



**UNITED  
COMMUNITY  
MINISTRIES**

*At the Heart of Community*

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*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

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**CAFTRITZ FOUNDATION RECOGNIZES UNITED COMMUNITY MINISTRIES  
WITH \$20,000 GRANT AWARD**

United Community Ministries (UCM) is pleased to announce it has been awarded a \$20,000 competitive grant from The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation.

“We are grateful to the Cafritz Foundation for this generous grant,” says Nichelle A. Mitchem, UCM Executive Director. “We applaud the Foundation’s commitment to improving the health and wellbeing of our community. These funds will be used to boost UCM’s critical infrastructure and will allow us to maintain our ability to help vulnerable people overcome crises and gain self-sufficiency. At UCM, we define success by the positive changes made by our clients at the individual level.”

Our client Fatima\* is an example of a recent success. She was ill-prepared for job interviews and could only land temporary assignments despite having a Bachelor’s degree. With the tools and techniques she learned at the UCM Work Center, Fatima became a better job candidate. UCM’s caring employment counselors provided her with the coaching she needed to secure permanent employment. Not only does Fatima have a new permanent position, she is now working to become a Certified Public Accountant. Towards that goal, Fatima enrolled in online classes that she learned about through a UCM-hosted job fair.

Success comes to UCM Work Center clients because of one-on-one coaching, personalizing the curriculum to each client, giving each client the time needed during counseling and training, and helping clients learn how to get and keep the job that’s just right for them. In Fiscal Year 2015, 150 job seekers obtained employment due to services received at the UCM Work Center.

Since 1969, UCM has been a safety net for people in the Alexandria portion of Fairfax County who have fallen on hard times. “We are grateful for the Cafritz Foundation’s recognition of the profound need for the programs and services that UCM provides – and the impact we make together to change lives for the better,” Mitchem continues.

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*\* Name changed to protect client privacy*

**The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation** ([www.cafritzfoundation.org](http://www.cafritzfoundation.org)) is the largest private, independent, local Foundation focused exclusively on the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. The Foundation is the legacy of Morris Cafritz, one of Washington's leading commercial and residential builders from the early 1920's to the mid-60's. An outstanding civic leader known for his generosity, Morris Cafritz established the Foundation in 1948. His wife Gwendolyn was one of Washington's leading hostesses in the post World War II years. The Cafritz Foundation is committed to building a stronger community for residents of the Washington, DC area through support of programs in arts and humanities, community services, education, health, and the environment.

**United Community Ministries (UCM)** mobilizes the power of community to equip, educate, and empower people to measurably improve their lives. For more than 46 years, UCM has provided a vital connection between people in need and the people committed to helping them thrive. Services include:

- **Immediate Help.** For families and individuals in crisis, UCM provides food, financial aid, counseling, and referrals to other resources.
- **Education and Employment.** Services such as job training and coaching, full-day early care and learning, ESL and citizenship classes, and parental education help people achieve stability and self-reliance.
- **Community Engagement.** UCM's neighborhood centers, with after-school programs and leadership training, engage youth and families in skill-building and broader social networks for success.

In Fiscal Year 2015, thanks to generous community support, UCM provided life-changing assistance to 10,200 individuals in 4,000 families in the Alexandria portion of Fairfax County. This included 5,000 children – more than any other agency in the Huntington-Mount Vernon area.

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