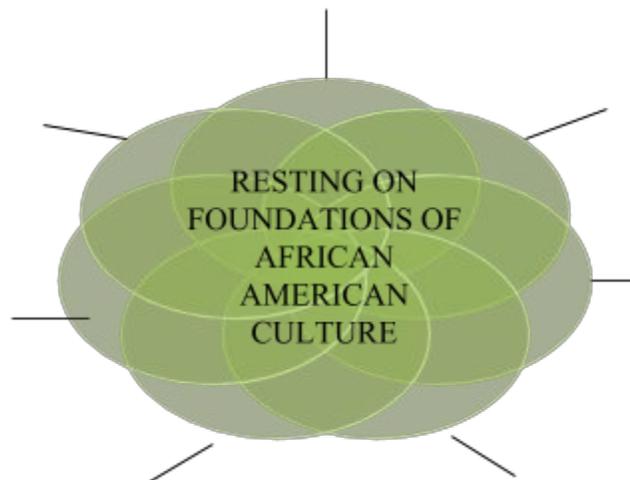


Core Program:

Ujamaa Place serves a very specific role in the social service continuum – to work with young African American who lack a GED or are currently testing at a 4th grade level educationally, and/or are homeless, have mental health issues, chemical health issues, etc. These are the young men in the Ujamaa community. Common characteristics include:

- Have experienced a lifetime of abuse and being treated stereotypically;
- Grew up without a father figure, or their only adult male relationships were abusive;
- Distrustful – they feel isolated, alone, and unsupported;
- Have experienced or witnessed violence that has created emotional trauma;
- Experience shame, guilt, and blame others –emotional repertoire is anger pervasive;
- Lack of hope – want a better future, but unable to envision it;
- Poor analytical and critical thinking skills – highly reactive behavior;
- Responsibility and accountability are lacking – leading to a history of failure;
- Lack of necessary resources and access to resources; and
- Chronic unemployment and job problems.

To effectively work with his population, Ujamaa Place has developed an integrated approach leveraging a network of partners. The model utilizes customized one-to-one, holistic, Individual Development Plans to inspire personal growth through education and knowledge-building. Below is a graphic developed by a General Mill GoodWorks marketing team to demonstrate the comprehensive approach that makes Ujamaa Place unique (this is also highlighted in a memorandum from Wilder Research that is included in the appendices).



Members of the Ujamaa Place community move through three stages – from entry to graduation, and are encouraged to remain involved as alumni after graduation. Length of

time in the program ranges from four to twenty-four months depending on their needs at enrollment. In order to officially enroll at Ujamaa Place, a participant must:

- 1) Attend an information session. Ujamaa Place offers information sessions every Monday to provide an overview of the program experience, and answer questions potential participants may have.
- 2) Complete and submit an entry packet.
- 3) Complete the Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE).
- 4) Undergo an in-depth entry interview with an Ujamaa Coach to identify and fully understand the participant's needs and if they are ready for all the program will require.

Once enrolled in the program, participants work with their assigned Coach to begin Empowerment and Life Skills classes and start working towards achieving their GED. Also, they work with their Coach to identify other barriers to their success, such as mental health, chemical health, housing, probation criteria, etc. in order to create a customized plan that will lead to graduating from Ujamaa and moving towards developing a life and career path. In order to graduate, the Individual Development Plan needs to lead the participant to achieve five program outcomes:

- 1) Stable housing.
- 2) Increased educational attainment as set in the entry process (e.g. acquire GED or pursue post-secondary options).
- 3) Consistent employment earning at least minimum wage.
- 4) Financial and emotional connection to family and children.
- 5) No criminal activity or gang involvement.

To remain active¹ in the program, participants must be making progress towards these five goals and meet the following benchmarks:

- 1) Working towards graduation and personal goals, on-site at Ujamaa Place, a minimum of 20 hours per week.
- 2) Time spent at Ujamaa Place must be focused on classroom work for academic, life skills, empowerment, employment, and other topics identified by Ujamaa Place.
- 3) Meet with personal Coach a minimum of once per week.
- 4) Complete, review, and update one's Individual Development Plan on a monthly basis.
- 5) Actively engage and participate in the Ujamaa Community of Men, e.g. during lunch and group activities.

Resting on a foundation of African American culture and heritage, and embracing spirituality as a building block for a whole person, Ujamaa Place works in partnership with a great

¹ *Participant Status Definition* is attached to describe how Ujamaa defines the status of men in the program

number of non-profit, for-profit, and government partners, to address each of the following components of the Ujamaa program/curriculum:

Education: a common theme at Ujamaa Place is personal growth through education in order to build knowledge. An important element of this theme is traditional education and moving Ujamaa participants towards achieving education benchmarks necessary for career development.

As noted previously, when a participant enters the program he takes the Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE) to determine his practical level of education in reading, writing, and math. This score then determines the education goal for the participant's Individual Development Plan in order to graduate. The baseline goal is to secure a GED, but with a TABE score commonly in the 4th/5th grade range for Ujamaa participants, receiving a GED within a year is very difficult; 18 – 24 months is a more realistic timeframe for these men. As such, program participants have a goal to pass the five GED test components, but may have interim benchmark goals to mark progress along the way.

Ujamaa partners with the Ronald M. Hubbs Center for Lifelong Learning. They pay for one of their Adult Basic Education (ABE) teachers to work out of the Ujamaa Place offices. Hubb's Center has recognized that Ujamaa men are not ready for the standard GED classes and need the additional support and programing provided at Ujamaa Place to ensure completion of the GED.

Life Skills: Ujamaa participants receive life skills training on a daily basis at Ujamaa, from intentional classroom based group discussions, to impromptu lessons offered by Ujamaa staff in the normal interactions of the day. Topics include:

- Financial literacy and money management (offered twice-monthly by a volunteer financial advisor from Mairs & Power)
- Parenting (partnership with The Father Project program at Goodwill EasterSeals)
- Personal and professional relationship management
- Communication
- Child support
- Medical, dental and mental health issues
- Connecting with community resources
- Skills required for positive relationships with women and children.
- Personal and household hygiene
- Nutrition (class provided by University of Minnesota Department of Nutrition)
- Tenants training

One special feature of the Ujamaa program is the daily lunch where the men eat together, build community and talk about what's going on in the world and in their lives. These conversations often provide opportunities for staff to highlight situations that are taught in

the classroom. This is also a forum Ujamaa uses to bring in African American leaders from throughout the Twin Cities (like Justice Alan Page) to tell their stories and talk with the men in the program. At Ujamaa Place, these are called “hours of power” and happen at least once a week.

Empowerment: Upon entering the Ujamaa program, empowerment skills training commences immediately and is at the core of Ujamaa’s philosophy for success. It is here that the men undergo a cognitive restructuring process where they learn to think differently about themselves first. Change from the inside – out is essential for permanent transformation. Topics discussed in empowerment class include:

- Core values
- Core beliefs
- Identity vs. self
- Historical context of how people have been disempowered
- Attitudes
- Change – need for change
- Overcoming procrastination
- Core hurts
- Accountability/responsibility vs. blaming
- Self - control

Ujamaa Place partners with Twin Cities RISE! In providing basic training for Ujamaa Empowerment instructors to offer classes on a regular basis for program participants. Ujamaa Place has modified the material to meet the unique needs of Ujamaa participants

Basic Needs: young men in the Ujamaa Place program have had their basic needs neglected for most of their lives. Without basic needs being met, real change cannot take place. To facilitate success and a greater connection to the program, Ujamaa Place helps fulfill basic needs such as:

- Transportation – Ujamaa provides bus tokens/passes as well as a group of volunteers and staff who assist with rides to medical appointments, job interviews, etc.
- Meals (daily light breakfast and full lunch on-site via a partnership with RS Eden).
- Clothing (basic and interview clothing provided in part via a partnership with Goodwill Easter Seals).
- Access to necessary health care services, including a developing relationship with Imani Child and Family Services for culturally specific mental health needs.
- A safe and welcoming environment to socialize, develop positive relationships with other men, and begin to develop a connection to the community.

Housing: A majority of the men in the program come to Ujamaa experiencing some level of homelessness. This is an immediate barrier as successful outcomes for Ujamaa’s program participants depend upon a stable, permanent place to call home. In order to facilitate the transformation and development of its clients, Ujamaa Place has developed community housing partnerships with Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative, Project for Pride in Living, and Union Gospel Mission.

The partnership with Beacon is located at 545 Snelling Avenue in St. Paul at their Kimball Court single resident occupancy (SRO) location., and offers the opportunity to place Ujamaa participants in units for a cost of only \$350 per month. Ujamaa Place subsidizes the first four months of rent, and then gradually transitions the rent responsibility to the program participant.

The relationship with Project for Pride in Living (PPL) was recently launched with 12 housing units at 716 Selby Avenue in Saint Paul. PPL owns and manages the building and Ujamaa provides the tenants and support services. This project has been embraced by six local church congregations in providing in-kind and volunteer support for the site and the residents.

Job Training and Employment: The vast majority of Ujamaa’s clients arrive at the program with a chronic history of unemployment and underemployment. Many also have some kind of criminal record, which essentially precludes them from a large amount of available job opportunities. Yet, having a job brings an individual a sense of purpose,

self-worth and most importantly the mental security of a steady income – all essential elements of a successful transformation.

To facilitate employment opportunities, Ujamaa has established an Internship/Employment Fund to connect program participants to gainful employment through the implementation of internships paid for by Ujamaa. Because Ujamaa employs these interns directly, the organization and its clients are not at the mercy of the prevailing job market, and are more attractive to local businesses as their risk is greatly reduced. Lifetrack Resources and Rebuild Resources are two non-profit agencies participating in the program.

The men in the program receive \$8/hr. for between 10 and 20 hours per week. The employment experience is in addition to the 20+ hours the men spend participating in the Ujamaa Place program. Each young man in the program is eligible for up to four months of a paid internship.

In addition to these activities, Ujamaa Place is developing a partnership with YWCA St. Paul to place Ujamaa graduates in regular employment after completing intensive job readiness training and an Ujamaa internship. The YWCA will certify the Ujamaa participants “readiness for work” utilizing their seven job readiness indicators, and then actively assist in finding long-term employment for the participant. The YWCA staff will then work with Ujamaa staff to provide follow-up support for the first year.

Family: Ujamaa’s truest impact will be measured by its ability to build a community of men that positively effects the next generation of African American families in St. Paul. To stop cycles of failure, Ujamaa men cannot just transform themselves, but that transformation needs to touch the lives of their families emotionally and financially via child support, providing a home, becoming a role model, engaging in healthy relationships, etc. Ujamaa partners with the Goodwill-Easter Seals FATHER Project for classes to help Ujamaa participants learn how to engage with their children emotionally and support them economically. When this is achieved, the transformation can change the life paths of their children, the mothers of their children, their wives, and beyond – breaking the cycle of poverty two generations at a time.