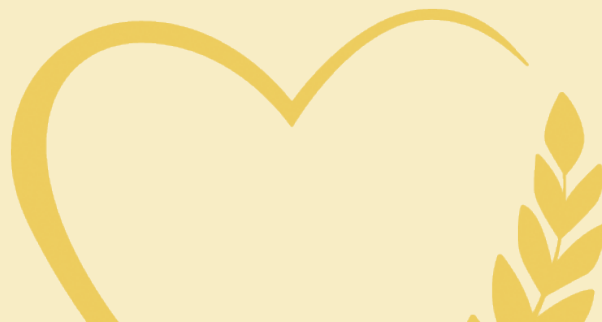




*Neighbors
helping Neighbors*



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A Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

I hope this message finds you well and you are enjoying a beautiful fall season.

As UCOM continues to grow and evolve to meet the needs of our neighbors, and having just celebrated our 45th Anniversary, it strikes me as the perfect time to reintroduce ourselves and reaffirm our deep commitment to serving the communities in South Jacksonville.

We are UCOM UrbanServ Inc. — a local nonprofit serving as a coordinated outreach to over fifty local faith organizations since 1979, rooted in compassion, dignity, and service. For decades, we've stood beside our neighbors in need, providing support where it's most needed. Whether it's through **meal or grocery delivery (Meals on Wheels)**, our **Emergency Food Pantry, Scholarships & Aid**, or helping individuals navigate personal crises in **case management**, our mission remains the same: **to ensure everyone has access to basic needs and the respect they deserve.**

WHY THE REINTRODUCTION?

As Jacksonville grows and changes, so do the challenges facing many of our residents. At the same time, UCOM has been quietly expanding its impact, developing new partnerships, and strengthening our programs. It's time to reintroduce ourselves—not because our values have changed, but because our vision for service is growing bolder.

WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO

- **Delivering thousands of nutritious meals and groceries** to homebound or transportation limited seniors.
- **Expanding our cold & freezer storage space** to meet nutritional needs and the high security need for fresh produce and frozen meats.
- **Connecting individuals to critical resources**—housing support, employment assistance, emotional resiliency, financial coaching, reliable transportation and creative solutions to transportation needs, a sense of community belonging, and more.
- **Building a stronger network of volunteers and partners** to multiply our impact and broaden our community's social capital.

HOW YOU CAN STAY INVOLVED

Whether you've walked alongside us for years or you're just learning about our work, we invite you to be part of this next chapter. Help us be the cup of sugar for the neighbor in need. Here's how you can help:

- **Volunteer:** Give your time to serve directly or support our operations.
- **Donate:** Your financial support powers every meal, every visit, and every life changed.
- **Share:** Know your direct neighbors and expand your connections. Share UCOM's mission with others and help us reach more hearts and hands.

We are proud to serve Jacksonville—not just as a nonprofit, but as a neighbor. Thank you for being part of our journey. Together, we can continue to build a stronger, more compassionate community.

With gratitude,



Sara Mitchell
Executive Director

UCOM Staff

Sara Mitchell

Executive Director

Tony Watkins

*Director of Food Assistance
Programs*

Dale Bolton

MOW and Volunteer Director

Jen Gubat

Director of Nutrition for Seniors

Ernest Borden III

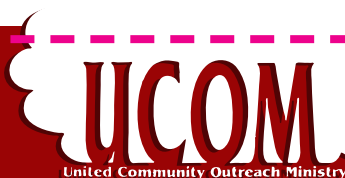
Receiving and Delivery Manager

Aidan Mitchell

Development Associate



Brief History of



UCOM's journey began in the summer of 1978 when members of the Jacksonville Ecumenical Right to Eat Advocacy Board met with five south-side churches, led by the Presbytery of St Augustine and South Jacksonville Presbyterian Church, to expand the city's Meals-on-Wheels program in order to meet the real and practical needs of its citizens in the south-side area. On September 30, 1978 volunteers began delivering meals.

Over the next six months, volunteers went door-to-door asking neighbors what their needs were and developed strategies to meet those needs long-term. On May 22, 1979, the Southside/Pine Forest Network of Churches officially became UCOM.

Since then UCOM has:

- Grown from 12 partnering churches to 62 interfaith mission collaborations
- Expanded our Meals on Wheels program with Aging True's partnership
- Launched our Food Pantry and other Emergency Assistance Programs
- Partnered with Church World Service to initiate the first CROP walk in Jacksonville where funds raised help combat world hunger, both locally and internationally
- Started our Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA) Scholarship Program
- Launched our Summer Nutrition Program with Deerwood Rotary
- Expanded our Workforce/Scholarship program to include students working toward a business license

UCOM is still growing, with new mission partners joining us every year. With more volunteers and collaborators we are able to have a deeper impact on our community and our neighbors' lives.



UCOM's Programs



FOOD LOCKER

Recently UCOM introduced our Food Locker program, which allows families to access food and grocery assistance outside of our normal hours. The food is loaded into the lockers at the end of the business day, And a code is texted and emailed to the individual or family so they can pick up the food at their convenience.



FOOD PANTRY

UCOM's food pantry runs M-Th, 9:30-12:30, at the pantry we provide healthy grocery assistance to individuals and families living with food insecurity, time poverty, and limited access to good nutrition. We offer our neighbors dry pantry staples, fresh fruits and vegetables, and frozen meats. We will do our best to accommodate any dietary restrictions or specific needs.



MEALS ON WHEELS

UCOM's oldest program is our Meals on Wheels, where we deliver daily hot meals provided by Aging True to those who are housebound. We have 97 volunteers who pack and deliver the meals, also developing relationships and checking on our neighbors five days a week.

SCHOLARSHIPS, AID, AND CASE MANAGEMENT

UCOM also provides case management to end cycles of crisis and to address those living with financial insecurity and time poverty. We provide scholarships for certifications and training that will advance careers and earning potential.



NUTRITIONALLY SECURE SENIORS

UCOM delivers mobile pantries to income sensitive senior living apartments with collaborations for seniors to better 'access nutrition.' A program supported by the Florida Blue Foundation. (More in 2025 Highlights)



SUMMER NUTRITION AND HOLIDAY FEAST ASSISTANCE

During specific crunch times in the year, UCOM offers special programs to assist our neighbors. Through the summer we provide kids' lunches to families that rely on free school lunches during the school year; this program is made possible through support from Deerwood Rotary of Jacksonville. During Thanksgiving and Christmas we offer bags that have everything a family needs for a large holiday meal.

UCOM 2025 Highlights so far



From January through June, the Food Pantry served an average of



From January through July, Meals on Wheels served an average of



From January through July, an average of **714 volunteer hours** were served each month through UCOM's different programs.

From January through June, the Food Locker served an average of



Throughout the 10 weeks of Summer, UCOM distributed **6000 summer lunches, 3 tons of produce, and 1.5 tons of frozen meat** to our families who struggle to feed their kids through the summer.



Since UCOM's Nutritionally Secure Seniors' Program started in 2023, it has served

19,648 INDIVIDUALS



Every summer at UCOM there is an influx of teenage volunteers who are out of school and need community service hours. These teenagers hear about UCOM in many different ways, whether they worship at one of our faith partners, Googled food pantries near them, or their family has received food from us before. UCOM has always been proud of this role we get to play, as a safe place where young people can work as a team and see the direct fruits of their labor.

This summer was unique in that a majority of the teenage volunteers who consistently showed up were all neighborhood youth whose families had been case managed by UCOM. These hard workers were able to build a tight community amidst themselves, relying on each other and knowing that it was up to them each week to make sure our neighbors were fed. As we spent time with them each week, we were able to hear their specific struggles and what they needed as they graduated high school and looked towards higher education and employment. The summer culminated in a Teen Takeover event to celebrate these special youth.



Nutritionally Secure Seniors

“Affluent or poor, there are many elderly or ill people who are isolated with no support system.”

— Mary Burt, UCOM Founder

UCOM was born as an MOW expansion to support the housebound seniors of the Southside area. Feeding seniors has been a core mission of UCOM's since then. This mission expanded in 2023 with UCOM's Nutritionally Secure Seniors' Program, made possible through the Florida Blue Foundation. Now UCOM delivers groceries with heart healthy and diabetic options at up to nine area income sensitive and senior living apartment buildings. UCOM also provides nutritional education and support to make sure the food the seniors receive is easy to prepare.



In February UCOM had its Volunteer Appreciation Brunch where many of our volunteers were able to gather and celebrate each other's work at UCOM, with superlatives being awarded to specific exemplary volunteers who had gone above and beyond.



In Memorial

This year, UCOM lost Laura Gordon and James B. Crooks, two of our founders. Laura was the president of the Right to Eat Board in the 1970s and helped get the grant for the Meals on Wheels expansion that became UCOM. She also met with representatives from the original five churches. Jim Crooks served as the UCOM board president from 1984-1988, taking a strong leadership role in UCOM's early programs like the Minority Youth Employment Program and the first CROP walk in Jacksonville. He also used his skill as a professor of history by writing the history of UCOM that is on our website.



“The UCOM story is defined by the people that made and ran its programs, and by the change it has caused in people's lives and the Jacksonville community. The founders of United Community Outreach Ministry (UCOM) believed they were beginning a journey of faith. They did not know the direction of their journey, or how they would reach their destination. But they did believe that their God would support them and lead the way.”

— James B. Crooks



“The coordinator of Meals on Wheels out of All Saints Episcopal told me in a meeting that there were hungry people on the Southside, and I took up the challenge. I got the newly formed group to canvas the Pine Forest area, and a number of qualified people were identified. So, the new organization started delivering the meals.”

— Laura Gordon

Thank you to UCOM's Neighbors and Mission Partners who have donated from January through August 2025!

*2025 Donations from January through August. For any errors or omissions please email sara@ucomjax.org so we can correct and be better at sharing your generosity!

Financial Contributions from Mission Partners

All Saints Episcopal	RF Smart
Bank of America Charitable Foundation	Riverside Presbyterian Day School
CSX Transportation	St Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church
Faith Community Methodist Church	San Jose Church of Christ
Hendricks Avenue Baptist Church	South Jacksonville Presbyterian Church
Historic Mount Zion AME Church	South Jacksonville Presbyterian Women
Lakewood Church of Jacksonville	Southside Methodist Church
Lakewood Presbyterian Church	Sunoptic Technologies
Lineage Church Southside Assembly of God	University Blvd Church of the Nazarene
Phillip R. Cousin AME Church	
Pilot Club of Jacksonville	

Granting Organizations Supporting Programs

American Heart Association	Florida Blue Foundation
The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida	The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints
Deerwood Rotary of Jacksonville	

Neighbors Helping Neighbors: Up to \$99

Allison Detloff	Frances Hallet
Amy Betts	Janese Warriner
Ann Reaves	Janet & Paul Trojak
B.J. & Rebecca Hutto	Joanne Maholanyi
Charles Cason	Michael DiAngelo
Chris & Pamela Lawrence	Natalie Eppolito
Christina Milon	Nicholus Stapleton
Courtney Fornof	Peter Harvey
Elizabeth Scholes	Sharon Maszy
Ellen Balanky	Susan Ebbinghouse

Neighbors Helping Neighbors: \$100+

Anderson Family	Cynthia Clayton	Joyce Hanson & Jennifer Closson
Andrew & Wandra Sanders	Daniel Dundon	Julia Cyrus
Andrew Clarke	David & Meg Sheffield	Katherine Eames
Anita Snell & Lowry Daniels	David Goedtke & Connie Smith	Lisa Hardy
Annie Guertin	Dennis & Mary Roderick	Lisa Meirow
Ashley Robinson	Diana & Raymond Quinlan	Lynette & Mark Weber
Barbara & Hardy Sandlin	Donald Poag	Marshall Maver
Ben & Michele MacKay	Douglas & Linda Pitts	Mary Jane Cooper
Bernard Giancola	Gary Ledman	Michael Fierro
Beverly Chapman	George & Cathy Barnwell	Mike Atkinson
Bruce & Carmelita Reagan	Helen Roberts	Nancy Curran
Bruce & Mary Hinchliffe	Jack Miller	Randy McCormick
Carol & Roosevelt Marell	James & Leora Legacy	Sandra Hicks
Carol Garner	Jeanette Dearing	Sarah Reed
Carol Phillips	Jeanne & Conroy Bradburn	Susan Patterson
Carolyn Shapard	Jennifer & Robert Spinelli	Susan White
Cathy Sorensen	Jennifer White	Thomas & Carol Heekin
Chris & Beth Leavitt	Jo Anne Estes	Virginia Skinner Jones
Christian & Barbara Kuhn	Joseph & Susan Stepp	William Ahrens

Neighbors Helping Neighbors: \$500+

Ashley Drum
Adair and David Owens
Cora Hackley
Deborah Crumb
Dorothy Grimsley
Glenn & Jane Green
Jane Daniel
Kenneth Black

Neighbors Helping Neighbors: \$1,000+

Blake & Mindy Menzel
Connor Christy
David & Renee Frederick
Glenn & Susan Speicher
Greg & Virginia McMillan
Mr. and Mrs. Dan Burns
Wilson & Sally Trammell

Neighbors Helping Neighbors: \$5,000+

Anonymous	John & Sandi Davoli
Claudio Gosiker	Louise Dixon
George & Carolyn Richardson	Sharon Dover
Jim & Mary Burt	

Gifts Given In Memory Of

These donations were made to honor the memory of loved ones who have passed. Their legacies live on through acts of service and compassion.

Helen Ferrell: <i>Given by Sharon Dover</i>
Mac Barnes, who loved all animals but especially dogs: <i>Given by Adair and David Owens</i>
Laura Gordon: <i>Given by Mary Burt</i>
Maurice Phillips: <i>Given by Carol Phillips</i>
Rusty Marinich: <i>Given by Susan Patterson</i>

Gifts Given In Honor Of

These donations were made to celebrate and recognize those who inspire generosity.

Dr. Susan H. White's birthday: <i>Given by Annie Guertin</i>
Mildred Daniel: <i>Given by Sandy and Jane Daniel</i>
Dale Bolton, Judy and Mike Smith: <i>Given by Michael DiAngelo</i>
Gordon Chrisholm: <i>Given by Carol Garner</i>

Flavor Philanthropists *Gifts in Kind and Food Donors*

All Saints Episcopal	Lakewood Presbyterian Church
Assumption Catholic Church	Lakewood Presbyterian Church VBS
Ben & Michele MacKay	Lisa Wetzel
Carol Family	M. Cruz
Carol Philips	North Harbor Church
Catherine & Thomas Norton	Pilot Club of Jacksonville
Connie Smith	Rick Ojeda
Dames Point Animal Hospital	Scott & Chrissi Griffin
Danielle Micek	Sharon Dover
Dawn Gray	Sherrill Dewberry
Debbie Hollis	Skinner Family
Donna Thouin	South Jacksonville Presbyterian
Faith Community Methodist	Southside Methodist Church
Faith Community Methodist Women	Spinelli Inc.
Freedom Pest Control	St. Marl's Lutheran Church
Hendricks Avenue Baptist	Susan Patterson
James Owens	Teresa Ismach
Jim & Mary Burt	University Blvd. Church of the Nazarene
John & Lisa Wright	Wolfson High School
Kathryn Nealy	
Lakewood Community Methodist	



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Working together since 1979, so no one faces crisis or hunger alone.



BBQ TAILGATE FUNDRAISER

Hosted by
SOUTHSIDE METHODIST

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SATURDAY NOV.

8

- *BBQ Competition*
- *Judging & Tasting*
- *Food & Drinks*
- *Raffle Prizes and more...*

**IF INTERESTED IN COMPETING IN
A GRILLING TEAM,**

**EMAIL AIDAN AT:
AIDAN@UCOMJAX.ORG**



**SCAN TO BUY YOUR
TICKETS!**