

My name is Reverend Nathaniel Moody. I am writing to you, along with my wife Laura, today because our family is an example of United Methodist Community House strengthening our community across generations. We'd like to tell you our story.

My first encounter with UMCH was as a child in the early 1960s when we moved to Sheldon Avenue. UMCH was next door. I spent a lot of time there, learning to read from the Book Mobile program, participating in after school and summer programming, and eventually becoming the leader of their youth committee.

My mother completed her high school diploma through UMCH's continuing education program after dropping out of school in 11th grade following the death of a family member. UMCH opened the door for her to complete one of the proudest accomplishments in her life.

Laura and I fell in love as teenagers and made a lot of happy memories at UMCH as we grew—as members of the youth program, and later as volunteers, board members, and donors. Our children attended after school programs at UMCH.

We strive to be leaders who give back to our community because of lessons UMCH taught us. Today, Laura was a nursing professor at Grand Rapids Community College for 25 years and she volunteers in leadership roles with the Black Nurses Association, the Grand Rapids African American Health Institute, and UMCH. I have served as a Grand Rapids Public School Board member, City Commissioner, and was a pastor for decades at Brown Hutcherson Ministries. We have 4 children and 5 grandchildren who are continuing this legacy and blazing new trails of their own.

It's impossible to say where we would be if it weren't for the role UMCH played in our lives. All we can say with certainty is that if it wasn't for UMCH, we wouldn't be where we are now.

We want you to know that our family is just one of many examples of the difference you make when you give to UMCH. When you give today, you could be helping someone else fulfill a lifelong goal, or setting them on the path to success and leadership. You're helping them become the kinds of people who want to give back. The world has changed a lot since UMCH came into our lives, but what hasn't changed is the need for a place like this.

We are sincerely grateful for all you have given to UMCH, and we hope you will continue giving today to make a difference for another family like ours.

With thanks,

Reverend Nathaniel and Laura B. Moody