



United in Philanthropy

Fall 2026 • Volume 7 • Issue 1



Connected by Purpose
United by Impact

Creativity *Connects* Us

Meet Our First Artist in Residence



Leah instructs several residents in a mindfulness watercolor exercise.



Leah with two of her Flow State Gallery's featured artists, residents Perk Jackson (left) and Paul Schaffer (right).

For years, United Methodist Communities envisioned an Artist in Residence program that would bring creativity, connection, and new opportunities for engagement to residents. With support from the UMC Foundation, that vision became a reality this summer as The Shores welcomed its first Artist in Residence intern, Leah Strasser.

Selected from a competitive pool of applicants, Leah is a junior at Lehigh University studying Cognitive Science with a concentration in Cognitive Neuroscience, along with a minor in Studio Art. Throughout the summer, she invited residents to explore their creativity through hands-on experiences including cyanotypes, printmaking, cognitive focus painting, abstract art, and an “Ugly Art Party” that celebrated the idea that everyone can be an artist. Residents embraced opportunities to try something new, connect with one another, and enjoy the process of creating.

What made this pilot program especially unique was that Leah was truly an Artist in Residence—living in an assisted living apartment at The Shores and becoming

part of the community she served. The summer culminated in a July 21 art show showcasing the work created by Leah and the residents.

The success of this pilot program demonstrated the value of innovative approaches to resident engagement and enrichment. UMC and the UMC Foundation are exploring opportunities to continue and expand creative programming that brings people together and supports abundant life for older adults. Individuals and organizations interested in helping make future opportunities possible are invited to connect with the UMC Foundation.



Celebrating *Two* Grant Awards for Abundant Minds Café

We are Grateful for Expanded Support for Older Adults and Caregivers!

The UMC Foundation is excited to share that Abundant Minds Café has received **two grant awards** to help expand this important community initiative and bring its impact to even more older adults and caregivers! The Alzheimer's Foundation of America (AFA) awarded \$6,000 through its 2026 Spring Bi-Annual Grant, and The Mosaic Foundation awarded \$3,000 to support the continued growth of Abundant Minds Café at Collingswood and The Shores.

Launched as part of UMC's commitment to brain health, memory support, and education, Abundant Minds Café provides a welcoming, no-cost environment for older adults experiencing early changes in memory, attention, and daily functioning, as well as the caregivers who support them. Through education, evidence-informed strategies, and meaningful social connection, participants gain resources, build confidence, and connect with others navigating similar experiences.



MOSAIC
FOUNDATION

These two grants are an exciting recognition of the value and potential of Abundant Minds Café, and they will help UMC continue expanding access to this innovative program. The UMC Foundation is grateful to the Alzheimer's Foundation of America and The Mosaic Foundation for partnering with us to ensure that more older adults and families can benefit from the connection, support, and resources they need!



Anchored in Generosity Sails Beyond Expectations

An Evening on the Water Raised Nearly \$50,000 to Support Older Adults

On May 28, friends, supporters, board members, teammates, and community partners gathered aboard the River Queen for UMC Foundation's second annual Anchored in Generosity fundraiser. Surrounded by the beautiful waters of the Manasquan River and Barnegat Bay, guests enjoyed an evening of fellowship, music, and celebration while supporting UMC's mission of creating abundant life for older adults throughout New Jersey.

A highlight of the evening was hearing from Esther Hill, a resident of The Wesleyan, UMC's affordable senior housing community in Red Bank. Esther shared how finding a home at The Wesleyan brought her a renewed sense of independence, security, and belonging. Her story was a powerful reminder of the difference made possible through the generosity of donors, volunteers, and community partners.

Thanks to the incredible support of everyone who attended, donated, bid in the silent auction, and sponsored the event, Anchored in Generosity raised nearly \$50,000 to support programs and services that benefit seniors across New Jersey.



The UMC Foundation extends its sincere appreciation to all of our event sponsors, including Premier Partner Hawks & Company; Visionary Sponsors: Caring Communities, Hackensack Meridian Health, Princeton Strategic Communications, and Provident Bank; and Patron Sponsors: AllRisk, D.A. Davidson, Thomas & Danielle Griffith, KDA Architects, the OceanFirst Foundation, UFCW Local 152, and Vasanth & Susan Victor. Your partnership helps us continue championing abundant life—one act of generosity at a time.

Thank You for your Generosity!

Spring Appeal Inspires Growth

The UMC Foundation's Spring Appeal exceeded expectations this year, raising \$49,710.31 thanks to the generosity of donors who continue to believe in our mission and the older adults we serve. Inspired by Michele, a resident of our Collingswood community, who shared that "you make it personal," this year's appeal highlighted the meaningful difference supporters make in the lives of UMC residents. The response was a testament to the strength of our Foundation community, with 119 gifts received compared to 94 gifts during last year's appeal.

Because of donors like you, United Methodist Communities is able to provide seniors with more than services and care. Your generosity helps create communities where older adults can build meaningful relationships, explore new pursuits, and live engaged, purpose-filled lives. Thank you for helping ensure our residents experience the warmth of home and family every day and for making abundant life possible.



A Standing Ovation for *Live Music* Bringing NJ's Seniors Together for a Purpose

UMC and the UMC Foundation were proud to be the Standing Ovation Sponsor of the Garden State Arts Foundation's 2026 Spring Concert Series at the PNC Bank Arts Center. Through this partnership, four free performances brought music, memories, and community connection to audiences throughout New Jersey and the surrounding region, with an incredible 75,905 ticket requests across the season! It was also the first time in GSAF history that two performances sold out!

From Sinatra favorites and Motown tributes to a special US Army Field Band celebration of America's 250th birthday, the spring schedule offered something for everyone. We're proud to support GSAF's commitment to accessible live music for seniors, and pleased to continue as a Standing Ovation Sponsor for the 2026-2027 season.

Follow our social media and SupportUMCF.org for upcoming performances and ways to enjoy Fall 2026 with us.

TEDxCapeMay 2026: "Vital Signs"

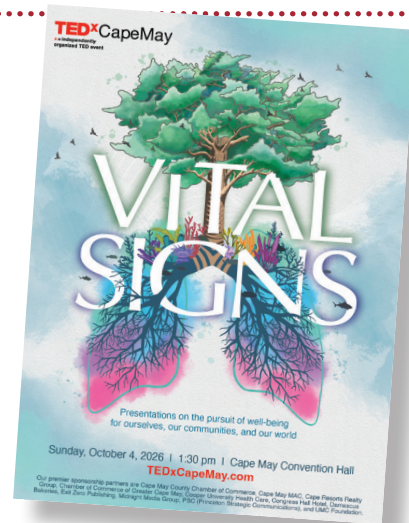
On **Sunday, October 4**, TEDxCapeMay returns to Cape May Convention Hall for its 15th season, Vital Signs, bringing together speakers from medicine, science, the arts, law, and more to explore ideas that touch all our lives.

We're pleased to offer **adults age 50 and older a \$30 "friends of UMC" discount on tickets**, bringing the price from \$65 to just \$35. The ticket includes all afternoon presentations and an open-bar reception at Congress Hall.

The lineup includes talks on the science of hope and resilience, legacy planning as an act of love, and the role of art and connection in building healthy communities. With something for everyone, Vital Signs offers plenty to think about and discuss.

TEDx events bring people together around ideas worth sharing, sparking conversation and connection. We're proud to support TEDxCapeMay and make this experience more accessible to our community!

Learn more and take advantage of our special \$35 ticket offer at tedxcapemay.com/umcf



From UMCF to the TEDx Stage

Did you know that our President & CEO Mark Lenhard was a featured speaker at TEDxCapeMay 2025? His talk, Re-envisioning Aging Successfully, has surpassed 70K views on YouTube.

Scan the QR code to watch Mark's TEDx talk.





Wednesday, October 7, 2026

SupportUMCF.org



PRESENTED BY LOCKTON

Now Reserved: **Your Fall Tee Time!**

UMC Foundation Gets Back on the Green

It's been a long time since the UMC Foundation last hosted a golf outing – 13 years, to be exact! This October, we're excited to bring the event back to our calendar with the 2026 UMC Foundation Golf Outing, Presented by Lockton.

On **Wednesday, October 7**, golfers, community members, and business leaders will gather at **Blue Heron Pines Golf Club in Galloway Township** for an afternoon of golf, networking, and philanthropy, followed by a dinner reception.

We're thrilled by the enthusiastic response we've already received from sponsors and golfers and are especially grateful to the businesses helping to make this event possible, including our **Title Sponsor, Lockton; Presenting Sponsor, Provident Bank; Gold Sponsor, Sodexo; and 2026 Premier Partner, Hawks & Company.**

David Griffin, Vice President & Client Advocate at Lockton, shared, "At Lockton, we believe that strong communities are measured by how they care for their most vulnerable members." He added that Lockton is proud to support UMCF's work providing "compassionate care, meaningful connection, and opportunities for older adults to live abundant lives."

With October fast approaching, there's still an opportunity to join us:

A limited number of golfer spots remain available, as well as hole sponsorships for businesses and organizations looking to increase their visibility while supporting UMCF's mission. Dinner-only registration is also available for those who would like to join us for the reception without playing golf.

For those who prefer to support the event from behind the scenes, the UMC Foundation is seeking monetary and in-kind donations for the reception's silent auction. Every contribution helps make the day a success while supporting UMC's programs and services that promote dignity, independence, connection, and well-being for seniors in our communities.

Whether you join us on the course, at dinner, or through sponsorship, we hope you'll help us make this long-awaited return to the green one worth celebrating!

To learn more or register, please visit SupportUMCF.org/golf26 or contact Maureen Stern, Director of Special Events, at mstern@umcommunities.org.



SAVE THE DATE FOR UNITED TOGETHER:

A CELEBRATION OF
EXCELLENCE



**Celebrating the people
who make our mission possible.**

This November, the UMC Foundation will host its sixth annual virtual presentation, themed *United Together: A Celebration of Excellence*, honoring the teammates who go above and beyond to make UMC so special.

Every day, these teammates bring our mission to life through compassionate care, meaningful connection, and encouragement that helps our residents live vibrant, abundant lives. Their dedication, kindness, and commitment are what make our communities more than places to live—they make them places to belong. With support from the program's Presenting Sponsor, Sodexo, A Celebration of Excellence gives us an opportunity to shine an organization-wide light on the people whose extraordinary efforts make that possible.

The 2026 celebration will be livestreamed on Saturday, November 14. Watch for more information about the event, including how you can participate, sponsor the celebration, and honor the remarkable people who make UMC special.

Learn more at SupportUMCF.org/celebration-of-excellence



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Stay
CONNECTED

SUPPORT

Make a gift in support of the UMC Foundation using the enclosed envelope or by visiting SupportUMCF.org.

SHARE

Have you or a loved one experienced life in one of our full-service communities or HomeWorks? Share your experience by leaving us a review at umcommunities.org/leave-a-review. Please note that Google reviews require a Gmail account.

FOLLOW

Follow us online for resident stories, mission moments, special events, and behind-the-scenes highlights and help us share the story of abundant life with others!

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UMC FOUNDATION

Abundant Life for Seniors

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Connected by Purpose
United by Impact

Don't Miss a Moment!
Connect Online!



DON'T MISS A MOMENT!

Purposeful Legacy Giving

It's never too late to change your plans. There are many ways to include the UMC Foundation in your legacy planning!

With so many options available for including us in your legacy planning, it can be overwhelming to know which asset to give. Tax ramifications are one of the best considerations when determining the most beneficial choices for you.

Depending on the kind of gift you give, it may be eligible for tax benefits or deductions from your estate taxes.

Consider:

- A bequest (in the form of property, stocks, cash, or a portion of your estate)
- Charitable Gift Annuity (CGA)
- Making a gift of life insurance
- Designate the Foundation as a beneficiary in your retirement fund
- Charitable Remainder Trust
- A Donor Advised Fund (DAF)

Giving By Check or Credit Card?

Visit **SupportUMCF.org** or scan the code to give online now.



Volunteer with UMC!

With our nine locations across New Jersey, there's bound to be a UM Community near you. Would you consider donating your time to bring a smile to the face of a senior? Whatever your interest, we can find a way to benefit our communities through your experience, expertise, and passion.

Scan the QR code to tell us how you're interested in helping out!



Mark Lenhard, *President & CEO of UMC and UMC Foundation*

Jim Roberts, *VP of UMC Foundation*
jroberts@umcommunities.org

Rebecca Roe, *Senior Director, UMC Foundation*
rroe@umcommunities.org

Gary Engelstad, *Senior Director, Giving*
engelstad@umcommunities.org

Maria Kane, *Foundation Office Coordinator*
mkane@umcommunities.org

Maureen Stern, *Director of Special Events*
mstern@umcommunities.org

Melanie Dixon, *Director of Major Gifts*
mdixon@umcommunities.org