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### OUR MISSION:

The UACDC, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) public/private partnership whose mission is children and family development, crime prevention and commerce growth. Its primary focus is the redevelopment and sustainability of the at-risk areas surrounding the Tampa campus of the University of South Florida.



# 2014 Annual Report



uacdc.org

## Message from the Executive Director



It is my privilege and honor to report on the many accomplishments achieved this year through the initiatives and efforts set forth by the University Area Community Development Corporation, Inc. (UACDC). Through the creation of effective, innovative and lasting partnerships and programs within the University Area community, we continue to Make It Happen.

Over the past year we've celebrated many successes. We grew our community garden, started construction on our community kitchen, and held our DreamCatchers summer camp where we were blessed to serve 50 children living in poverty. Additionally, we aided 500 residents through our INVEST: Workforce program and helped 25 individuals and their families fight the cycle of poverty through our STEPS for Success® Program, now in its second successful year. Through the collective efforts of many, the UACDC was able to do all of this while still providing positive afterschool programming to over 3,200 community youth through our Prodigy® program. While we've accomplished many goals this year, we still have a long way to go towards our ultimate mission of building a sustainable University Area that no longer needs a UACDC.

We will not give up and are excited for all else that is possible through the continued efforts and support of our community partners, our exceptional board of directors and our dedicated staff. We recognize the vital contributions of time, talent, money and other resources and are eternally grateful. There is no greater feat than to make a difference in the world, one family, one life, one step at a time.

Respectfully,

Sarah Combs  
Executive Director & CEO

## Prodigy® Cultural Arts Program

2014 was an exciting year. Thank you to all of our volunteers, Board members, donors and supporters. Due to your generosity, we are able to continue our efforts to grow vital programs needed to end the cycle of poverty in the University Area!

### Transforming Young Lives

The Prodigy® Cultural Arts Program is a research based, diversion and prevention program that provides a safe arena where at-risk youth ages 7-17 learn effective communication, problem solving and conflict resolution skills through visual and performing arts. Prodigy® serves over 3,000 youth on an annual basis.



*"Prodigy has taught me how to play instruments, dance and mold things out of clay. It also taught me how to work together with others. I love coming to Prodigy!"*

— Haneen, Age 9  
Prodigy® Youth

Prodigy® is also among the best performing diversion programs in the state, with a non-recidivism rate of 85-93% since program inception in 2000, and an overall average of 89%.

Fidelity of programming is provided through behavior based curriculum and performance measures.

The purpose of the Prodigy® program is to provide the instruction, tools and resources that will lead to transformed lives. Youth are encouraged to explore themes and ideas that develop a sense of self-worth, as well as appreciate the worth and value of others and the world in which they live. When youth have a better understanding of who they are and how they connect with their communities, they are better prepared to become productive and socially responsible adults.



RIGHT: Prodigy® Cultural Arts Program Youth

## STEPS for Success® Program

The UACDC decided to take a new approach in assisting low-income individuals and families in their determination to achieve economic independence and free themselves from government assistance. This person-centered approach is based on the fundamental belief that each person has strengths, hopes and dreams, and is the only real authority on their life and family. STEPS® encourages participants to express their preferences and choices, which must always be acknowledged and respected.

This approach also allows individuals to be in charge of their personal goals and to determine what success looks like, as well as accept the accountability that comes with every choice. The only way of breaking the chains of intergenerational poverty is by engaging the dispossessed. What these individuals need are access to resources, options and capital.

That's why UACDC created the STEPS for Success® Program and its core elements: Sustainability, Training, Education, Planning and Support. In STEPS®, participants take the initiative and "steps" to lift themselves and their families out of poverty. The program serves both single-parents and dual-parents, as well as Eckerd transitional youth in extended foster care. In its first year, STEPS® assisted 29 primary applicants and their households, totaling over 100 individuals.



Above: UACDC STEPS® Circle Navigators, STEPS® Participants, Hillsborough County Social Services and HCC Staff Members

*"STEPS® helped me to acquire the leadership skills and the support needed to take control of my life, in order to carve out a path to self-sufficiency for myself and my son."*

— Jasmine  
STEPS® Participant



## INVEST: University Area

### Workforce Development

By operating this program out of the UA computer lab, no time was wasted on program start-up as community members immediately began coming in for job search assistance, resume creation, custom computer training courses, career search workshops and one-on-one job search assistance.

"In just one year we have served over 500 community members, awarded seven scholarships and witnessed our computer lab be transformed into a busy business center that allows those without access to computers at home the ability to search the internet for jobs, gain assistance in applying and learn computer skills that

are necessary for gainful employment" said UACDC's Director of Programs, Martine Dorvil.

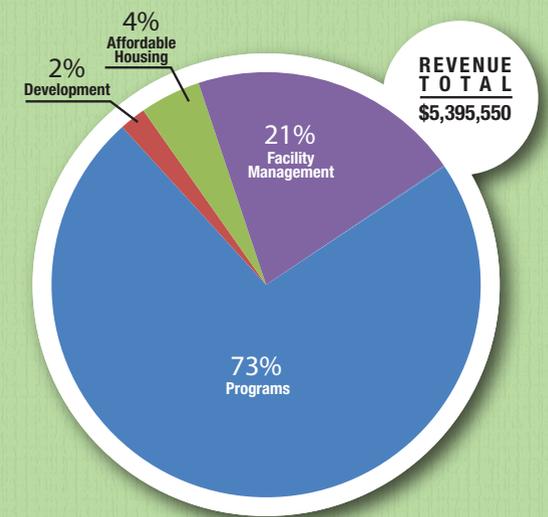
In our first year of operation we have identified key areas of need for job-seekers in the University Area, including lack of transportation, lack of employable skills, lack of skills necessary to maintain long-term employment and past criminal or employment history that hinders resident's ability to be hired. We will be working with community partners in our second year of programming to identify the keys areas of need and break down those workforce barriers.

### Stand with us and...



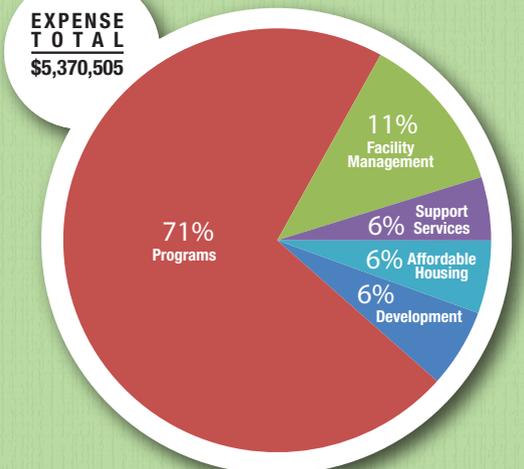
Join our efforts against the cycle of poverty in the University Area! Visit [www.uacdc.org](http://www.uacdc.org) for information on donating to our programs and services, which bring the collective strengths of our community together to bear the greatest challenges.

## Financial Highlights



In 2014...

- STEPS for Success® assisted 109 individuals during their inaugural program year
- 3,274 Prodigy® youth participated in programming throughout Central Florida
- Over 500 community members were served through INVEST: Workforce
- Harvest Hope Center and Kitchen went under construction
- Community garden grew to 24 beds



\* Depreciation expense of \$183,297 is not reflected in the expense total