Community Unity Center (CUC) Report to the Administrative Council

From Nancy Thompson

August, 2025 .

Our CUC VISTA, Bailey Schuchmann, has been compiling data for us since the inception of her service in February. She distributed a detailed report to the steering committee at our most recent meeting, and I wanted to share a few highlights with the Council.

1. Our monthly third-Thursday dinners have averaged at estimated 82 attendees. We think that about 58% of those attending were adults under the age of 65, 26% were children, and 16% were over 65. We think church members were about 18% of the total attendees and that an average of 11 guests were non-white, 3 were unhoused, and 3 showed limited mobility. In comparison with Maplewood demographics overall, non-white guests amounted to 15%, compared to 28% in Maplewood as a whole. About 16% of our dinner guests were estimated to be over 65 compared to 9% in the population as a whole. All of these numbers are educated estimates from the steering committee.
2. Since February, our distribution for the CUC newsletter has increased from 56 to 114. From 53% to 75% of those receiving the newsletters opened them, which is well above the nonprofit industry average of 35-40%.
3. The CUC also has a Facebook page, which has grown from 105 to 170 members during the six-month period.
4. Bailey secured meal donations to Freedom School from The Blue Duck, The Living Room, Sabroso Cantina, Maplewood Deli, and Olive and Oak. As a result of her work, we also received Freedom School donations of cash from Seafoam Media, Treasure Isle, and individuals. Other businesses or organizations provided services, including Artists First, School of Metaphysics, and Buzzing Love.
5. Bailey has been accepted into the fall session of UMSL's Neighborhood Leadership Academy, which some of you may know as NLA. In addition to group instruction and discussion, each participant must do a neighborhood project. Her project is continuing and accelerating our efforts to enlist and educate block leaders for each block in Maplewood. She has been working with the Police and other City departments and officials to assure that the project is well understood. A well-attended kickoff informational meeting was held in Ryan Hummert Park.
6. Our VISTA is researching what would be involved with the church providing warming and cooling centers during severe weather. This feature would be open only to already known unhoused people in our community, thus pre-empting others from outside taking advantage of this service. Our current thought is that we would like for the City to provide financial support for such an initiative. Stay tuned for further developments, as nothing is decided at this point.