

Team:

When I think of the list of core values that I hold in such high regard here at UCP, collaboration is often the first that comes to mind. I think this is because it is in the spirit of collaboration that we make sure the individuals and families we serve benefit from a wide array of support, of knowledge, and of perspective. Which is what is key to accomplishing our mission each and every day.

One of our long-standing partnerships has been with the Jesuit Volunteer Corps (JVC), an international organization dedicated to 'building a just, inclusive, and equitable world.' UCP has worked with several young adults from JVC over the past decade, first teaming up with other agencies and then having the privilege to host a volunteer of our own. With a new volunteer each year, we have had many different talents brought to UCP – all who left the organization better than when they arrived – and all in their own way.

Some of you know Chris, our current Jesuit Volunteer. Chris is from New Jersey and came to UCP after graduating from Penn State. He has a strong connection with team members and individuals alike, and maintains focus on recreation, wellness, and community integration. Chris spends time adults served at the Wolstein Center. He works with Activities Coordinator, Lakesha Porch, assisting in community outings, volunteering, holding classes -- including a much-loved cooking class! He has helped to bring back the sports-focused podcast and is always there to talk about sports, current events or simply what is happening with an individual on a particular day. He enriches the lives of those we serve. Chris fit right in at UCP and there is mutual trust and respect between him and everyone he encounters.

When Chris is not at UCP, he lives with several roommates at a JVC house in Ohio City, where he loves to lift weights, play basketball, listen to music and cheer for the Eagles, Penn State and the 76ers! Chris says it has been 'heartwarming to build interpersonal relationships' at UCP and that it has been a blessing in his life to volunteer at such a wonderful non-profit. Once he moves onto the next stage in his life, not only will Chris cherish this time and remember it forever, but I know everyone he has come into contact with at UCP will cherish it as well. I know I am very grateful.

You may not have known that we have a new JVC each year – but you know that we are offering the best services out there; and that is the true value of collaboration.

My best to you all,

Beth