

THE UMOJA CONNECTION



Special Thanks to our Funders:

Umoja would like to thank the countless individuals, businesses, organizations, and foundations who have donated their time and funds to help our programming succeed. We could not do it without you!

Fall Update 2007

A Word from our Executive Director:

Dear Friends of Umoja,

It is hard to believe that 10 years ago this fall, Umoja had just arrived at Manley Academy High School. We had one paid staff position working with about 100 young people in the Construction Technology small school at Manley and our efforts were supported exclusively by the Steans Family Foundation and DePaul University. At that time, the high school's total student population was under 700. Currently, we provide services and activities to every single one of the more than 1,000 students who attend Manley! Our rich and intertwined history has allowed us to offer the kinds of resources and supports that neither Manley nor Umoja could have considered offering in isolation. Together, we have dramatically increased the number of graduates going on to college from less than 10% in 1997 to 67% in 2007, and this year we are serving the largest graduating class in Manley's history. We believe that the Manley and Umoja marriage is truly an example of what school community partnerships should be and demonstrates how young people, no matter what their economic background, can be connected with the resources and opportunities they need and deserve to be successfully engaged in high school and to become productive adults and citizens.

This year, Umoja's staff of 21 will serve more than 2,000 young people and close to 500 teachers at Manley, Gage Park High School, ACE Technical Charter High School, Collins Academy High School, and the Comer Center as well as through professional development opportunities for teachers across the city. While the Steans Family Foundation remains our longest ally and advocate, many more foundation, corporate and individual supporters have come on board during this last decade to provide the critical financial and human resources that allow us to do this important work. Our more than 250 active volunteers bring their perspective and insight to our young people by networking with them at our career and college events, partnering with teachers in the classroom through Umoja programming, and providing ongoing tutoring and mentoring with both our current high school students and our graduates.

Please know that none of the work we do would be possible without you. Throughout our 10 year anniversary, Umoja allies will be hosting small gatherings of their colleagues and friends in an effort to spread the word and expand our base of volunteers and donors. If you are interested in hosting an event or attending one, we would welcome your participation.

We are excited to greet the next decade with the same passion and commitment we brought to our first. Thank you, as always, for all you do to support the young people that are Umoja Student Development Corporation.

Sincerely,

Lila Leff, Executive Director

Corporate & Foundation Funders

ACE Technical Charter High School
After School Matters
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois
J.P. Morgan Chase
Chicago Foundation for Women
Chicago Public Schools
Collins Academy High School
Comer Science & Education Foundation
DLA Piper LLP
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Steans Family Foundation
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Washington Mutual
WGN Children's Charities
WGN Radio 720 Neediest Kids Fund
W.P. and H.B. White Foundation
WISE Neighbors/UIC



Community Builders Spotlight

The six-week Community Builders (CB) internship represents a powerful synthesis of Umoja's organizational best practices, as it brings together our academic enrichment, leadership, and college and career programming. CB gives students real work experience and challenges them to stretch intellectually and academically.



The curriculum promotes community awareness and engagement as well as individual and social growth.

This summer's topic, *Reducing Violence and Conflict, Increasing the Peace*, gave interns the opportunity to explore the roots of violence and conflict and introduced them to a variety of approaches to decreasing violence and promoting effective forms of conflict resolution. For the second summer in a row, we were thrilled to partner with the Revere Alumni Association and Gary Comer Youth Center to run a CB internship on the South Side. We employed ten



students, ranging from rising sophomores to rising seniors, on the South Side, in addition to the twenty-nine rising sophomores through seniors employed at the North Lawndale site. Each site concluded their summer with a community showcase in which students presented the results of their research through group presentations, visual displays, and the premiere of the two documentaries.

Community Builders Team Insight

West Side

Working in four teams, the North Lawndale CB interns generated four focused areas of inquiry: violence and the media, how people coming out of prison affect community violence, violence and schools, and violence and child development. Each group then participated in interview and survey workshops, and subsequently created and implemented a research plan. In addition to their group projects, students developed a deeper



understanding of violence, conflict and approaches to increasing peace through participation in interactive workshops with experts from several organizations, including Cease Fire, Peace Circles, the Center for Conflict Resolution, and a scholar from the University of Illinois at Chicago.



South Side

The Comer/Revere interns focused specifically on violence, conflict and approaches to increasing peace in schools. They developed a conflict resolution and violence reduction curriculum for students and teachers and generated a set of policy recommendations for high school principals. Their research process included meetings with school security personnel and the head of CPS security, school principals from ACE Tech High School and Kenwood Academy, students from several CPS high schools, and the Executive Director of the Juvenile Intervention Support Center. They also participated in an interactive workshop with an expert from the Center for Conflict Resolution.



WALL OF FAME

Umoja Celebrates Manley's College Graduates on the Wall of Fame



Earlier this fall, Umoja began gathering photos of Manley graduates who have earned their bachelor's degrees from four-year colleges

and universities. The photos have been framed and are displayed directly across from the main office so that everyone who walks through Manley High School can see them. Umoja is proud to celebrate this major achievement in the graduates' lives

and hopes that the Wall of Fame will serve as a reminder and a statement of encouragement for those Manley students still walking the halls.



Umoja Board of Directors

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We're Off to College



**67% of 2007
Manley
graduates
arrived on
college
campuses
this fall.**



**Here's where Manley
students are attending
college this fall:**

Umoja's Vision and Mission

Umoja Student Development Corporation demonstrates a best practice model of youth development and education by partnering with students in their growth as learners and leaders and by actively engaging them in academic achievement, community-building, and leadership opportunities. We accomplish this by implementing innovative educational initiatives and cultivating relationships with schools and organizations on the West Side and throughout Chicago. Umoja envisions a relationship-rich environment where schools, families, and communities work as partners to foster confident and motivated young people who understand and achieve their educational and career goals and act as agents of change.

UMOJA WISH LIST

You can help Umoja by providing something from our wish list.

- Digital Video Camera
- LCD Projector
- Digital Camera
- File Cabinets (w/Lock & Key)
- Flash Drives
- Reams of Printer Paper
- Gift Cards
- Office Furniture (Chairs)

If you have questions please email mbenton@umojacorporation.org

- Alabama State University
- Ball State University
- College of DuPage
- Eastern Illinois University
- Howard College
- Joliet Junior College
- Kennedy King College
- Lincoln College
- Miles College
- Northeastern Illinois University
- Northern Illinois University
- Paine College
- Southern Illinois University Carbondale
- Southwestern Christian College
- Triton College
- Truman College
- University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana
- University of Illinois at Chicago
- University of Wisconsin-Madison
- University of Wisconsin-Platteville
- Waubensee Community College
- Western Illinois University
- Wright College



Umoja Staff



- Marlee Benton, *Development Associate*
- Pamela Brown, *Program Development Specialist*
- Ted Christians, *Associate Executive Director*
- Joe Cytrynbaum, *Program Director*
- Nicole Fowler, *Upward Bound Secretary*
- Jeanne Gallo, *Development Associate*
- Joseph Halli, *Student Development Manager*
- Marcia Kunstler, *Development Coordinator*
- Lila Leff, *Executive Director*
- Michelle Lugalia, *Student Advocate Fellow*
- Katrina Monzon, *Operations Manager*
- Anna Osterbur, *Academic Coordinator*
- Doug Pietrzak, *Program Development Specialist*
- Andre Smith, *Student Advocate*
- Jacare Thomas, *College & Career/Upward Bound Director*
- William Walden, *Student Advocate – Academics*
- Nicole Williams, *Program Development Specialist*
- Nicole L. Williams, *Student Advocate – College and Career*
- Simone Woods, *Upward Bound Coordinator*
- Easter Young, *Alumni Advocate*
- Ilana Zafran, *Student Advocate*

UMOJA Celebrates 10 Years

Partnerships



ACE Technical Charter High School
Collins Academy High School
Comer Youth Center/Revere Alumni Assn.
Gage Park High School
Manley Career Academy High School



Collins Academy

During the winter of 2006, Umoja began laying the groundwork for our newest partnership with Collins Academy, located in the North Lawndale community. This new school opened its doors in September 2007 with a class of 150 freshmen. Principal Joyce Caine is a long-time partner and supporter who shares Umoja's vision for developing motivated young people who feel responsible for themselves and their communities. Umoja staff is working closely with the administration, faculty and students at Collins Academy to offer programming and to support student development seminars through curriculum creation and teacher coaching. Umoja is extremely proud to have started working with Collins Academy teachers and leaders, even before the doors officially opened, to lay a strong, supportive foundation for high academic standards, college and career preparation, social/emotional and leadership development.



Upward Bound

Umoja is starting its first ever Upward Bound program! Upward Bound is an elite and prestigious program with a forty year history of preparing students for college. Umoja has the distinct privilege of providing 50 students the opportunity to be a part of this legacy. Upward Bound students and their parents will benefit from college and career workshops, free tutoring, cultural enrichment, college tours, and financial aid workshops throughout their high school, college, and professional years.



THE GROWTH OF UMOJA



ACE Tech

This year ACE Technical Charter High School will celebrate its first graduating class! The Umoja-ACE Tech partnership continues to flourish as Umoja brings leadership to advisory and student development programming and works to insure that every ACE Tech student graduates with a realistic plan for postsecondary success. We are excited to provide structure and support to the college and career center as students take their next steps. Many of the school's seniors are planning to study architecture, engineering and construction when they enroll in college, while others will immediately enter trade schools and career specific training programs.

In Honor of Umoja's

...10 year anniversary, long-time supporters are joining us in a year of celebration. The gatherings and events they are hosting for their friends and colleagues will expand Umoja's network, increase our donor and volunteer base and connect us with new corporate support.

Umoja Board Vice President, Becky Betts and her husband Steve, and Kate and Marin Gjaja co-hosted our first anniversary event: The Magic of Umoja. They spoke to their guests about the magic of Umoja, and a magician added to the festivities.

Jeanne and John Gallo invited guests to a summer gathering where they enjoyed delicious desserts and learned about Umoja programs.

Umoja staff and volunteers participated in the Chicago Half Marathon and raised more than \$18,000 for Umoja.

Randy Frieser hosted a cocktail reception at the historic Sante Fe Building overlooking Lake Michigan where guests feasted on the skyline, appetizers and wonderful stories about Umoja.

Upcoming 10th anniversary events:
Richard Klawiter, Ken Schmetterer and Peter Ellis of DLA Piper will host an event in November 2007; Peter and Michelle Thompson will sponsor an event in February 2008; and Tony Grant will host an event in March 2008.

We thank all who are hosting our 10th year celebrations. If you are interested in introducing your friends or colleagues to Umoja by sponsoring a 10th anniversary event, please contact Lila Leff at lleff@umojacorporation.org.

Looking Ahead...

***Come to our Annual Spring Fling
Silent Auction Fundraiser on
April 11, 2008!!***

***Bid on great items while supporting
a great cause...our youth!!***

***For more information, contact
Marlee Benton or Jeanne Gallo
at 773.534.8877 or
mbenton@umojacorporation.org or
jgallo@umojacorporation.org.***