

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Girl Scout Silver Award Project Benefits UCM Children's Programs



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File name: 03-18-16_UCM_GirlScout_Silver_photo.jpg*

Girl Scout Week is celebrated each March and always includes the Girl Scout Birthday, March 12, which commemorates the day in 1912 when Juliette Gordon Low officially registered the organization's first 18 members in Savannah, Georgia.

United Community Ministries (UCM) welcomed Girl Scout Cadette Maryclaire O'Brien (as pictured above) from Troop 3520 for a recent visit to complete her Girl Scout Silver Award project at the agency's main Fordson Road location. The Silver Award is the second highest award of the Girl Scouts of the USA, and the highest award that a Girl Scout Cadette can earn.

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A seventh grader at St. Mary's Catholic School in Alexandria, O'Brien organized a Childrens Book Drive, collecting three big boxes of books for UCM's Mount Vernon Kids campaign – plus donated copies of an activity book about reading, which she designed herself. Her project also included the donation of a new bookcase for the UCM main waiting room, which was purchased with funds she earned and solicited.

“All of us at UCM are all inspired by and grateful to Maryclaire for her generosity and thoughtfulness to help our Mount Vernon Kids with her literacy project,” says Susan Johnson, UCM Development Associate. “We are honored that every year, many Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts select UCM for their Award projects. We always have a variety of opportunities for meaningful mission-centric projects at our many program locations including our UCM Early Learning Center, Creekside Village Community Center, and Sacramento Neighborhood Center. We also welcome Scouts and Troops of all age levels to visit us for a tour of our Food Pantry or other field trips.”

UCM welcomes the opportunity to talk and meet with Scouts who are researching ideas for their Award projects. Visit ucmagency.org and then email Volunteer Coordinator Emily Griffin at emily.griffin@ucmagency.org.

United Community Ministries (UCM) mobilizes the power of community to equip, educate, and empower people to measurably improve their lives. For the past 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 counseling, food, financial aid, and referrals to other resources.
- **Children's Programs.** UCM provides the next generation with essential education and enriching experiences, including full-day early care and learning, new parent education, and after-school programs for youth leadership development and computer access.
- **Workforce Development.** UCM helps adults increase their employability with job counseling and computer training and with ESL and citizenship classes.

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 private nonprofit agency in the Huntington-Mount Vernon area.

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