierson, Sr. (husband & father) - Mrs. Frances Ann Pierson & William F. Pierson (son)**
- In memory of Marion Dillon & Mary C. Lassiter - Mr. & Mrs. Kevin Williams**

Honorariums

- In honor of Allison Beerthuis & Peter Anderson - Mr. & Mrs. Mark A. Beerthuis**
- In honor of Dick Benson - Mary B. Benson. In honor of Bob & Cari Sherwood - Mr. & Mrs. Lawrence Davis**
- In honor of Devin Barkey - Sarah E. Durst**
- In honor of Judy Hertz - Mary Ellen Hertz**
- In honor of Bill Havenstock & Ann Mendurn - Phyllis G. Liner**
- In honor of Steve & Liane Young - Mr. & Mrs. Stuart Matthews**
- In honor of George Colby & Pat McCarthy - Mt. Vernon United Methodist Church**
- In honor of Robert & Donna Raasch - Mr. & Mrs. Charles Raasch**
- In honor of Nona Amerson - Mr. & Mrs. Scott Shelsta**
- In honor of Abigail, Alex, & Nick Weikert - Mr. & Mrs. Edward Tarlosky**
- In honor of Mrs. Marilyn E. Thiel (mother) - Dr. & Dr. James M. Thiel**

UCM NIGHT

Wednesday, Feb. 11, (11 a.m. - 11 p.m.) UCM Night at El Amanecer Bonilla's Restaurant, located at 8113 Richmond Highway in Alexandria. Take your family to experience traditional Salvadorian and Mexican food and a portion of the sales will benefit UCM and its programs. For more information or directions, call (703) 780-2300. ■

NO FUSS, NO MUSS

We've tried to take the hassle out of making monthly contributions to UCM. Due to numerous requests from our donors, we have established a monthly automatic contribution program. You can make monthly donations through your checking, savings, money market or credit card account - at no additional cost. For more information, please contact Debbie Halla at (703) 768-7106 ext. 338 or developmentofficer1@ucmagency.org.

UCM LOCATIONS AND HOURS

MAIN OFFICE

7511 Fordson Road
Alexandria, VA 22306
(703) 768-7106
Hours: 9 am-6 pm, Monday-Friday

BACK PORCH THRIFT STORE

7838 Richmond Highway
Alexandria, VA 22306
(703) 799-7015
Hours: 10 am-8 pm, Monday-Saturday
12 pm-6 pm, Sunday
Donations accepted 9:30 am-7:30 pm,
Tuesday, Thursday & Saturday

SACREMENTO NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

8792 Sacramento Drive
Alexandria, VA 22309-1676
(703) 619-2964

HEALTHY FAMILIES

8850 Richmond Highway
Alexandria, VA 22306
(703) 799-6329
and
8136 Old Keene Mill road
Springfield, VA 22152
(703) 913-8993
Hours: Based on family needs

BEL CENTER

2709 Popkins Lane
Alexandria, VA 22306
(703) 765-0909
Hours: 7 am-6:30 pm, Monday-Friday

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CENTER

7842 Richmond Highway
Alexandria, VA 22306
(703) 360-9088
Hours: 9 am-9 pm, Monday-Thursday
9 am-5 pm, Friday

REMEMBER TO SUPPORT UCM BY DESIGNATING #8199 IN YOUR WORKPLACE CAMPAIGN!



United Community Ministries
7511 Fordson Road
Alexandria, VA 22306

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ORGANIZATION**
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Please let us know if your address has changed, or if you are receiving duplicate mailings so we can update your record and save money.

Also, please send us your e-mail address so we can include you in our special bulletins.

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development@ucmagency.org