



Connection

THE UCD NEWSLETTER • WINTER 2019



UCD Celebrates 20 Years of Community Support by Giving Back to Local Civic Associations

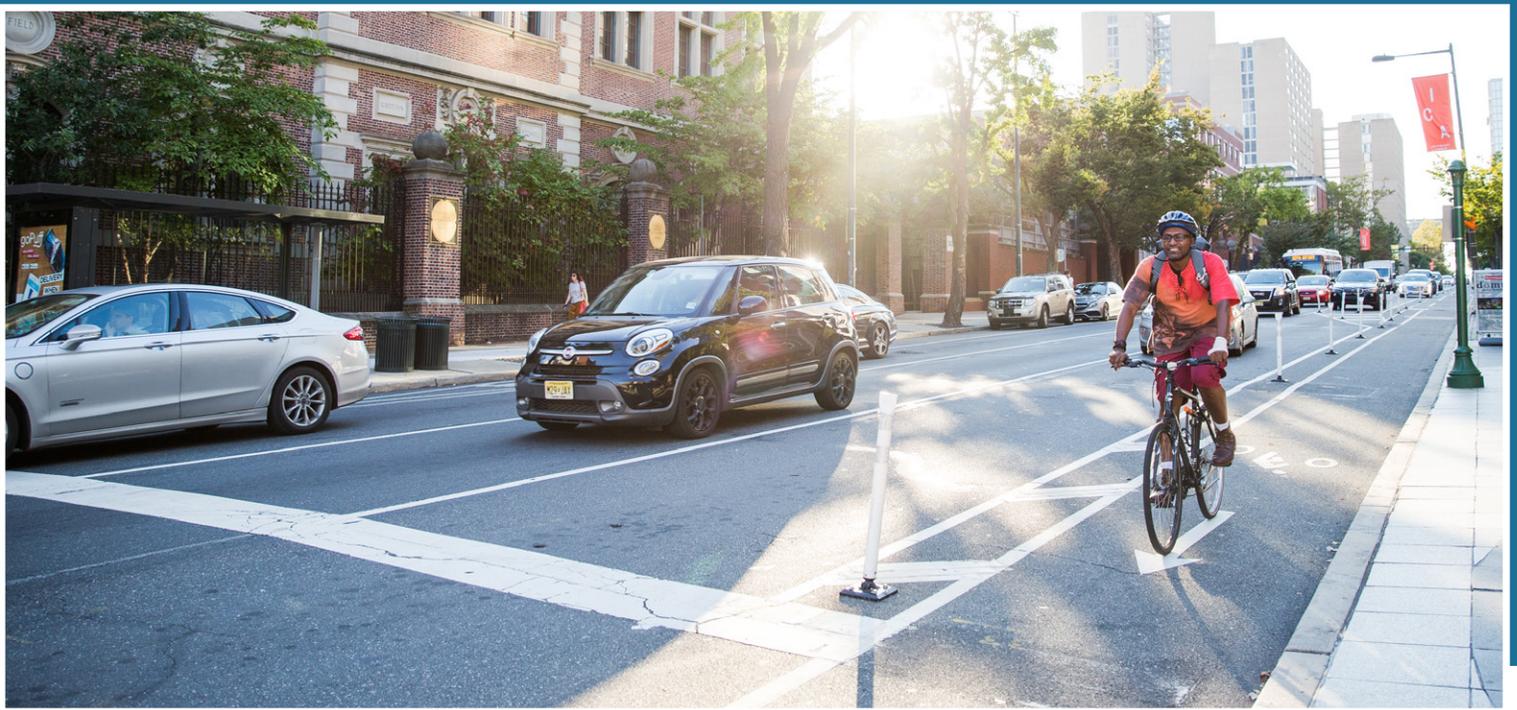
The support of local civic associations has been critical to UCD’s work since our formation in 1997. Early in our history, the civics served as a bridge between UCD and the neighborhoods they serve, helping to amplify our mission with the community. Our Board of Directors has always included one representative from each association, ensuring the needs of the community are given voice and priority within University City.

As part of our 20th anniversary celebration, we decided to show our deep appreciation for these organizations by developing a project with each of the five civic groups on our board. We worked with the leadership from each association to plan and deliver projects they felt would benefit their specific neighborhoods. After a year of planning and coordination, we’re excited to share the final results of each project. *(Continued on page 4)*

Trolley Portal Gardens Opens After Years of Planning and Partnership

Through a unique public-private partnership with SEPTA, the City of Philadelphia, and neighborhood stakeholders, UCD raised \$2.1 million to transform the 40th Street Trolley Portal, the busiest at-grade rail station in the city. After years of fundraising, planning, and construction, we cut the ribbon on the beautiful new space on September 27th. Hundreds of partners, friends, and neighbors joined us to celebrate the completion of the project, explore the new space, and enjoy food and drinks from Trolley Car Station, the restaurant located at the site.

Guests heard from our featured speakers including Mayor Jim Kenney, Representative Jim Roebuck, Councilwoman Jannie Blackwell, PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources’ Deputy Secretary Lauren Imgrund, SEPTA General Manager Jeffrey Kneuppel, Trolley Car Station Owner Ken Weinstein, University of Pennsylvania’s Executive Vice President Craig Carnaroli, William Penn Foundation’s Executive Director Shawn McCaney, and PIDC’s President and CEO John Grady. *(Continued on page 6)*

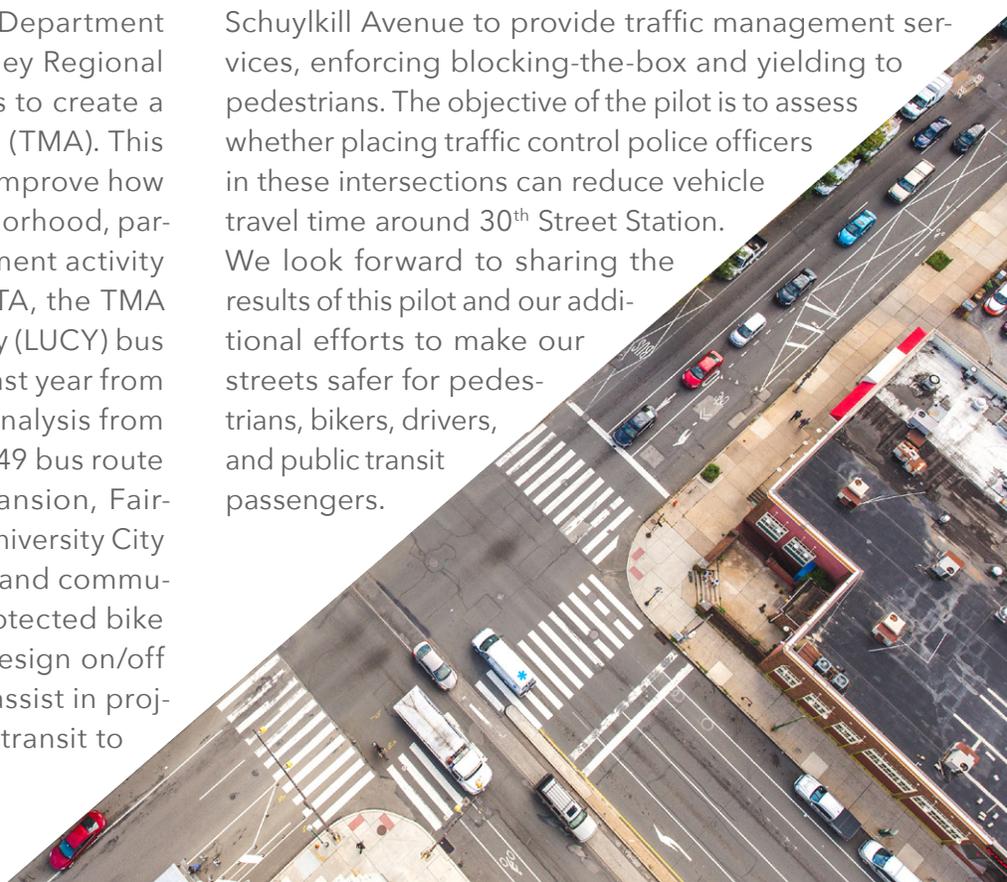


UCD Ramps Up Transportation Planning Efforts

Over the past year, UCD has expanded its role in addressing the transportation issues that face our neighborhood. We already work with partners to address bike and pedestrian safety, traffic congestion, transit routing, and more, but this year we made efforts to formalize and advance this work in conjunction with city and state agencies.

Over the course of the past year, UCD, major institutions, developers, the City, Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, and the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission have joined forces to create a Transportation Management Association (TMA). This association opens new opportunities to improve how people and goods get around our neighborhood, particularly as both residential and employment activity grows in the district. Together with SEPTA, the TMA operates the Loop through University City (LUCY) bus that carried nearly 700,000 passengers last year from 30th Street Station to nearby jobs. Data analysis from the TMA helped SEPTA develop the new 49 bus route connecting residents of Strawberry Mansion, Fairmount, Grays Ferry and Brewerytown to University City and its over 80,000 jobs. The City, TMA, and community groups worked closely to bring a protected bike lane to Chestnut Street, and helped redesign on/off ramps to I-76. The TMA will continue to assist in projects aimed at improving every mode of transit to benefit both residents and commuters.

Additionally, we recently partnered with the City of Philadelphia and Drexel University to develop a pilot program that addresses congestion issues at 30th Street Station through improved traffic management. A component of the City's CONNECT Transportation Plan, this effort will help Philadelphia reach its goals of improving traffic safety and managing congestion. The Traffic Division of the Philadelphia Police Department deployed officers at 30th and Market Streets as well as Market Street and Schuylkill Avenue to provide traffic management services, enforcing blocking-the-box and yielding to pedestrians. The objective of the pilot is to assess whether placing traffic control police officers in these intersections can reduce vehicle travel time around 30th Street Station. We look forward to sharing the results of this pilot and our additional efforts to make our streets safer for pedestrians, bikers, drivers, and public transit passengers.



UCD AND COMMUNITY LEADERS HELP SAVE LOCAL CHURCH FROM WRECKING BALL



The Hickman Temple AME congregation hadn't been able to hold services in their historic church at 5001 Baltimore Avenue since April 2017. But all that changed on Sunday, September 2nd, thanks to assistance from UCD's Project Rehab and a very engaged community. Project Rehab, which usually focuses on guiding residential property owners through the process of restoring distressed real estate, answered a call for help from Hickman Temple.

After a particularly cold and snowy winter in 2016/17, the façade of the church facing 50th Street separated 9 inches from the main portion of the building. This beautiful 120-year-old church was proving dangerous to those who wished to worship inside as well as people walking outside along the building's perimeter. After Philadelphia's Department of Licenses and Inspections (L&I) ordered the congregation to cease using the sanctuary until repairs were made, the situation seemed dire and demolition likely.

In stepped Project Rehab's Ryan Spak, local architect Kathy Dowdell, and the local civic association Cedar Park Neighbors. The team devised a plan that included working directly with L&I, helping to raise funds, developing engineering reports, erecting temporary fencing and structural support, temporarily relocating the congregation to other places of worship in the community, and finding contractors. AME Pastor Gregory Nelson led a fundraising effort to collect \$75,000 from the congregation, neighbors, and local businesses to pay for temporary repairs which allowed the building to reopen in early September for its first service in over a year.

When the congregation returned to its historic home, the members recognized and honored Spak, Dowdell, and Cedar Park Neighbors' President David Hinchler for their assistance in helping to preserve the church. Although the church is reopened, more work will be needed to ensure the building's stability going forward. For now, UCD is proud to have played a role in maintaining the historic fabric of the community and supporting a neighborhood anchor in need.



Photo courtesy of Rachel Wisniewski for WHY News PlanPhilly

UCD Celebrates 20 Years *(continued from the cover)*



Cedar Park Neighbors: *Historical Window Display*

Cedar Park Neighbors (CPN), the non-partisan civic association established in 1960, works to foster collaboration among everyone living and working in the Cedar Park neighborhood, promote community development, provide a forum for communication and community education, respond to neighborhood concerns, and advocate for and promote the general welfare of the Cedar Park community. CPN members had long sought to highlight the rich and colorful history of their neighborhood through a historic window display, and UCD was thrilled to make that vision a reality. “The window display was conceived to communicate the mission, history, and ongoing activities of Cedar Park Neighbors,

as well as provide historical information about the neighborhood,” explained CPN member Maureen Tate. “The project also aimed to make good use of a previously covered retail window space to support revitalization efforts along the Baltimore Avenue commercial corridor.” UCD worked with CPN members to compile historic photos, news clippings, and an in-depth feature on the history of the neighborhood written by CPN member Amara Rockar, and then created an eye-catching display in the window of 4928 Baltimore Avenue. Stop by to see photos and details about this diverse neighborhood, as well as timely updates on CPN programming.

Garden Court Community Association: *Parklet*



For over 50 years, the Garden Court Community Association (GCCA) has provided their neighbors the opportunity to come together as a positive force for the community and the city at large. Through events, advocacy, and community service, they are building a community open to all. To advance this goal, UCD collaborated with a broad group of GCCA leaders to

install one of our outdoor seating platforms, known as Parklets, outside the Pine Street Laundromat on the 4700 block of Pine Street. Although that location is one of the densest in Garden Court, there was a lack of green space or public seating. UCD was excited by the location because it was our first Parklet placed outside of a business that didn't offer food or drink, and we were curious to observe how people would use the space. At GCCA's suggestion, we added chess/checkerboard patterns to some of the tabletops to spur further usage, and purchased game sets that people could take out of the laundromat. According to GCCA member Kate Farquhar, the Parklet “allows laundromat customers to keep an eye on their laundry through the front windows, while enjoying the weather outside.” While the Parklets are taken down over the winter months, it will return to this wonderful location in the spring.

Powelton Village Civic Association: *Historical Markers*

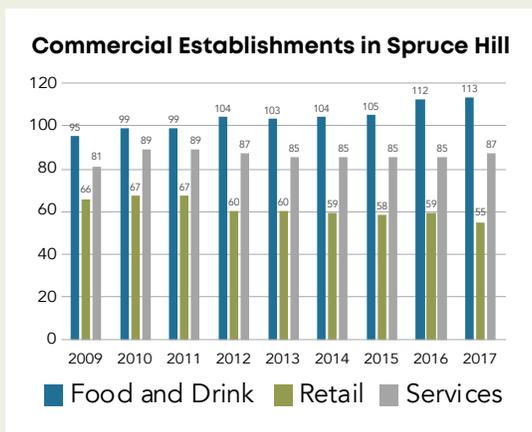
The leaders of Powelton Village Civic Association – a volunteer organization of residents dedicated to making Powelton Village a better place to live and work – sought to highlight the fascinating history of their 150-year-old neighborhood. As one of the original streetcar suburbs of Philadelphia, this National Historic District evolved from a neighborhood of private estates to a residential community in the 1850s and was home to prominent leaders in medicine, politics, and innovation. In the 1960s, the neighborhood became a center for counterculture, like at 3605 Hamilton Street where the Resistance House Commune (*pictured on the cover*) was founded for people fighting for social justice. Today, the neighborhood is a mix of long-term residents and

students. UCD and PVCA sought to highlight a range of individuals – including activists from the suffragette, labor, civil rights and LGBT movements – who made a mark on their community, city and country. The project was based on Penn Professor Douglas Ewbank's Powelton History Blog, which describes both the storied and unsung residents of Powelton from the 1800s and early 1900s. According to PVCA member and UCD board member George Poulin, the sign project is a way to “showcase our pride. By bringing our history to the street, we hope students and those visiting will have a greater appreciation for our neighborhood and why it is such a special place.” Spend some time wandering the beautiful streets of Powelton Village to find all the signs!

Spruce Hill Civic Association: *Membership Engagement and Communications Plan*

Spruce Hill Community Association (SHCA) is a volunteer organization of neighbors committed to strengthening the Spruce Hill community and to enhancing the quality of neighborhood life for all residents. With its broad range of activities – from the beloved Mayfair in Clark Park to providing Block Improvement grants – SHCA leaders sought UCD's advice in how to grow its membership program. With that goal in mind, UCD created a Membership Engagement and Communications Plan to help the civic association develop more robust ways of engaging existing members and cultivating new ones, while increasing the association's visibility

to the community at large. In addition, UCD compiled data about the Spruce Hill catchment area to help SHCA build out a membership and communications strategy. “UCD's effort to analyze relevant data for our community planning process has provided Spruce Hill with the essential tool for constructing a coherent and, hopefully, productive membership drive,” explained Barry Grossbach, longtime Spruce Hill Civic Association leader and UCD board member. “We now have concrete facts to form a basis for community planning thanks to the expertise of UCD staff, and we look forward to making that happen.”



Walnut Hill Community Association: *Bus Seat*

The Walnut Hill Community Association (WHCA) defines itself as the keeper of the community who serves as a liaison between state and local government resources for a cleaner, safer, and more vibrant community. When discussing potential projects the organization, WHCA's Lorna Peterson says they were interested in a project that could help them “achieve one of our Walnut Hill Neighborhood Plan Implementation Goals that would improve neighborhood identity and pride of place.” UCD developed bus seats in 2015 as a way of providing seating and information to passengers waiting for

public transit; based on WHCA's goals, we designed and installed a custom seat for the civic association located at the southwest corner of 48th and Chestnut Streets (*pictured on the cover*). Unlike our other bus seats, this version features a huge graphic welcoming people to Walnut Hill. Peterson says the project increases the identity of the neighborhood and raises “the awareness that the association is at work with community leaders, stakeholders and partners to continue keeping the neighborhood a clean, safe and wonderful place to live, work and play.”



Trolley Portal Gardens

(continued from the cover)

Key partners, stakeholders and officials described the incredible teamwork and partnerships required to transform the portal into a verdant new public space. This project would not be possible without the long-time support and collaboration of the neighborhood.

Now that the project is complete, we are planning ways to activate the space through the year, starting with two December holiday events. On December 15th we partnered with SEPTA on a festive day of holiday fun. SEPTA displayed their Holiday Bus winners onsite and provided rides to Dilworth Park on a Holiday Trolley, while University City Arts League made coasters with families and Trolley Car Station offered holiday snacks. On December 21st, we're partnering with Relâche Ensemble to present Phil Kline's *Unsilent Night*, an interactive community walk and mobile community chorus that will begin and end at the Trolley Portal. For more details head to unsilentnight.com.

Stay tuned for more programming at Trolley Portal Gardens. We also encourage you to stop into Trolley Car Station and sample their delicious menu of food and drink options, and to come back and enjoy the public space we've created for the entire community to enjoy.





ENJOY ALL-DAY COMFORT FOOD AT TROLLEY CAR STATION

Trolley Car Station – sister restaurant to Trolley Car Diner in Mt. Airy and Trolley Car Café in East Falls – is now open at the Trolley Portal Gardens site. The new restaurant is positioned to be the eastern anchor of the Baltimore Avenue business corridor, where thousands of neighbors, commuters, university students and faculty, and employees from the nearby VA Medical Center, University of Pennsylvania, and Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia converge.

“Trolley Portal Gardens is the perfect home for our newest Trolley Car restaurant,” said Trolley Car Station Owner Ken Weinstein. “The combination of promoting community and encouraging public transit was a powerful draw for us. We’re looking forward to providing friendly service and quality, affordable comfort food in the West Philadelphia neighborhood.”

The two-story restaurant features outdoor dining, traditional booth seating, daily happy hour specials, seating for nearly 200 guests, and a hand-painted mural on the restaurant’s second floor honoring West Philadelphia’s rich history. The menus feature a blend of comfort foods like chicken and waffles and shrimp and grits, as well as international flavors. Rounding out the breakfast, lunch, and dinner menus are milkshakes made with Bassetts Ice Cream (both normal and “adult” varieties), and a selection of wine, cocktails, and a beer list of over 300 choices.

Stop by for a meal, a drink, or just to enjoy the space!



New Business Spotlight

The retail, hospitality and commercial landscape of University City is changing all the time, as more businesses seek to join our vibrant community. Here’s a snapshot of new businesses that have recently opened in our area:

NOW OPEN

&Pizza • 3925 Walnut Street

Creative pies and beverages using local produce and no artificial flavors

Alrattan Supermarket • 121 South 43rd Street

Combination grocery store and restaurant featuring shawarma and other Middle Eastern treats

Creamery Cafe • 3818 Chestnut Street

Unique flavor combos for soft serve, cones, and “freakshakes”

I-CE-NY • 3900 Chestnut Street

Thai-style rolled ice cream

Louie-Louie • 3611 Walnut Street

Classic cafe and bistro fare found from France, Spain, Italy and North America by the owners of White Dog Cafe

Lululemon Pop-Up • 3661 Walnut Street

Technical gear for yoga lovers, runners, and everyone in between

Old Nelson • 3600 Market Street

New edition of the Philly-based deli

Terakawa • 125 S 40th Street

2nd Philly location for popular ramen joint

SoBol University City • 3736 Spruce Street

Healthy and invigorating acai bowls topped with fresh fruit and home-made granola

Starbucks • 3601 Walnut Street

Coffee outpost inside Penn Bookstore

Steve’s Prince of Steaks • 3900 Sansom Street

A new 2,400 square feet version of the popular cheesesteak joint

Trolley Car Station • 40th and Baltimore Avenue

The newest location in the Trolley Car family offers surprisingly cool comfort food, ice cream, outdoor dining and beer to go

Wawa • 3300 Market Street

Huge new location of the popular convenience store

OPENING SOON

Bonchon • 3900 Chestnut Street

Korean food restaurant specializing in delicious Korean fried chicken

Halal Guys • 3900 Chestnut Street

Halal fast casual restaurant franchise serving gyros, chicken, and more

Tea Do • 3900 Chestnut Street

Fast casual Japanese and bubble tea

Want more information about businesses in the neighborhood? Visit our website to read our guide to spending *36 Hours in University City!*

News from the West Philadelphia Skills Initiative



The West Philadelphia Skills Initiative (WPSI), our nationally renowned job training program that connects local residents seeking opportunity with employers seeking talent, enjoyed a busy end to 2018. The Skills Initiative completed several cohorts, began recruitment for more trainings, and made exciting staff changes that will help our program grow and reach our goal of serving 400 participants a year by 2021.

In order to serve more jobseekers and employers, we've made changes to the team, starting with our existing team. Joshua Park will now serve as Senior Manager of Employer Services (EST), managing and improving the full employer partner experience while also overseeing jobseeker recruitment, assessment, and selection for each cohort. Caitlin Garazzo is now our Senior Manager of Learning and Development where she will lead our Participant Services Team (PST), designing and managing the WPSI participant experience both during and after the program. WPSI graduate Joyce Bacon will continue her outstanding work with participants under her new title as the Manager of Coaching & Support Services.

The Skills Initiative has also hired three new staff members. After a comprehensive search, Taylor Keitt, Fontaine Gutierrez, and Patrick Bayer have joined WPSI, adding new talent and skills to our dynamic team.

Taylor is our new Manager of Participant Services, where he will serve as a key member of the Participant Services Team, supporting every aspect of the participant experience with a particular focus on alumni programming. We're excited for Taylor to bring the

skills and insight that he has gained as a result of his time with the Department of Public Welfare, years working as a tax preparer, and his recently acquired master's degree in Social Work and Social Research from Bryn Mawr College.

Fontaine Gutierrez has assumed the role of Operations Coordinator. Fontaine is primarily responsible for increasing the effectiveness of WPSI's business practices. She will work across the team to review practices and improve the quality of services provided to WPSI stakeholders. Fontaine previously worked with the Philadelphia Youth Network as a Business Partnership Specialist, and with local organizations Career Wardrobe and Philly AIDS Thrift.

Patrick Bayer is our new Manager of Continuous Improvement. Patrick will assess WPSI's overall effectiveness through the development of formal evaluation metrics, working closely with participants and employers to build the relationships that are necessary for conducting holistic evaluations. We are pleased to welcome Patrick back to UCD, where he previously worked on the business plan for our social venture Green City Works through a role with the Mayor's Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity. He most recently worked at Philadelphia Works as a Program Representative.

We are excited by these staff changes, and look forward to expanding our crucial work within the community. Learn more about the Skills Initiative and current recruitments at www.universitycity.org/wpsi.

PUBLIC SPACE AND EVENT ROUND-UP

UCD partners with local performers, businesses, and arts organizations throughout the year to present events and bring life to public spaces. Here are some of the highlights of the past season.



Market Street Bridge Refresh

Three years after we added planters, bleachers, and landscaping to the Market Street Bridge, it was time for a refresh. We stained the majority of the planters black to blend with the window trim of nearby buildings and engaged local artist Glossblack to create “pixelated patterns” using shades of green, blue, indigo, and violet for a combination he dubbed “G-BIV.” The bright colors look compelling from a distance and provide a fun pop to engage pedestrians as they pass by.

Pub at The Porch

This summer we partnered with Bridgewater’s Pub to create the Pub at The Porch, an outdoor beer garden serving drinks and small bites. Guests were able to enjoy beer takeovers from local breweries, live music, and group happy hour events from May through September. On weekday afternoons Bridgewater’s operated from a free-standing turquoise structure created specifically for The Porch by local company SHIFTSPACE, and local bagel purveyors Schmeat It occupied the space in the morning.



PECO Performances at The Porch

We partnered with PECO for a second year to present a season of free music, dance, and performing arts at The Porch. From May through September we brought in an eclectic lineup of performers, ranging from Brazilian dance to Korean drumming to American blues. The lineup was designed to entertain passersby and people visiting The Porch during lunch. We’re grateful to PECO for their support and to the many talented performers who appeared during the series!

Summer Events

Although we were limited by a particularly rainy summer, we enjoyed a wonderfully robust season of free neighborhood performances, movies, networking events, and more. Our University City Dining Days had the largest number of offerings ever, including new restaurants like the Topsy Bistro, Walnut Street Cafe, and Louie, Louie. Stay tuned for details about our 2019 events season!





State of University City Event Highlights Future of Work and Local Talent

On Wednesday, December 5th, more than 200 guests attended our annual State of University City event at World Cafe Live. This year's event focused on the future of work being forged in University City, and featured stories about the local entrepreneurs and innovators who are shaping a next generation economy while examining the critical actions local partners can take to accelerate the district's growth.

We also used the event to highlight our own Xia Frazier, a crew supervisor at our Green City Works landscaping company. Xia is a graduate of our West Philadelphia Skills Initiative, who went from unemployed to managing one of Green City Works' biggest accounts in under three years. She is a wonderful example of someone with the talent and drive to succeed, who simply needed the right opportunity in order to thrive. If you'd like to learn more about Xia and her inspiring story, visit www.bit.ly/gcw2018.

At the conclusion of the evening we officially released our *2019 State of University City* publication, which details the neighborhood's status as the regional leader in innovation and development. The report provides an in-depth guide to the development projects - academic, commercial, public, residential and more - transforming the district, along with additional data and stories on employment, innovation, retail growth and other critical economic development indicators. *The State of University City* is a critical resource for those seeking to do business in the neighborhood. To obtain physical copies of *The State of University City 2019*, contact UCD by phone at 215-243-0555 or by email at ucd@universitycity.org.





Your neighborhood.

Your UCD.




Dozens of free events, from the Baltimore Avenue Dollar Stroll to Movies in Clark Park. Transforming concrete places into vibrant public spaces. Connecting residents seeking opportunity with employers seeking talent. These are just a few of the great ways University City District works for you and this neighborhood we love, 365 days a year.

We ask you to join hundreds of your neighbors in supporting UCD by making a tax-deductible donation by December 31st. Did you know? University City District is a 501c3 organization - we're funded through voluntary contributions from universities and health systems, local businesses, and individuals like you. **Please respond with the form below or donate online at universitycity.org/donate.**

Your gift is vital to helping us continue our work in 2019. Thank you for your support!

----- Donation Form -----

Circle one: **\$250** **\$100** **\$50** **other:** _____

I have enclosed my check for _____ payable to University City District.

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Cut along the dashed line and mail to: University City District, 3940 Chestnut St, Philadelphia, PA 19104

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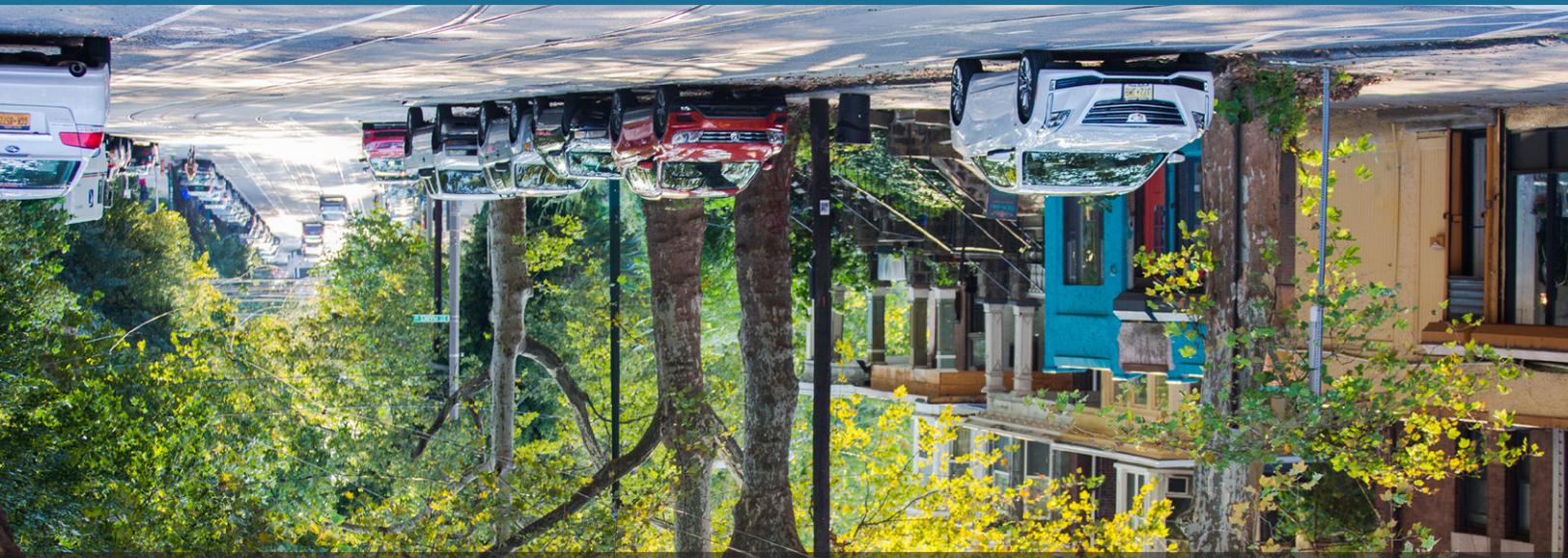
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Read the latest neighborhood news inside!



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