



## **In the Spirit of UJIMA, Inc**

### **Executive Summary**

In the Spirit of Ujima, Inc. means Collective Work and Responsibility is a principles in which, In the Spirit of UJIMA, Inc. was founded. In the Spirit of UJIMA, since September 10, 1992 has been tirelessly building an organization designed to uplift the hope and aspirations of a targeted at-risk male segment pulling together ways to instill brighter hope of future outcome for the youth we desire to serve, uplift, and challenge. Our goals for attaining sustainable results was done successfully through creating avenues for providing a conduit to empower the youth, as well as, empowering families to encourage their children to consistently, work hard by setting high personal and career goals. This document is only a snapshot explaining the humble beginnings of the Spirit being driven with passionate journey to aid and assist at-risk youth, as well as their communities with fun, wholesome, and informative family driven activities, providing cost effective events including but not limited to intervention, prevention and mentoring services through outreach and awareness programming. During the fall of 1991, two of Mansfield's Senior Alumni student athletes, Darrin Brooks and Ronald Holmes, were tragically killed in an automobile accident on their way back to Mount Vernon Nazarene College outside Mt. Vernon, Ohio. These student athletes were embarking on completing their senior year of college and were very dear to me and their families; loved by their college family, peers, and celebrated by the community who are presently still celebrating their memory through a youth scholarship tournament. In fact, I grew up with their brother, sister, uncles as well as being taught valuable lesson by their parents, uncle, and grandparents through many of my childhood adventures as a youth in Mansfield, Ohio.

The entire community was struck and distressed by the sudden unexplainable loss of two outstanding student athletes and these issues continue to dramatically impact neighborhoods worldwide. In response to the community's grief during the summer of 1992, In the Spirit of UJIMA, Inc began a memorial tribute known as the, "Labor Day Youth Stop the Violence, Brooks/Holmes Memorial Basketball Tournament". This was just the back drop to all the great things God would allow to develop through this tragic loss that would further impact my passion for pushing youth advocacy in the terrain of Mansfield, Ohio, as well as garnering statewide recognition for work in service to mentoring youth. We began to follow-up with the youth participants, as well as tutoring, mentoring, wrap around services and other complimentary services students needed in order to bridge to gap from completing high school to entering college.

The Spirit of UJIMA, Inc, was started with a personal investment of \$10,000 to establish the 501 C 3 nonprofit status; along with sponsoring teen dances, skating fellowship, educational field trips, and the basketball tournament. After the successful completion of these events and then the need developed for this type of organization was welcomed and gained support from community and civic leaders who began contributing to the Spirits of UJIMA youth services agenda. We were awarded grants from foundations, churches and direct sponsorships from corporations within the community. We established a great name for the organization in Mansfield, Ohio and throughout the area for providing enriching programs designed to serve all at-risk youth. In the Spirit of UJIMA, Inc went through some real trying times as funding for social intervention, prevention, and educational programs dwindled and the funding did not reach those earmarked to be served by this national initiative of "No Child Left Behind" where in fact

all the children were left behind due to services being eliminated because of a lack in funding for such programs.

We utilized our reserves and found it difficult to survive in the social service climate of Ohio. Consequently, In the Spirit of UJIMA, Inc was shelved as an entity that had run its course.

Therefore, looking to the hills from which comes my help, innately believing and trusting that I was summoned to Charlotte, NC. It wasn't apparent at first, but upon getting here, I was immediately hired with two youth service agency to provide character education and mentoring. Simply observing, I was granted the opportunity to hone in on my skill set, as well as enrolling back into college to complete my Master's degree with the intent to rebuild my talents and skills to go global.

After the completion of my MBA with an emphasis in International Business, I further searched inward looking to my inner self in addition to having deep conversations with God about ways to restart In the Spirit of UJIMA, Inc. I began to seek His leading; researching other program options, while having the desire to advocate and assist African American and Hispanic American males to improve their quality of life through sports, education, and entrepreneurial avenues; along with ways to engage this targeted segment to become productive gave way for In the Spirit of UJIMA, Inc. to begin for a second time. Moreover, as you are reading this testimony its clear focusing on providing a worthwhile program is my desire to give Him glory and honor through services to our youth. By helping this target group of at-risk males from diverse groups can appear far reaching and can be only accomplish through divine intervention to achieve such an extraordinary task.

In the Spirit of UJIMA, Inc is presently pressing to make an even greater impact to serve at-risk youth in Charlotte, North Carolina, metropolitan area. Only He knows where we go from here. In the Spirit of UJIMA, Inc has forge many outstanding partnerships that have been totally inspirational and impactful in garnering additional momentum that has ignited the spirit and passion to become proactive in raising the quality of life of the African and Hispanic American male youth we are elated to be serving.

We are circling back to many of the community partner that aligns with the two fold mission of In the Spirit of UJIMA, Inc. One is to provide an outreach mentoring and adopt the school program or create a charter school that impacts the all students, but targeting specifically the needs of male students. Our challenge will be to assist and attack the drop out rate of these students, as well as implementing prevention services designed to address character education, while building the self-esteem as we stress the importance of having a good quality education. The second reason is to launch a greater participation through recruitment of men to become active in the development of at-risk male youth whom are dropping out of school at a 57% rate. Our goal is to sign up, train, orientate, and foster men to get involve through mentoring as lunch buddies, tutors, life coaches, as well as group facilitators taking an active role in the lives of at-risk youth males who will greatly benefit from active involvement with a successful role model. This partnership initiative is timely and can transform social outreach, educational achievement, intervention, and mentoring through broader levels of development, growth, and enrichment.

It has been through a steadfast commitment along with faith to meet the challenge and belief that all things work together for the good of them who trust Him in seeking his divine direction to serve this most neglected group in today's time and history; our male youth? One ways of fostering inclusion and direct impact to this community need is by demonstrating a wide scope of partnership and involvement. Therefore, our formative efforts has been to bring an excellent group of expert good that are passionate and hardworking people with the professional skill essential to getting the task of building the skills that aligns with our goals and mission to aid and assist through advocacy to break the cycle of the high school dropout rate effecting our targeted male youth. These partnership will challenging and reward them by the benefits of mentoring, intervention, and outreach services for this problem has reached alarming proportions having equal devastation on the future of the young male youth.

We have and will continue to be transparent and forth coming in establishing partnership that can thrive by merging some of the services and community interest impacting the future outcome for many youth within the at-risk communities. It's with sincere belief and trusting by faith, men can be recruited, trained, oriented as well as fostering a brand of program services to engage them in becoming active role models in the lives of both African and Hispanic male youth. Without a doubt, the synergy and partnerships for this future assignment is desperately needed to generate hope, building self esteem, improving attitudes, and broaden respect for history, embracing a sense of belonging, making our world a better place than how we find it, must be our anthem as we declare and decree this will become the productive method for developing young men in this society in which we live.

Finally, I am Thomas H. Murphy, a certified High School CTE Business teacher. The Founder/CEO of In the spirit of UJIMA, Inc is relocating to Charlotte, NC from Mansfield, Ohio, with its own good standing 501 C 3, nonprofit status. I have a MBA with emphasis in International Business and Finance, and a BS in Criminal Justice and Political Science. I am a hard working servant bringing over 20 years of experience from nonprofit sector, criminal justice, educational services, outreach, advocacy, fundraising, relationship management and skills to the table. I have had the awesome pleasure of working with an outstanding group of people who have been rolling up their shirt sleeves to make these efforts happen. Our concentration has been in the formation of the executive board, and are registered as a foreign corporation vying to conduct business throughout the State of North Carolina and beyond as the Lord God further directs.