



UNIVERSITY DISTRICT

ECUMENICAL CAMPUS Coalition

Survey of Human Service Agencies in the U District

August 1, 2009





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Introduction

The following summary was gleaned from interviews with the staff of 18 human service agencies serving the University District. UDECC board members conducted these interviews. Following this summary are more detailed reports from the interviews at each agency. (Note: a numeral in parenthesis indicates the number of times the same comment was made by multiple subjects.)

Service Providers contacted include:

- 45th Street Clinic in Wallingford
 - Homeless youth clinic in Wallingford
- Elizabeth Gregory Home (EGH) at ULC
 - Women's transitional housing
 - Drop-in day center for homeless women
- Peoples' Harm Reduction Alliance at UTUMC
 - U District Needle Exchange, vein care, health counseling & testing
- ROOTS Young Adult Shelter at UTUMC
 - Emergency shelter for young adults 18-25 years old
 - Friday Feast
- Sanctuary Art Center (SAC) at ULC
 - Visual arts studio & music activities for street youth
 - Skills/job training (Silk screen studio)
- Seattle Education Access (SEA) on Roosevelt Avenue
 - Support for disadvantaged/homeless youth seeking higher education
- Seattle Youth Garden Works
- SHARE/WHEEL
 - Emergency shelter at Christ Episcopal Church
 - Emergency shelter at University Friends Meeting
 - Emergency shelter for women at University Lutheran Church
- Street Youth Ministries (SYM) at University Presbyterian Church
 - Faith-based drop-in center
- Tallmadge Hamilton House (Senior Services)
- University Churches Emergency Fund (UCEF) at UCUC
- University District Food Bank at UCC
- University District Service Providers Alliance (UDSPA) on University Way
- University District Youth Center (UDYC) at UCUC Gold House
 - Interagency Academy for GED completion
 - Catholic Community Services' day center, counseling, hygiene facilities for youth
- University Family YMCA
 - Drop-in center & hygiene services for street youth
 - Saturday evening meal for street youth
- University Neighborhood Service Center, City of Seattle
- University Street Ministry (USM)
 - Teen Feed (Sunday – Thursday evening meals in churches)
 - Service Links for Youth (SLY) – Outreach-based support services
 - Street Talk Outreach Program (STOP)
- University Thrift Shop at UTUMC



Summary of Comments from Service Providers

Strengths of being in the University District

- (4) Eclectic, diverse, “non-sterile” ACTIVE neighborhood, a mix of students, academics, families, provider networks, businesses
- Pretty good job of helping at-risk youth
- (2) Restaurants serving nutritious, reasonably priced food – very important
- Nice neighborhood feel of “the Ave.” Bulldog News, etc.
- Very cool clients, kids great to work with.
- (2) Strong sense of community among U District service providers, emotional support, connection, mostly progressive.
- U District residents are mostly transient, main population doesn’t connect with street culture. So community/resident-based assistance isn’t really possible. Have to depend on agencies.
- (2) The churches help make up for transient nature of the resident population. “The congregations here are great: progressive, open, tolerant, we’re lucky to know and work with these people.” “16 of the 25 volunteers who help with TeenFeed are from your churches.” “Street Youth Ministry can only work because there’s the support of an ecumenical religious community.” “You guys are not hate-filled bigots, and I’m glad.”

Challenges that need to be addressed in the University District

SERVICE AGENCIES

- (5) Better / less shabby / larger / less expensive / better equipped space for agencies, more suited to their functions. Specifics mentioned: improved kitchen, sleeping spaces; meeting rooms, a training room.
- Maintenance staff so agency staff isn’t always doing repairs
- (5) More / better hygiene facilities. At ROOTS, of 25 guests per night, there’s time/space only for 7 showers per night.
- Storage lockers where clients can store their belongings for the day.
- Mail service for clients
- (3) Better staff pay/benefits/assistance. Staff support (including more staff) to avoid burnout – counseling, space for staff to meet and debrief
- Alliance is great for coordinating. But need UDSPA-driven training beyond Homelessness 101-102. Hard to get a feel for the job until you actually do it.
- (7) More volunteers at the agencies / more long-term volunteers for stability, better service; esp. important when funding for paid staff is low
- (1) PR for agencies and what they do, improved community relations, community sense of them & their work
- Better & more advocacy for youth issues

SHELTER & TRANSPORTATION

- (2) Affordable housing (working families; low income)
- Permanent supportive housing
- (3) Overnight shelter space – ROOTS had to turn 1000 guests away last year. Some nights they have to turn 7 away. TeenFeed has 50-60 kids/night, but ROOTS has 25 beds, and some kids are under 18.
- (3) Improved transportation to/from U District, especially with increase in fuel costs.



SERVICES & PROGRAMS

- A continuum of care for the homeless: shelter, drop in centers, medical/dental care, transitional housing—all readily available. E.g., coordinate Food Bank with other services for its client population, of which 15-20% are homeless and the rest have no or inadequate jobs and skills.
- (2) Variety of service options to try to reach every individual (i.e., one approach does not work for everyone.)
- (4) More chemical/alcohol dependency assistance/counseling programs
- (4) More mental health services
- Noon feeding programs daily
- Dental services / screening
- More case management services for youth
- English teaching as a second language
- More street outreach; go where the kids are and help them
- (6) More vocational training for clients
- Supported employment in the neighborhood for youth, a “working zone for youth.” Helping keep neighborhood clean can be a youth job
- (2) Gallery/studio space for kids’ art in a street level very public space, and a second, more functional and roomy studio.
- (3) Space for clients to go chill out after events (TeenFeed, etc.). Stuff for youth to do: a gym, outdoor basketball court, garden to plant in, “a storefront living room on the Ave”
- (2) Drop-in / low-cost day care for children of low income and/or homeless
- Services for 25 and older, esp. men; single adults

GENERAL

- (2) Improved connections in the community. Agencies have good relationships with host churches & some business owners, but not many of the residents. Strengthening those relationships would be good for expanding volunteer pool and other purposes.
- Coordination - coalition of agencies and other stakeholders that chooses a limited set of priorities, aware that others are taking care of others to lessen duplication: “These 5 Things.”
- No cohesiveness in U District diversity, people here for different reasons (which is a strength), BUT no one managing a sense of community. There are pockets (UDSPA, Ecumenical Parish, Chamber of Commerce).
- How about a U District Community Group – an access point for being together, partly but not all to solve problems as they come up. Organized not around a response of meeting to deal with Issue X (a crisis - Greek Row or street violence out of control, or a possibility - somebody wants a P Patch). A forum that’s not always reactive.
- U District has lots of engaged people passionate about lots of different things, but they don’t meet regularly – business owners, service providers, faith communities. Create opportunities for people to work together – group A has a project, group B has a space to loan them for it. Building a sense of relationship that doesn’t come solely out of a sense of crisis. Come together in celebration of what’s going on.
- Neighborhood sense of where the community is trying to head. Big changes: new buildings, UW at the Safeco Tower. Concerned with development people looking strictly at bottom-line questions. Where is collective sense of purpose and vision?
- Additional cultural activities beyond what the UW offers.



The Ecumenical Campus concept

- (6) Co-location of services would mean proximity of a full range of services - especially helpful to youth recently arrived in the District. Not all kids know what services are available. Economic efficiencies through shared common space (though there would be scheduling issues). (2) Consolidated food programs would use storage space more efficiently, waste less food. Tracking and access to youth would be easier. District-wide newsletter instead of all separate agency publications, etc. Consolidation would mean kids don't have to move about to access them. "Their life is so spread out. Pack up and go here, wait... Pack up and go there, wait ..." U-District-wide newsletter instead of all separate agency publications
- (3) Collocating agencies each must retain their individuality and distinctive identity. Clearly autonomous entities whose separateness is clearly defined in a variety of ways, including architecturally. Different agencies are a strength. Maintaining different spaces is important, less confusing for clients.
- Be really intentional about choosing the programs to be at an Ecumenical Campus and about how they are sited and orchestrated.



Table: Services Provided

	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Financial Assistance for Housing	Food / Feeding Programs / Nutrition Programs	Hygiene Facilities	Clothing / Household Furnishings	Medical/Dental Services; Wellness/Fitness Programs	Drop-in, Case Management & Outreach Programs	Education Programs	Vocational Training / Employment Counseling	Transportation Assistance / Bus Tickets	Computer Use / Internet Access	Social Activities / Community Connections
45 th Street Clinic							■						
Elizabeth Gregory Home		■		■	■			■				■	■
Peoples Harm Reduction Alliance							■						
ROOTS	■			■	■		■	■					
Sanctuary Art Center										■			■
Seattle Education Access								■					
Seattle Youth Garden Works								■	■				■
SHARE/WHEEL	■										■		■
Street Youth Ministry (UPC)				■	■	■	■	■			■		■
Tallmadge Hamilton House				■			■	■				■	■
Univ. Churches Emergency Fund			■					■			■		
U Dist. Food Bank				■									
U Dist. Service Providers Alliance													■
U Dist. Youth Center				■	■			■	■	■		■	
Univ. Family YMCA				■	■			■				■	■
Univ. Neighborhood Service Ctr.													
Univ. Street Ministry				■				■					
UTUMC Thrift Store				■	■	■		■					

Key to Current Program Location:

In UDECC Church Facility	In non-UDECC Church Facility	In non-Church Facility	No Longer Operating
■	■	■	■



45th Street Clinic (Homeless Youth Clinic)

Interview with Charlotte Tucker, MSW, Clinic Manager

The Homeless Youth Clinic is housed in the 45th Street Clinic, a clinic in the NeighborCare Health network. It is located at 1629 North 45th. The clinic is operated on a drop in basis, and is open Wednesday and Thursday evenings from 6 to 9 pm. It provides free health care to homeless and 'near homeless' youth ages 12 to 23. Services provided include medical (naturopathic and traditional), dental, acupuncture, and pharmacy. Though recent cuts have had to be made, the clinic also offers some mental health counseling and drug/alcohol addiction counseling. They have 'outreach staff' to provide education/vocational and other referrals. They also mentor some of their successful clients to be 'peer outreach counselors' in order to reach more youth.

The clinic can use volunteers in two main areas: medical personnel (physicians, physician assistants, ARNP, acupuncturists) and clerical personnel to help at the front desk or with data input with their electronic medical record. She also said the clinic is open to volunteers with other gifts to share. For example, they now offer yoga and meditation classes staffed by volunteer instructors.

The 'good' that she saw with the human service providers in the U District was the collaboration through the UDSPA meetings of staff and executive directors of the organizations. (The two groups meet monthly in separate meetings.) She believes there is good sharing of information and resources so that individual organizations can help 'fill in the gaps' for their clients. She thought it would be even better if such meetings occurred at a city and/or county-wide level in order to better coordinate services for youth.

Charlotte's ideal would be a continuum of care for the homeless: shelter, drop in centers, medical/dental care, transitional housing—all readily available. She believes that it is important to have a variety of service options to try to reach each individual (ie, one approach does not work for everyone.) She would prefer even more options in the U District, but she is realistic about funding!

Another ideal would be better support for human services staff. Charlotte believes that all too often human services staff are not paid well and that employers do not/cannot provide benefits such as mental health counseling, support groups or other services that would help keep staff 'healthy' and avoid burn out. When asked what the churches could do to help, she suggested 'free' space for support groups for staff to meet. (She also offered that perhaps the service organizations could 'barter' for space, e.g. provide clean up in exchange for the space.)

As a side note, one of the other staff members in the office where Charlotte and I talked had been the medical director at a day care center for homeless women/children. She stated there is a real need for regular and 'drop-in' day care for the low income and/or homeless.

At the end of our discussion, Charlotte commented that she was pleased that we were conducting these interviews, impressed that we were attempting to gather this information. She stated the questions were very good—I told her I couldn't take credit for that! Good job, Judy.

Submitted by Donna Dockter



Elizabeth Gregory Home (EGH)

Interview with Kimberly Jackson, Executive Director, and Jessica Silye, Case Manager

EGH has two programs:

- The transitional housing program for women, located in the Royal Manor apartments kitty-corner from University Lutheran Church at 16th Avenue NE and NE 50th Street.
- Drop in center located on the lower level of University Lutheran Church

The program was conceived and received overwhelming support from the congregation at University Lutheran. It was incorporated in April 2001. The first staff were hired in the summer of 2006. An open house for the transitional housing program was held in August 2006. The program opened with individual housing for 9 residents on October 2, 2006. EGH made leasehold improvements to the University Lutheran space and opened the drop-in center in October 2007. With the move of staff offices to the drop in center, they were able to convert the office space in Royal Manor to housing for two more women.

The drop in center is used by the residents of the transitional housing program and by other homeless women. There is room for 21 women; currently they average 7-10 women a day. The women have access to a computer lab, laundry facilities, as well as case management two days a week. Breakfast and lunch are served daily, and service learner volunteers from UW prepare hot meals on Tuesdays and Thursdays. It is expected that the drop in center will become the primary source for transitional housing referrals. The program is highly dependent on volunteers.

The transitional housing residents meet after the Tuesday meal for Open Floor Meetings (to air differences), and/or to participate in Life Skills classes. A savings program is offered to help women save toward apartment applications, rental deposits for permanent housing, or other transitional expenses. Twice a month sessions are held with a licensed psychologist from University Lutheran. To date, 9 women have graduated from the program into permanent housing.

The EGH board has 8 members, most of which are currently members of University Lutheran. They are working on board development and may have as many as 13 members. They currently have an annual budget of \$360,000. The articles in the local papers and a recent new story on Fox news have helped them tremendously. Their current funding is from individual donors, fund raising events (2 per year), private grants and churches.

The staff finds the neighborhood energizing with the mix of students, academia, families, and provider networks. Although the neighborhood does a good job of working with youth and young adults, there is little in the way of services for those 25 and older, especially men. They see a need for more space to provide an overnight shelter; permanent supportive housing; expanded services for single adults; substance abuse and chemical dependency programs; mental health services, and a WorkSource location in or near the University District.

I did not have time to take the offer of a tour of the program, although I was at the transitional housing open house. Kimberly said she would be happy to meet with our executive director.

Submitted by Michael Shaw



Peoples Harm Reduction Alliance (PHRA)

Interview with Shilo Murphy, Executive Director

PHRA is the grassroots organization that operates the University District Needle Exchange Program from rented space at University Temple United Methodist Church (UTUMC). Accessed from the alley behind the University Station Post Office, it provides intravenous drug users of all ages with new sterile syringes, alcohol wipes and other sterile supplies. They distribute a host of pamphlets and other educational materials on how to stay clean and safe. They also provide vein care and wound care, and free Hepatitis C testing on the first Thursday of every month. The Needle Exchange operates 7 days each week, from 5-7 PM Monday-Thursday, and from 1-5 PM Friday-Sunday. On average, they serve 400-500 individuals each month, about 1/3 street youth, about 1/3 veterans of foreign wars, and about 1/3 working class folks.

Working out of a rented 6' by 10' closet space, the University District Needle Exchange is the second largest needle exchange program in the United States, and the largest working out of a single location. In 2008, they distributed more than 1.89 million syringes! The only larger program is a Chicago program that operates out of 10 locations. King County Public Health operates 4 other needle exchanges elsewhere, none of which are 7 day per week programs. The University District Needle Exchange is larger than all of the others combined.

PHRA is a peer-run organization, meaning its bylaws require that all staff and volunteers, including board members, are active or former intravenous drug users. The organization has a long waiting list of eager volunteers, who are motivated to provide non-judgmental help, and who have few opportunities to help at other service agencies. Executive Director Shilo Murphy has been at the University District Needle Exchange for 15 years.

Hepatitis C has been a raging pandemic for many years. While 82-92 percent of those served by the Needle Exchange test positive for Hepatitis C infections, only 2-4 percent have HIV infections (the lowest in the United States) thanks to the needle exchange.

PHRA operates with an annual budget of only \$55,000, which pays for staff, rent, and wound care services. In 2008, the organization received nearly \$250,000 in donated supplies. The operating budget is primarily funded by individual donations.

Officially, there is a federal ban on needle exchange programs, a politically loaded situation that is unlikely to change in the foreseeable future. States' rights trump federal law, however, and Washington State permits needle exchange programs in counties (like King County) that condone them.

PHRA will soon have the use of an office space at UTUMC for the first time, enabling expansion of their wound care advice, including assistance from two emergency medical technicians (EMTs). They also intend to use the space to begin scheduling group discussion/counseling sessions, working to reduce IV drug use.

Submitted by Clint Pehrson



ROOTS Young Adult Shelter

Interview with Matt Fox, Program Director

ROOTS (“Rising Out of the Shadows”) is Seattle’s only shelter program specifically addressing the needs of homeless young adults. ROOTS serves ages 18-25 seven nights a week and provides critical services to street-involved, homeless, and other low-income persons. Its clients are too old to access youth shelters but often feel unwelcome or threatened in programs serving mostly older single adults.

The ROOTS program includes:

- Safe emergency overnight shelter to street-involved young adults, ages 18-25
- Clean bedding and sheets
- Snacks, dinner, and hot breakfast
- Opportunities for personal hygiene (including laundry, showers)
- On-site case management, referral to other services
- Visits by healthcare providers
- Supportive, nurturing relationships between staff, volunteers, and guests

In addition, ROOTS hosts Friday Feast. Every Friday night at 6pm a restaurant-quality meal is served to people of all ages.

What would improve the work of ROOTS?

- A space more specifically designed to be a shelter.
- A less shabby space that doesn’t hold and show dirt so much, easier to clean, heat, and ventilate.
- A larger space, to serve 5 more sleepers per night. They had to turn 1000 guests away last year. Some nights they have to turn 7 away.
- Actual bunks instead of mats on the floor.
- Storage lockers for guests, where they could store their belongings for the day.
- A designated address for receiving guest mail.
- Kitchen improvements.
- More bathroom space.
- A bigger laundry room.
- More volunteers in summer, when UW students and faculty are gone.

What would improve the delivery of needed human services in the U District?

- Co-location of services
 - Proximity of a full range of services will especially help youth recently arrived in the District.
 - Economic efficiencies would be achieved through shared common space (though there would be scheduling issues)
- More vocational training for clients/guests
- Services for single mothers and kids in the District [prompted by a leading Q from Judy]
- More public rest rooms and hygiene centers in the District. Even guests at ROOTS don’t always get a chance to shower. ROOTS hosts 25 guests/night, but they’re let in at 9 with lights-out is at 10:30, so there’s time for only 7 showers.
- Not sure if there’s enough room at other drop-in centers. Ask: do they have to turn people away?

Submitted by Judy Lightfoot



Sanctuary Art Center (SAC)

Interview with Troy Carter, Director

I choose Sanctuary Art Center, as art has become a very big part of my life and well being over the last few years. I really love the idea of what this group is doing. I was impressed with the space they use at University Lutheran Church (it is right by the elevator on the second floor so our board members can easily look in on Saturday mornings). I was also impressed that University Lutheran has dedicating that much space in the building to this group.

Troy and I discussed the UDECC vision, and he is familiar with the concept. It has been discussed at UDSP meetings. I will summarize his thoughts.

Pros concerning a central location for youth services:

Will make tracking and access to youth in need easier?

Will make it easier for these youth to access the services?

Cons concerning a central location for youth services in a UDEC location:

Will the homeless and unchurched youth feel that they “fit in” in an openly religious setting?

He’s concerned that many will not.

There is a feeling that it might be better not to be branded as services that are associated with a particular religion (Christianity and how it is perceived by their clients). (I mentioned here that I had heard discussion in the past regarding planning of the UDECC facility that there was an awareness of this difficulty and that, perhaps, the solution is in the architectural plans for a separate entrance to these community service organizations that would not mark them as part of the overall religious organization.)

Sanctuary Art Centers plans for the future:

They would like to have a street level store front space in the more traveled areas of the U. District to have a gallery with their art for sale and also some studio space as well, although the need for studio space will probably be greater than a store location would provide. So the future may consist of a gallery/studio in a street level very public space, and a second, more functional and roomy studio.

Troy Carter has not personally met Clint, but he knows who he is. I forgot to offer to make the introduction, but Troy and I did resolve to meet sometime in the next few weeks on a Saturday when the center is open for business. I offered to canvas my art buddies for supplies that can be donated. They are particularly interested in drawing and painting paper.

Submitted by Debbie Giles



Seattle Education Access (SEA)

Interview with Dr. Polly Trout, Executive Director, and Anthon Smith, Program Director

Seattle Education Access is located at 6920 Roosevelt Way NE. The Student Resource Center is at 1406 NE 50th St., #202.

Mission To provide higher education advocacy and opportunity to people struggling to overcome poverty and adversity.

Goals

- To **connect** non-traditional students with the information and financial resources to help them achieve their dreams of a college education.
- To provide **financial support** that helps low-income youth access higher education and meet their housing and basic survival needs while in school.
- To provide the **personal attention**, mentoring, technical assistance, and moral support that marginalized youth need to navigate the complex systems of higher education and financial aid.
- To empower young people living in poverty to develop their own voices and succeed in the higher academic arena.

Program

College Success Program: We help youth and young adults transition successfully to community colleges by combining financial support with social support. We provide non-traditional scholarships, tutoring, career counseling, computers, academic advising, books, case management and advocacy for our target population.

Youth Outreach: SEA partners with other local nonprofits that provide basic services to homeless youth, in order to increase the range of educational opportunities that they are able to provide their clients. Past Youth Outreach projects include refurbishing a computer lab at a local group home, cooking for Teen Feed, providing books for shelters and school programs that serve homeless youth, providing book seminars and art lessons for homeless youth at partner nonprofits.

Education Advocacy Training: Our staff provides free consultation to other grassroots organizations, teaching them how to adapt our College Success Program to their own unique constituencies. We also offer training workshops and consultation to service providers at other nonprofits that serve low income and marginalized people, teaching them how to provide higher education advocacy for their clients. Currently, SEA staff is providing pro bono consultation to the Post Prison Education Program, an emerging nonprofit that helps people who have recently been released from Washington State prisons transition successfully to community colleges.

Why we help

The prospect of college feels completely out of reach to many low-income young people. Add a history of homelessness to the picture and higher education becomes even more remote and unattainable. Why? Because young people without sufficient financial resources and nurturing parents lack access to information about college. They are fearful and uninformed about the application process. They find the maze of financial aid possibilities confusing and daunting. And they often don't have the assistance of a supportive adult who has experience going through this process. ([Learn more](#) about homeless youth in Seattle.)



Poverty is a spiral, and the cultural forces that surround those in poverty (landlords, creditors, police, entitlement and aid programs) often wind up keeping people within that spiral. Studies show that young people from low-income backgrounds generally do not receive as much information and support about college planning as their wealthier peers do. In most cases, this is because low-income parents are less likely to have graduated from college and are less familiar with the requirements of the college admissions process. The situation worsens for homeless youth, most of whom have no parent or other supportive adult around to guide and assist them. These students are left to fend for themselves within the system.

Access to financial aid is crucial. But money is not enough. Research demonstrates that one of the most effective ways to increase low-income youth's access to higher education is through increased mentoring. The support of a mentor can guide them through the academic pipeline. Students who engage with a mentor for a sustained period of time are more likely to enroll in higher education, stay in school, and ultimately graduate.

Research* has shown that the most effective college access programs have the following elements in common:

- Providing a key person who monitors the students over a long period of time
- Providing high-quality instruction and access to the most challenging courses
- Making long-term investments rather than short-term interventions
- Incorporating culturally sensitive practices
- Providing a supportive peer group
- Providing financial assistance and incentives.

(*Reference: Gandara, P. (2001) *Paving the Way to Postsecondary Education: K-12 Interventions for Underrepresented Youth*. Washington D.C.: National Center for Education Statistics.)]

Students need:

- Affordable housing in the U District
- Affordable transportation to the U District (especially with rising cost of fuel)
- Student scholarships

Submitted by Dan Peterson



Seattle Youth Garden Works

Janice Dilworth, Director

The Seattle Youth Garden Works is a program of the Church Council of Greater Seattle.



SHARE/WHEEL Shelters

SHARE is Seattle Housing and Resource Effort, a co-ed shelter program. WHEEL is the Women's Housing, Equality and Enhancement League, and is women-only. The two are partner organizations of homeless and formerly homeless men and women. Programs are self-managed, run by the homeless members themselves.

SHARE operates two shelters in the University District. Christ Episcopal Church hosts 25-30 men and women 7 nights each week in its Undercroft. University Friends Meeting also hosts a group of men and women at its facility.

WHEEL is now operating a new shelter for homeless women at University Lutheran Church. The University Lutheran Women's Shelter opened on May 13, 2009 with an initial population of 10 women, and will increase in capacity as the operation settles into a routine. In addition to overnight accommodations, guests are able to take advantage of the resources of the Elizabeth Gregory Day Center on site, where they have access to laundry facilities, kitchen and dining facilities, computer and Internet resources, and mail services. They can meet with case managers for referrals, support and advocacy, and for support in finding housing and employment.

Guests at SHARE/WHEEL shelters arrive in the evening and depart early the next morning. They are given bus passes and are expected to leave the area when not sleeping at the facility, rather than hanging around the neighborhood. Security patrols are conducted and organized by the shelter residents to maintain security for those at the shelter as well as the surrounding community.

SHARE/WHEEL operate 14 emergency shelters and 2 tent cities in the Seattle area, mostly hosted by churches.



Street Youth Ministries (SYM)

Interview with Shelly Smith, Executive Director

Street Youth Ministry, a program of University Presbyterian Church, was established in 1993, the only agency for U District street youth that is both located in a church and committed to sharing a faith-based Christian message. Spiritual healing and reconciliation are part of SYM's work. And this generates certain kinds of tension between SYM and partner agencies in the UDSP Alliance, some of whom think all Christians espouse fundamentalist beliefs, aggressive evangelism, and even the forcing of confessions or conversions as part of their mission. As Shelly said to me, SYM strives to do truly Christian work "in a community that doesn't really understand a Christian's calling."

SYM's mission: to provide street-involved youth age 13-22 in Seattle's University District with life skills, resources, and relationships that bring hope and healing to their lives and the community. The agency works to educate the public about the causes of homelessness and the needs of homeless youth. They provide basic needs (food, clothing, hygiene items, showers, laundry, medical and first aid items), life skills development (activities and classes to promote and assist youth in developing social and behavioral skills), relational ministries (case management, mentoring, discussion groups and outreach), information and resources, transportation (youth earn Metro, Greyhound, and Amtrak tickets for appropriate travel), and advocacy (determining needs, making referrals, helping youth access necessary services). Volunteers do most of SYM's work. The agency serves more than 650 youth each year.

Shelly spoke as a major player in the UDSP Alliance. She says the paramount needs in the U District for improved services to street and at-risk youth – besides more funding, of course – are widely agreed to be these three:

- More chemical/alcohol dependency counseling for youth
- More mental health counseling for youth
- More case management services for youth

The UDSP Alliance has talked with the YMCA's director Christine Stoffels about a hypothetical model that she advocates, of moving into a single building to house them all:

- Everyone agrees on the advantages: reduced costs through obtaining supplies in common, using common equipment, combined volunteer training, a District-wide newsletter that would be cheaper as well as better than separate agency publications, better coordination of services, etc. etc.
- Disadvantage (meaning "fear"): Agency directors are "certain" that each organization would lose its individuality and distinctive identity. The UDECC model of clearly autonomous entities whose separateness is clearly defined in a variety of ways, including architecturally, is not on their radar screens.

Note: Shelly says SYM is the only agency in the UDSP Alliance located within a church that doesn't pay rent or utilities for its space.

Right now U Presbyterian is in transition – a new pastor is being sought and will be installed in 5 months. The retiring pastor is their interim. This is a complicated situation – U Pres as a church is probably not ready for talks with UDECC or Clint. But Shelly would like Clint to meet with the UDSP Alliance asap and is looking to set that up.

Submitted by Judy Lightfoot



Tallmadge Hamilton House

Interview with Barbara Clarke, Executive Director, and Marilyn Michael, Program Director

Tallmadge Hamilton House was the first senior center in the Pacific Northwest, possibly the first west of the Mississippi. It operated continuously in Seattle's University District until the program was terminated in 2008. THH operated during the hours of 9:00 AM – 3:30 PM, Mondays through Fridays. The annual operating budget was about \$150,000. Significant funding support came from United Way of King County, which began supporting THH in the 1960s. The program was housed rent-free in a facility at 5225 – 15th Avenue NE, that was owned by the University Kiwanis Club. The Kiwanis Club sold the building in 2008.

Activities were diverse and included the following:

- Lunches
- Financial counseling, legal counseling, tax assistance
- Counseling with a social worker
- Foot care
- Affordable haircuts
- Book clubs, writing classes
- Classes on aging
- A hearing loss group
- Exercise classes
- Acupressure
- Dancing and singing
- Yoga and Tai-Chi programs
- Games, including pinochle & poker
- Horserace handicapping (in a program that included high school students)

The mean age of members was 80.5 years. Although THH had earlier averaged about 150 visitors per day, that had dropped to only about 20 as it was winding down. The maximum was as high as 300-350 per day. Typically, more women than men are served, and more singles than couples.

THH ended because of funding challenges brought about by a tumultuous history with Senior Services of King County. In the 1990s, Senior Services and THH went through an on-again, off-again partnership that ultimately led to THH losing its United Way funding support, which shifted to Senior Services. THH was unsuccessful in replacing those funds with other sources.

Senior centers empower seniors in our community. They offer support to maintain their health and wellbeing, foster peer interaction, prevent isolation, reinforce independence, and enrich their daily lives. Tallmadge Hamilton House had offered programs ranging from how-to and self-improvement classes to discussion and support groups, arts and crafts, computer technology, social services and counseling as well as weekday lunches throughout the year. Other Seattle senior center programs include fitness classes, dancing, driving lessons, senior rights assistance, tax assistance, pet food distribution, and transportation services. Such programs are essential to the goal of building a healthy community in a time of increasing personal isolation.

Submitted by Clint Pehrson



UTUMC Thrift Store

Interview with Betty Blakney, Marian Karpoff, Jean Poole and Dorothy Trondsen

The Thrift Store was started in May of 2000, and continues to operate as a program of University Temple United Methodist Church (UTUMC). It operates in a portion of U. Temple's Crowther Hall in space occupied by the ROOTS young adult shelter (ROOTS makes the space available to the store for free). The store is open for business on Friday afternoons from 2-5 PM. It is staffed and operated entirely by volunteers. Approximately 120-150 people come to shop each time the Thrift Store is open. Merchandise includes clothing, books, small furnishings and house wares. After a typical Friday afternoon, all of the merchandise and displays are crowded into a corner of Crowther Hall to make more room for the ROOTS shelter. The next Friday, everything has to be moved back out by volunteers and set up for another afternoon of business. The store presently has a roster of 46 volunteers, 26 of whom are members of UTUMC, 2 from other churches, and the rest from the community. Several of the volunteers are homeless persons. The store takes in \$13-14,000 each year, about \$10,000 from sales, the rest from charitable donations. Net revenue is used by UTUMC for other outreach programs.

The store's broad range of customers includes homeless persons of all ages, UW students, the working poor and others. In addition to providing very low-cost clothing and goods for those in need, the Thrift Store has expanded its Friday offerings to include a free lunch from 11:30-1:00 PM, showers from Noon-3:00 PM, free haircuts and foot care. New underwear and socks are purchased and given out to anyone using the showers. Food for the lunch program comes from Northwest Harvest, as well as donations from Top Pot Donuts and others. In addition to merchandise donated by individuals, the University Bookstore donates books, Eckstein School donates clothing and items from their lost and found, and overages come from other businesses and nonprofits.

Dignity and compassion are in evidence in everything the folks at the thrift store do. One volunteer cleans and sanitizes each shower after each use. Another provides expert haircuts. Incoming merchandise is carefully sorted and inspected. One volunteer from Plymouth Congregational Church spends many hours ironing clothing.

The women who founded and continue to operate the Thrift Store all have nursing backgrounds, and are eager to see services continue to expand to include much-needed health care services to the poor, homeless, and elderly. A parish nurse, a foot clinic, health referrals and follow-up are important components of that vision. They are eager to see the Thrift Store continue as part of a broader range of services in a single convenient location, but they are all in their late 70s and need to begin "passing the baton." The Thrift Store coordinates with and makes referrals to other service agencies in the neighborhood, particularly the University Churches Emergency Fund.

One of the store's greatest challenges is the need to constantly move everything in and out of display mode. A dedicated space where the store could remain set up and operate more frequently would be a huge improvement. It would also be great if there were fitting rooms, so customers didn't have to tie-up rest rooms for trying on the merchandise. People and trucks for deliveries are needed as well.

Submitted by Clint Pehrson



University Churches Emergency Fund

Interview with Jo Gustafson, Director

UCEF was created in 1986 to provide information, referral and financial assistance to people in need residing in NE Seattle, and to the homeless. According to Executive Director Jo Gustafson, “We’re busier than we’ve ever been.” In response to the rising costs of rent, move-ins, and utilities the scope of UCEF giving has recently narrowed to focus on protecting people with housing from being evicted, and helping to cover move-in expenses for those en route to new housing. Tighter restrictions have improved stewardship of available funds and permitted stopgap gifts to increase from \$50-\$75 to \$100 per year per individual or family. But even with donations from individuals, foundations, and 21 churches, levels of giving have diminished, and income isn’t keeping pace with outgo.

UCEF assistance with paying rent or utility costs is based on individual need and verified by current bills or copies of lease agreements. Funds are paid directly to the landlord or service provider. Also provided on an as-needed basis are emergency food, bus tickets, and some toiletries. Funds are never given directly to clients.

Staff and volunteers talk individually with clients to determine their needs, help solve their problems, and refer them to other services if necessary. At UCEF assistance is personal and deeply respectful.

UCEF is open 10:30 AM -12:30 PM Tuesday through Friday. It is located at University Congregational Church, with its own entrance directly off of 45th Street.

Submitted by Judy Lightfoot



University District Food Bank

Interview with Joe Gruber, Executive Director

The food bank would move “tomorrow” if the right facilities became available. The food bank has some rather specific requirements for space and facilities. Joe provided me with a specifications sheet (attached to this report). Joe mentioned to me several key needs:

- Ability to handle pallet loads instead of case loads
- Loading dock for direct unloading with storage and distribution space on same level
- Refrigerated storage space
- Handicapped access
- Sheltered waiting area

Ideally, there could also be space for service add-ons such as contact with job counselor, nutritionist, and community college representatives. Adjacent offices would be necessary. Meeting space could be shared if conveniently available. The food bank also holds an annual auction, which it wants to keep in the District. It needs nice space for about 250 people.

The food bank has 3.5 fulltime employees and the service activities are staffed almost exclusively by volunteers. Currently it occupies about 1600 square feet of space that is not efficient for their operation. But it is relatively inexpensive at an annual rent of \$9000.

Joe’s vision is that the food bank could connect with other services for its client population, of which 15-20% or homeless and the rest have no or inadequate jobs and skills. He would like to see his population connect with job training skills, English learning through either community college or public school outreach. He thinks nutrition education, cooking demonstrations (perhaps by SNAC) and low cost day care would be valuable adjuncts.

There would be advantages to consolidating food bank, teen feed and other meal programs so that common storage space could be used efficiently. He hoped that the Saturday and Sunday noon feeding programs could be expanded to an every day noon feeding program.

Joe opined that the U District does a pretty good job with homeless youth. Joe’s vision for ways to make the University District better for all of its various populations include more services such as a low income medical services, dental services or screening, and a hygiene center. He believes provision should be made for working class housing as well as low-income housing. He suggested a need for additional cultural activities beyond what the UW offers. It is also critical to maintain access to good public transportation.

Joe indicated that he was sufficiently familiar with the UDECC concept that a visit from the Executive Director was not needed at this time, but he would welcome continued dialogue on future locations of the food bank and other social services.

Submitted by John Gienapp



University District Service Providers Alliance (UDSPA)

Interview with Laura Pritchard, Executive Director

U District strengths:

- Neighborhood active in diverse ways
- Diverse population – many transient (UW), but also people who live and work here for decades
- Great nonprofits and faith communities

UDSPA needs:

- Volunteers
- Office equipment
- More paid staff. They don't have enough peer support, which leads to high burnout rate. No vacations, sick days because nobody to fill in.
- Build UDSPA Board. Need creative ways to engage the community around that process, use it not just to get trustees but build connections w/ the community
- U District community support when we write grant proposals. We need letters of support from an engaged community: "Dear X, Yes, there's value to supporting UDSPA in our neighborhood..."
- Advocacy – add youth concerns and voices to advocacy (which tends to be dominated by advocacy for vets, single moms, etc.). In the 13 years of Partnership for Youth (PFY), there were different projects besides advocacy, including employment for youth – little paid jobs around the neighborhood. Closed down due to lack of funding, decreasing support from UW, not just funding but also in-kind support in that a UW School of Social Work faculty member was the director, housed in a UW office. UDSPA had partnered with PFY, PFY was their advocacy arm. Now trying to partner with Seattle King County Coalition on Homelessness, the King Co 10-year plan to end Homelessness, Mockingbird (?). Key to advocacy is coalition that chooses priorities, aware that other coalitions are taking care of others to lessen duplication: "These 5 Things."

U District needs:

- For some agencies collocation makes sense; some not possible. The former need a central location, enough office space, meeting rooms, a training room. Also an Ecumenical Campus should involve clients in the process, treat them as stakeholders, also neighbors. Establish and set expectations together about how this space is going to be used. Build a sense of a community of stakeholders.
- Hygiene facilities
- Central place for food program – storage for supplies and leftovers
- Volunteer pool. When U District shelters merged into ROOTS at UTUMC, LOTS of church volunteers were lost because congregations lost concrete sense of connection once the service was no longer located in their building.
- Strength in U District diversity, people here for different reasons, BUT no cohesiveness, no one managing a sense of community. There are pockets (UDSPA, Ecumenical Parish, Chamber of Commerce). How about a U District Community Group – an access point for being together, partly but not all to solve problems as they come up. Organized not around a response of meeting to deal with Issue X (a crisis - Greek Row or street violence out of



control, or a possibility - somebody wants a P Patch). A forum that's not always reactive. U District has lots of engaged people passionate about lots of different things, but they don't meet regularly – business owners, service providers, and faith communities. Create opportunities for people to work together – group A has a project, group B has a space to loan them for it. Building a sense of relationship that doesn't come solely out of a sense of crisis. Come together in celebration of what's going on. (Something like the regular monthly meetings between service providers and cops. Started out as a problem, now is a regular meeting.)

- Neighborhood sense of where the community is trying to head. Big changes: new buildings, UW at the Safeco building. Concerned with development people looking strictly at bottom-line questions.

Submitted by Judy Lightfoot



University District Youth Center (UDYC)

Interview with Cameron Alford, Volunteer Coordinator

UDYC is located in the “Gold House,” owned by University Congregation United Church of Christ. UDYC programs are operated by Catholic Community Services, and include case management and employment counseling offered to youth-in-transition and homeless youth. Laundry facilities, food, housing referrals, and a shower are all available to UDYC clients. Interagency – UDYC has a computer lab and Internet connectivity, allowing some on-line courses so students can work at home, the library or at school.

The Interagency Academy, a program of Seattle Public Schools, is located at UDYC. It offers high school completion and GED preparation classes. Students are encouraged to be involved in the community to earn credit and complete service learning. These opportunities are developed based on student interest.

University District strengths:

- Socioeconomic and ethnic diversity
- Good, reasonably priced food – very important
- Nice neighborhood feel of “the Ave.” Bulldog News, etc.

UDYC needs

- More staff and long-term “regular” volunteers. Staff retention should be longer than a year. Big burnout factor. Job is taxing mentally, emotionally, and pay, benefits are low. Few breaks during the day.
- Overwhelming needs of youth. You have to bring a lot to the job, be self-starting and self-motivating. More structure.
- Alliance is great for coordinating. Build a volunteer “bank” to keep a consistent volunteer staff at each agency.
- Space – although smallness is cozy, it’s an old stressed house instead of an impersonal “center.”
- Maintenance staff so staff isn’t always doing repairs
- UDSPA-driven training beyond Homelessness 101-102. Booklet compilation of past staff experiences would be valuable. Hard to get a feel for the job until you actually do it.

Program needs:

- A gym, outdoor basketball court, garden to work in
- Consolidation of services so kids don’t have to move about to access them. Their life is so spread out. Pack up and go here, wait... Pack up and go there, wait ...
- See Orion Center for example of comprehensive services.

Submitted by Van Hutton



University Family YMCA

Interview with Christine Stoffels, Executive Director

Christine conducted a tour of the facility, and we talked about the future of the branch and the ways the YMCA serves disadvantaged populations in the University District.

The current facility includes about 15,000 square feet on two levels. Facilities include:

- The Pocock Room, a multipurpose room with some athletic equipment
- The Kid's Corner, which provides drop-in service for parents using the facilities, and childcare
- A cardio room, with a full range of strength and weight-training equipment
- The Safeco Group Fitness Room, which provides room for exercise classes, and is also used for children's programming and Sunday youth programs
- The Gates Youth Development Center, which provides room for teen programming, and is also used as a meeting room for community groups.
- Support facilities including locker rooms, a coed sauna, office facilities, etc.

Service Activities

The YMCA has served a Saturday evening meal for homeless youth for the past 8-9 years. This compliments the Teen Feed program in the neighborhood churches, which does not provide meals on weekends. For the Saturday evening meal, food is prepared off-site by volunteers (individuals and groups/organizations) and then brought to the Y to be served in the Pocock Room. The YMCA is closed on Saturday evenings, so the meal does not conflict with any other programming. Showers and other hygiene services are also made available on Saturday evenings, and donated clothing is distributed.

On Sunday afternoons, the YMCA operates a drop-in center, with a light meal. Homeless youth are provided a place to hang out, socialize, play games and access the internet.

Replacement Facility

The University Family YMCA serves a large geographic area within Seattle extending from the Montlake Cut on the south to Shoreline on the north, from Ballard to Sandpoint. Hence, the current location is not necessarily central to the branch's served area, and it is not a forgone conclusion that the best location for the University Family YMCA is in the University District. The YMCA needs to examine this question in detail.

The YMCA has a goal of replacing its current facility with a +/- 50,000 square foot facility. The site of the existing branch is not large enough to accommodate such a facility. The wish list for the new facility would include large space demands, such as a swimming pool and a basketball court.

Submitted by Clint Pehrson



University Neighborhood Service Center

Interview with Karen Ko, Coordinator

Karen Ko sees the eclectic, “non-sterile” character of the U District as a great strength. She appreciates the mix of people from students to homeless youth to kids in child care – “all can call ‘the Ave’ home.”

She sees a tremendous need for youth employment programs. She is also interested in keeping the District clean and welcome, especially for pedestrians. Such goals can be combined!

She would like to see a “working zone” for youth – supporting employment. Before Partnership for Youth lost its funding, youth were hired for a monthly alley cleanup – 6 kids per month, paid \$25 for 2 hours, plus lunch. “For \$210 a month total, youth made a huge difference in the look and feel of the district.” It also gave her and other adults a great way to connect with kids, and the kids a good way to connect with businesses. “We went door to door each time to tell them ‘Kids care! The Ave is more to them than just a place to hang out.’” The City provided bags and pickers, Chamber of Commerce loaned us wagons, Seattle Public Utilities picked up the bags and helped fund the cleanups. Additional funding sources were needed for ongoing employment.

Randy Thomas of University Park Neighborhood Alliance went to landlords in the area bounded by 50th, Ravenna, 16th, and 21st asking for compensation for youth to trim and clean up their yards under his supervision. Some kids got a whole day’s work. This was partly funded by Small Sparks grants – a fund for small neighborhood projects.

Youth employment projects would need a dedicated staff person or group of volunteers to coordinate and supervise, maybe 20 hrs/ week.

Would Ecumenical Campus be willing also to support Dumpster-free alleys – where alleys become pedestrian walkways, garden space, public parks space? That would be great.

Ko would also like to see a storefront drop-in “living room on the Ave” for kids. They are anxious about leaving the Ave, where they feel at home, for a drop-in place elsewhere. The defunct Partnership for Youth director led regular conversations with kids who showed up at their office – “What do you need/want?” There was also counseling and weekly indoor basketball games at U Pres, which has an indoor gym. Popular games – service providers came, and it was a great opportunity to interact with youth “on a level playing field.” The center could have gallery/workshop/studio/photography/frame shop space.

In short, if the Ecumenical Campus had a gym and a drop-in center for youth it would be great. Businesses would appreciate a place that draws kids in off the street.

Submitted by Judy Lightfoot



University Street Ministry (USM)

Interview with Eric Wirkman, TeenFeed Coordinator

U District strengths :

- Homeless youth have lots of services, more comprehensive care than before, a network of care, safer than downtown.
- College neighborhood congenial, cheap food is affordable for kids.
- Weakness: Residents are mostly transient, main population doesn't feel a connection with street culture. So community/resident-based assistance isn't really possible. Have to depend on agencies.
- There's a strong sense of community among service providers, emotional support, connection.

SYM is progressive, a good place to work. Very cool clients, I like the kids.

Church congregations here are great: progressive, open, and tolerant. Coming from a conservative sense of Christianity, I feel lucky to see and work these people. 16 of the 25 volunteers who help with TeenFeed are from your churches. SYM can work, only because there's the support of an ecumenical religious community. "You guys are not hate-filled bigots, and I'm glad."

SYM's needs:

- More volunteers (esp. for TeenFeed)
- Connections with people in the community. Have good relationships with host churches, some business owners, but not many of the residents. Strengthening those relationships would be good for expanding volunteer pool and other purposes.
- Better storage. I'm in 4 churches each week, supplies in 4 different places, have to keep track of what's getting low in which space, leftover milk can't be saved for next night. One location 5 nights/week would be great. But I don't want to lose relationships with the churches and connections with the different congregations. Also, if kids are "trespassed" (caught trespassing on a church property) they can't enter the property for a year or will be arrested. So having different TeenFeed sites gives trespassed kids a chance to eat at the other churches.
- SLY (Service Links for Youth) needs increased street outreach presence, staff & volunteers out on the street, find kids where they're at, create relationships, distribute care packets. Ryan and I do needle exchange. Having it more available would be great – carry cleans w/ us and a sharps container.
- \$ for bus tickets – rate increase not made up for by our funding
- Publicity for SLY so that people needing help and support would know about us. Brochures at the churches.
- Safe places to sleep, increased shelter space. I see 50-60 kids/night; ROOTS has 25 beds, and some kids are under 18. No shelters for younger kids anymore. Youth Care – kids 12-17 don't access because under WA law shelter staff must notify parents w/in 24 hours, and some kids come from abusive homes.
- Mental health counseling. UDYS has a new wrap-around team and a MH counselor and CD (chemical dependency) counselor. But there are gaps in care. Kids age out but still need support.
- Improved coordination from UDSPA – but needs more funding for more staff. Laura juggles 9-10 agencies, all wanting things from her but slow to respond TO her. She needs support staff.



U District needs:

- Concern: put everything in one place? Different agencies are a strength. Maintaining different spaces is important, less confusing. We must be really intentional about choosing the programs to be at an Ecumenical Campus and about how they are sited and orchestrated.
- Space for clients to go chill out after events (TeenFeed, etc.) – a gym.

Submitted by Tom Quigley