



Educator Guide

**Urban Leaders
Urban Teaching Cohort
Office of Community Engagement & Service**

Introduction

The purpose of this Urban Plunge Educator Guide is to provide student leaders, graduate assistants, or staff members with the knowledge and resources necessary to successfully plan and implement an Urban Plunge.

When planning an Urban Plunge, you will need to consider the following essential components:

- Service Experience(s)
- Community Journey
- Community Voices
- Reflection
- Lunch on Food Stamps Activity
- Meals (Friday Dinner, Saturday Breakfast)
- Overnight Stay
- Transportation

Additionally, I have included information on Recruitment and Marketing, Budget and Accounting, Communication with Students, and Sample Itineraries from past Urban Plunges.

Each section contains information on the specified topic as well as resources for your use such as forms, sample emails, contact information, etc. In addition to having this information in hard copy form, there is an accompanying USB that has this guide and the resources in electronic form – this will allow for continuous updating of the guide and also easier access and use of resources.

If you have questions, please contact:

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Service Experiences

The service experience is one of the core aspects of the Urban Plunge. Some plunges have involved two service experiences, while others have only had one. Service experiences should be guided by the principle of mutually beneficial relationships, meaning that the experience should meet an authentic community need and be meaningful for the students.

Scheduling Service Experiences

A contact list of community partners is included in this section (and available in the Resources folder on the accompanying USB).

Keep in mind that these are the partners we have worked with in the past – if you are interested in working with other partners or are unable to schedule a service experience with the partners listed, contact the Office of Community Engagement and Service at slcgroup@muohio.edu or 513-529-2961. The Office of Community Engagement and Service partners with many agencies in Hamilton, Middletown, and Cincinnati that are not in the contact list, such as Serve City's Chosen Food Pantry (Hamilton), Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless (Over-the-Rhine), and Abilities First (Middletown). You can also learn more about their volunteer opportunities by visiting their website: www.muohio.edu/servicelearning.

When contacting a community partner, you should frame the email as a request to meet an authentic community need. While I provided examples of past service projects in the contact information, this was primarily for your information – the needs of the partner may change over time or even from weekend to weekend.

It is highly recommended that you contact the community partner to schedule a service experience with as much advance notice as possible. This is due in part to the very busy and understaffed nature of many community agencies. Additionally, some partners (like Over-the-Rhine Community Housing) have limited volunteer slots that fill up quickly.

It is also important to provide them with as much detail as possible (e.g., dates and times, size of group, etc.). While service experiences are typically scheduled for Saturday morning, we have also scheduled them for Friday afternoon and Saturday afternoon – the date/time should accommodate the needs of the partner first and foremost. See the Sample Itineraries for more information on the various ways the service experience can be structured.

A sample email to community partners is included in this section (and available in the Resources folder on the accompanying USB).

Contacting Partners the Week of the Urban Plunge

It is recommended that you email or call the community partner the week of the plunge. This should just be a brief email or phone call. The main purpose is to update the partner on the number of students coming and also double check if our students will need to bring anything (e.g., comfortable shoes, clothes they can paint in, etc.). This is also a great way to confirm the day and time of the scheduled service.

A sample email is included in this section (and available in the Resources folder on the accompanying USB).

Thanking the Partners After the Urban Plunge

It is very important to thank you community partners the week following the plunge – after all, we could not have a successful Urban Plunge without them! I highly recommend using Thank You cards but an email will also suffice.

A sample email is included in this section (and available in the Resources folder on the accompanying USB).

In This Section:

- Contact Information for Community Partners
- Sample Emails to Community Partners

Community Journey

A community journey allows the students to become more familiar with the community, including its history, assets, people, and current challenges or struggles. A community journey is essentially a “tour” of the community, though we avoid using this language because we do not want to encourage the idea of students as “tourists.” The community journeys have varied greatly depending on the location.

For Urban Plunges in Over-the-Rhine, the staff at Peaslee have led community journeys. This costs ~\$150. The community journey typically lasts 1.5 hours and is the first activity students engage in while in Over-the-Rhine. Vehicles are not required, as Over-the-Rhine is only approximately one square mile and easy to walk. To set up a Community Journey, contact Jenn Sommers at volunteer@peasleecenter.org or (513)-621-5514. If Jenn is unavailable for any reason, you can also contact Bonnie Neumeier at bonsunflower@gmail.com.

For Urban Plunges in Middletown, we have had the students ride the City Bus. It is highly encouraged that a student, teacher, or community member from Middletown assists in leading the community journey. (In the past we had a UTC student from Middletown, Morgan Chapman, guide us.) An honorarium of at least \$50 should be provided to compensate them for their time. Bus fare is \$1.25 per person and can be paid on the bus. In order to be reimbursed for bus fare, you must ensure all students fill out and sign the Bus Fare form. A sample bus fare form is included in this section (and available in the Resources folder on the accompanying USB). In the past, we rode on the Gold bus route, though different routes will show different aspects of Middletown. It is recommended that you consult with the community member assisting you on which bus route would be best. The bus routes, stops, and times are included in this section (and available in the Resources folder on the accompanying USB).

For Urban Plunge in Hamilton, two Miami students and lifetime residents of Hamilton – Lance Samples and Stefan Samples – provided us with a community journey around the second ward of Hamilton (which is where the Booker T. Washington Community Center is located.)

Lance Samples

Email: samplelf@muohio.edu

Address: 201 East Chestnut Street, Oxford, OH 45056 #310

Phone: 513-344-3074

Stefan Samples

Email: samples@muohio.edu

Address: 336 Wilks Lane, Hamilton, OH 45011

Phone: 513-328-1081

If Lance Samples and/or Stefan Samples are not available, I recommend contacting Regina Johnson-Phillips (occchope@aol.com) to ask for other potential community journey leaders. An honorarium of at least \$50 should be provided to compensate them for their time.

The community journey in Hamilton was primarily walking, but we did use cars at some points. Ideally, Lance and Stefan could ride in the university vehicle with the students on the plunge. If two vehicles are needed, you can connect the cars via speakerphone on someone’s cell phone.

In This Section:

- Bus Fare Form
- City of Middletown Bus Routes – Gold, Red, Blue, Green
- City of Middletown Bus Stops and Times

Community Voices

One of the most important aspects of the Community Plunge is for students to interact with community members and hear their stories. Community voices may be heard or represented in a variety of ways.

In Over-the-Rhine, Urban Plunges have included people from the Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless' "Voices of Homeless" Speaker's Bureau. The "Voice of the Homeless" Speaker's Bureau is made up of homeless and formerly homeless individuals who are available to share their experiences. Often, a Coalition staff member will accompany the speaker. The staff member discusses factual information on the homeless crisis in our community and beyond, while the speaker's story helps to personalize the issue. To set up a visit from the Speaker's Bureau, contact Jeni Jenkins, Education Coordinator, at 513-421-7803 ext. 14 or visionforchange@gmail.com. GCCH will provide transportation for the speaker, but ask that groups provide a small stipend of \$65, \$40 of which will go to the speaker, with the rest covering transportation costs. (This cost is per speaker.) You can also email the Event Request form to Jeni, which is included in this section (and available in the Resources folder on the accompanying USB). *If you do include people from the GCCH's Speaker Bureau, encourage the students bring \$1 - \$2 in cash in case the speaker(s) offer a Streetvibes paper to them. This is not required but recommended. Streetvibes Vendors are often low-income, formerly homeless people who are seeking to supplement their income. They purchase issues of Streetvibes from the GCCH for \$0.25 and sell it for \$1, and they keep any profit they earn. Most Speaker's Bureau members are also Streetvibes vendors.

In Middletown, Urban Plunges have included various community leaders, coordinated by long-time resident and EDL doctoral student Celeste R. Davis. The group included city planners, city officials, non-profit directors, long-time residents, etc. To request assistance in coordinating this group, contact Celeste at celestediddav@sbcglobal.net or CELL PHONE???

In Hamilton, Urban Plunges have included people from the Speaker's Bureau at Serve City. Serve City is a non-profit homeless shelter and food pantry. While they do not have an official speaker's bureau, they have spoken to Miami students several times in the past. To coordinate this, contact Linda Kimble, Executive Director, at linda@servecitychosen.org or (513)-737-9701. Serve City also has volunteer opportunities if scheduled in advance – see the Service Experiences section for more information.

All of the Urban Plunges have also included former or current Miami students who are community leaders. Hearing these community voices is a positive experience for many Miami students because they can relate to the former Miami students and it helps them envision possible ways they might join an urban community after they graduate.

Included below are past speakers and their contact information. As the UTC alumni base grows, more former students may be invited to speak. You can also contact Alumni Relations or local Miami Alumni Chapters to see if they could connect you with possible speakers.

Over-the-Rhine:

- Amy Silver (Former Miami Student, OTR Residency Program) – Social Worker, Over-the-Rhine Community Housing – CONTACT INFO?

Hamilton:

- Brittany Webb (Former UTC Student) – Youth Coordinator, Hamilton Living Water Ministry – b.webb@fuse.net.
- David Childs (Former Education Student) – Professor, Central State University – dchilds@centralstate.edu.

Middletown:

- Celeste R. Davis (Current EDL Doctoral Student) – Reverend at Local Church - celestediddav@sbcglobal.net.

In This Section:

- Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless Event Request Form
- Sample of Streetvibes Paper

Reflection

Insert Reflection information here.

Friday Dinner & Saturday Breakfast

Friday Dinner

Friday dinner is usually at a local restaurant. Given the group size, it is recommended you call ahead to reserve a table or, if they do not do reservations, inform the restaurant you are coming. You can ask Sharron Roberts to assist you with this aspect. Information on the restaurants we typically go to in Over-the-Rhine, Hamilton, and Middletown. Keep in mind that if you decide to go elsewhere, you will need to ensure there are multiple dietary options (vegetarian, gluten free, etc.). You can email the students to double check if anyone has special dietary needs.

Over-the-Rhine:

- In Over-the-Rhine, students eat dinner at Venice on Vine, a pizzeria that is dedicated to social change. Venice on Vine serves as an employment education program for people with limited employment experience, and teaches its staff basic skills such as customer service, answering phones, taking orders, waiting tables, preparing food, etc. They also work on personal development with their employees. Employees can study for their GED, receive help applying for jobs, or participate in workshops such as poetry writing. This prepares their staff to find gainful employment. Venice on Vine is a great way to show students how businesses can make a difference in the community so it is highly recommend that you speak to the students about what they do, even if only briefly.
- Venice on Vine offers a “Party Pack” that is a set price per person and includes pizza, salad, and cookies. This is the meal we typically order; they just need to know the number of students and the time you are coming for dinner.
- Address: 1301 Vine Street, Cincinnati, OH 45202
- Phone: (513) 221-7020
- *Note:* We typically invite the speakers from the GCCH to come to Venice on Vine. See the “Community Voices” section for more information.

Hamilton:

- In Hamilton, students eat dinner at Taqueria Paisano’s, a Mexican restaurant in the fourth ward.
- Address: 747 High Street, Hamilton, OH 45011
- Phone: (513) 895-5800

Middletown:

- In Middletown, students eat dinner at Marce’s Sabor, a Caribbean restaurant.
- Address: 1410 Yankee Road, Middletown, OH
- Phone: (513) 422-4593

Saturday Breakfast

Saturday breakfast is typically a light “a la carte” style breakfast that is purchased from Kroger or another grocery store before the Urban Plunge. Items typically purchased include:

- Bagels (1 – 2 Kinds) and Cream Cheese
- Fruit (Oranges, Bananas)
- Orange Juice
- Donuts

Lunch on Food Stamps Activity

The Lunch on Food Stamps Activity typically occurs on the second day of the Plunge, though it can take the place of other meals such as breakfast or dinner if needed.

Select a market that is within walking distance of a low-income neighborhood – for example, Findlay Market in Over-the-Rhine. You can also select corner markets or even gas station markets.

Explain to the students many people see food assistance programs as a “free lunch,” when in fact it is only meant to supplement other income. If you receive the maximum amount for food stamps, it actually breaks down to only about \$1.25 per meal. Provide each of the students with \$1.25 and tell them that they will need to purchase lunch using only this money. They are not permitted to use their own money if they have any.

You can also provide students with the “Facts and Figures” sheet for additional information.

Because you will be giving the students cash, be sure to fill out the Food Stamps Activity Form and have each student sign it in order for you to be reimbursed. A sample form is included in this section (and available in the Resources folder on the accompanying USB).

Budget and Accounting

Transportation

Sample Itineraries

Sample

Recruitment and Marketing

Recruitment