



SFY 2019 Ujamaa Place Equity Direct Appropriation

Final Report

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Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development
Employment and Training Programs Division

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Background and Direct Appropriation

Ujamaa Place is an organization focused on eliminating barriers facing young African-American men in St. Paul, most of whom suffer multiple obstacles to obtaining stability. These barriers include:

- Lack of adequate education;
- Unemployment and/or unemployable;
- Gang affiliation;
- Criminal history;
- Homelessness;
- Drug use; and
- Societal marginalization

Ujamaa Place addresses an issue identified throughout the country, i.e. the systematic, cultural, and political under-utilization of African-American men, particularly in the area of gainful employment. While overall unemployment has dropped in Minnesota, this has not been the case for African-American men, especially for the population served at Ujamaa Place.

The 2017 Minnesota Legislature ([Laws of Minnesota, 2017, Chapter 94, Article 1, Section 2, Subdivision \(u\)](#)) appropriated \$600,000 for both SFY 2018 and SFY 2019 to Ujamaa Place. This report concerns the activities and outcomes from SFY2019, a period from October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019. The funds were allocated to develop programs in seven areas: housing, education, employment, behavioral health and wellness, cultural services, criminal justice advocacy, and support services (e.g. bus tokens, legal assistance, laundry, transportation, scholarships, stipends, etc.).

These programs are part of Ujamaa Place's overall system of serving the "Ujamaa Man," whose enrollment into "The Theory of Transformation" programming results in a "transformative empowering experience" of mentoring young African-American men on navigating inequality, poverty, and the criminal justice system. Each enrolled participant has an individual transformational plan designed to meet the stabilization needs of each man at time of enrollment. In accordance with legislation, the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) took \$30,000 (five percent) from the appropriation to cover administrative costs associated with the grant.

As a requirement of the appropriation, Ujamaa Place was to provide programs in the following areas:

- Job training;
- Employment preparation;
- Internships;
- Education;
- Training in the construction trades;
- Housing; and
- Organizational capacity building.

Summary of Goals and Objectives Presented in the Work Plan

The funding supports Ujamaa Place's Theory of Transformation program. This component, delivered within a community environment, assists young black men with almost no income or job training to develop employment capability and life skills essential for self-sufficiency and life stability. The program has a clear focus on work-entry programming, specific skills training, employment retention, and personal financial management. Most of the participants involved in Ujamaa Place were incarcerated for five years or more.

The Theory of Transformation has five major outcomes:

- Stable housing situation;
- Increased educational attainment;
- Securing/retaining employment;
- Connection with family/children; and
- Eliminating contact with the criminal justice system.

Ujamaa Place recognizes there are systemic barriers along the journey of stabilization for Ujamaa men including:

- Repeated chronic bouts of homelessness;
- Unemployment;
- Low wages;
- Trauma-related illnesses within the family that trigger a negative effect on youth, many of which result in criminal justice involvement; and
- Areas of Concentrated Poverty that are a major societal health concern.

Ujamaa Place provides job training classes preparing participants, most of whom have never held a full-time job or have been disconnected from the job market for a considerable period to enter the workforce. These interactive classes allow participants to learn best practices in filling out job applications, building resumes, and answering questions from potential employers about their criminal past. In addition, the classes help participants obtain all necessary work documents.

Ujamaa Place offers employment certification classes to Ujamaa men at no charge. These classes help the men gain critical skills that create pathways preparing the men for living wage employment opportunities. Currently, the certification training programs consist of:

- Construction;
- Automotive;
- Ujamaanomics (Cultural Financial Literacy);
- Film Club; and
- Career IQ (Ujamaa Place's proprietary job training and development program):
 - Coding and mobile app development
 - Employment development training

Ujamaa Place partners that have given Ujamaa men a second chance are:

- CareerForce
- Better Futures
- MN Voice
- White Bear Lake Superstore
- Asia Peso Security
- MN State Fair
- Employment Partners (sample)
 - Neighborhood Development Center;
 - St. Paul College;
 - J.L. Griffis Twin Cities Schools;
 - Bob and Steve’s Auto World;
 - Abra Auto;
 - Anagram International;
 - Pearson’s Candies

The enthusiastically received Construction Trade program was developed by an individual who has had a long career in the construction trades. This individual spent 40 years in the trades and was the former Dean of Construction at a local technical college. Upon completion of this program, students are NCCER certified with 152 hours of completion in construction training and are qualified for hire as construction laborers in the industry category of their choice.

Ujamaa Place developed housing relationships with Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative, St. Paul Housing Authority, Project for Pride in Living (helped Ujamaa Place secure additional section 8 housing vouchers), Community Stabilization Project and Union Gospel Mission. Other stable housing partners include: CommonBond Communities, D.E. Lewis Properties, Emerge, and People, Inc. Ujamaa Place provides security deposits, monthly rent, and application fees while providing basic household items including furniture and bedding, U-Haul rentals, and move in expenses. In 2018, Ujamaa Place successfully housed 60 men in either shelter (12), transitional or short- and long-term supportive housing (41), or permanent supportive housing (7).

Most Ujamaa participants lack a high school diploma and have only a minimum education. Obtaining a GED provides a path to high school equivalency credentials for individuals who did not earn a traditional high school diploma and needed a second chance in order to get a job. Ujamaa partners with the Ronald M. Hubbs Center for Lifelong Learning to work with program participants on an ongoing basis to meet their educational goals.

Ujamaa Place anticipates growing as a catalyst for change. It intends to become a mechanism for serving societal needs and a solution for a long-term community problem. Ujamaa Place is increasing its organizational capacity to enhance its effectiveness and program quality in response to serving African-American men surrounded by multiple racial disparities.

Data Elements and Performance Indicators Being Collected and Reported

Ujamaa Place submits data to DEED, on a quarterly basis, to document the demographics of participants served, services provided, and outcomes achieved.

Outcomes to Date - SFY 2019

The grant period for SFY 2019 funds ran from October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019. The participant data for this period follows in the table below.

Demographic Characteristic	Number
Total participants served	1,067
Male	1,067
Female	0
AGE	
Age 14-15	0
Age 16-17	0
Age 18-20	76
Age 21-22	116
Age 23-24	187
Age 25-30	688
RACE/ETHNICITY	
Hispanic/Latino	0
American Indian/Alaskan Native	4
Asian/Pacific Islander	0
Black/African American	954
White	2
Multi-Racial	107
EDUCATION	
8 th grade and under	17
9 th grade – 12 th grade	221
High school graduate/equivalent	420
GED	82
Post-Secondary education	23
Some College	294
Unknown	10
CHALLENGES	
High School Dropout	221
Youth from families receiving public assistance	205
Foster Youth	235
Youth with a disability	179
Youth offender	219
Pregnant or parenting youth	492
Basic Skills deficient	1,067
Homeless or runaway youth	496
Not employed at program enrollment	772
Veteran	5
Program Services, Activities, and Other Related Assistance	Number
Received education or job training activities	278

Demographic Characteristic	Number
Received work experience activities	121
Received community involvement and leadership development activities	130
Received post-secondary exploration, career guidance and planning activities	151
Received mentoring activities	867
Received support services	867
Indicators of Performance	Number
Attained work readiness/education goals	157
Received academic or service-learning credit	31
Obtained high school diploma/GED/Remained in school/credential/ returned to school	1
Entered post-secondary education/vocational-occupational skills/apprenticeship/military/job search/employment	3

Expenditure Data – SFY 2019

Ujamaa Place expended the SFY 2019 allocation as follows:

Budget Category	Amount
Administrative Costs (up to 10% allowed)	\$57,000
Contracted Services (construction training)	\$30,000
Participant Wages and Fringe Benefits	\$50,000
Direct Services to Participants	\$285,000
Support Services	\$148,000
Total	\$570,000

Future Allocations

Ujamaa Place received an appropriation of \$500,000 in SFY2020 and SFY2021 (\$475,000 after DEED administrative allowance removed).