



**UNITED  
COMMUNITY  
MINISTRIES**

*At the Heart of Community*

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Scouting For Food Donations Stock UCM Food Pantry More than Six Tons Collected by Boy Scout Troops From Community**

**Alexandria, VA (December 5, 2016)** – The annual Scouting for Food drive on Saturday, November 12, was a community-wide success. United Community Ministries (UCM) estimates a record-breaking collection this year totaling more than 12,000 pounds donated, collected, sorted and packed all in one day by are Boy Scouts and community volunteers.

More than 80 volunteers at UCM's main office processed and sorted the donations from community residents that were collected from the front porches of area residents by area Boy Scout troops and Cub Scout packs. Scouting For Food, the area's largest single-day community food drive, stock the UCM Food Pantry for the critical winter months. Across Fairfax County, more than 76,000 people are considered food insecure; more than 40% are children. Every week day, 80 to 100 families in need visit and depend on UCM's Food Pantry so they can make ends meet.

"UCM's facility was an amazing hive of activity all day long, with food coming in by the van and truck load, then being sorted, packed, and moved to the pantry shelves and storage boxes," says Elizabeth McNally, UCM Deputy Executive Director. "We extend a heartfelt thank you to all the busy Scouts, their families, volunteer leaders, and the scores of on-site volunteers of all ages. We are grateful for the generous outpouring of support from caring community members across our region. Thank you for providing food for so many people in need."

Cub Scout Steve Guch of Pack 658, a second grader at Belle View Elementary School, enjoyed the day of volunteering. "I like Scouting for Food because it helps the community and gives UCM a big boost for the winter need for food donations. I felt good because I was helping the community. People need food to survive, and we need to help people who cannot help themselves. I especially like picking up the bags of food at townhouses."

Guch and his family volunteer weekly at the UCM main office, usually in the pantry. "I like sorting food and stocking the shelves," he says. "But what I like best is helping people when they come in to select the items that they know their family needs and will like to eat." He encourages others to volunteer at UCM: "Volunteering makes me feel satisfied and happy. Anybody can do it, and you can use your skills and learn new ones. Volunteering is good for the community, because without volunteers, UCM can't help families to grow and thrive. The more volunteers we have, the better the chances that more people who are poor will get the help they need."

Volunteer groups helping out for the day included members of the Fairfax County Police Dept. Explorer Post 2252. Participating Scout troops and packs included: Troops 654, 680, 1102, 4077, 4554, and 4834; and Cub Scout Packs 155, 888, 996, 1503, and 1504.

To learn out how you can volunteer at UCM or help with a holiday food or children's gift drive, visit [ucmagency.org](http://ucmagency.org). Or contact April Love, UCM Volunteer and Community Relations Coordinator, at [april.love@ucmagency.org](mailto:april.love@ucmagency.org) or 703.768.7106.

**About United Community Ministries** *United Community Ministries mobilizes the power of community to equip, educate, and empower people to improve their lives. For more than 47 years, UCM has provided a vital connection between people in need and the people committed to helping them thrive through an array of services including emergency financial help to individuals in crisis; children's programs; and adult education. For additional information, visit [ucmagency.org](http://ucmagency.org).*

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### Food donations arrive outside

12-05-16\_UCM\_Scouts\_photo1.jpg



*Scouts delivered 6+ tons of donations collected from the community on Nov. 12.*

### Food donations inside sorting

12-05-16\_UCM\_Scouts\_photo2.jpg



*Scores of community volunteers sort and organize food donations.*

### Cub Scout Steve Guch

12-05-16\_UCM\_Scouts\_photo3.jpg



*Cub Scout Steve Guch is a weekly volunteer at UCM and encourages others to help.*

### Explorer Post 2252 Volunteers

12-05-16\_UCM\_Scouts\_photo4.jpg



*Volunteer members of Fairfax County Police Dept. Explorer Post 2252 are pictured with UCM Food Pantry Manager Wossenu Weldekiros (at far right).*