

MEET MARY SIMMONS

Please join us in welcoming Mary Simmons to the Urban Strategies team as our new Case Manager Supervisor! Mary has over twenty-five years of experience as a workforce and career development expert, including her previous positions at Kentuckiana Works, Goodwill Industries and at Louisville Metro Government's Microbusiness Financial Empowerment department. Mary's extensive educational background includes a master's degrees in human resource leadership, Organizational Leadership Management, and Organization Development from Spalding University, as well as an undergraduate degree in Business Communications.

Mary enjoys helping her clients to build confidence by learning how to speak about their own strengths, talents, and abilities. She strives to work with individuals to see beyond any current challenges they may be facing by envisioning unlimited possibilities through education, self-awareness, and a changed mindset.

Mary currently resides in Louisville and is mother to three sons, a grandmother of ten, and a foster parent to three teenaged boys.



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420 S. Eight Street
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The Beecher Report

Community is the foundation of the bigger picture

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This summer, approximately 60 Beecher Terrace youth were able to enhance their self-confidence, further their teamwork skills, and slow the "summer slide" by participating in quality programming throughout Metro Louisville. Urban Strategies, Inc. (USI) was able to connect students to these programs through BLOCS (Building Louisville's Out of School Time Coordinated System), a community partnership founded by Metro United Way, Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS), and Louisville Metro Government. BLOCS connects youth to programs and connects programs to one another. The program also helps to identify gaps in service and works to build system-wide quality through community trainings, professional opportunities for youth workers. BLOCS also measures outcomes for the various initiatives.

According to BLOCS most recent data report, youth who participated in quality programs have higher attendance at school and were suspended at a lower rate than their peers in JCPS. BLOCS' partners are working together to make sure that our youth are kindergarten ready, proficient in academ-

ics (with an emphasis on math and reading) and graduate on time. USI Case Managers were able to assess the individual needs of Beecher's youth and connect them to the summer program that best fit their needs, at no cost. Some programs, such as the YMCA, provided transportation, while others, such as Sowing Seeds, were able to take their youth on trips out of state. All three siblings in one Beecher family and their parents took a trip to Washington D.C. as part of their summer program.

Some of the summer programs that Beecher Youth attended included:

- YMCA's SouthEast, Chestnut and Wheatley campuses
- Neighborhood House
- Sowing Seeds
- St. George's
- DramaWorks
- Basketball Camp at Bellarmine University

USI will continue to work with youth and families to keep them connected to quality programs within the school and community. Our goal is to have more partners participating in BLOCS by next summer, allowing even more families to enjoy these exciting youth development opportunities.





LaiEsha Allen has been a proud and active resident of Beecher Terrace for five years. The epitome of “family focused,” Mrs. Allen stays very busy raising her four children, while working, and participating in a variety of school and community events. Always on the go, Mrs. Allen has become a great networker and leader in the Beecher and Russell community,

One way that she ensures that she and her family benefit from the Choice Neighborhood grant efforts that are currently underway at Beecher Terrace is by staying closely connected with the Urban Strategies office and case management team. You’ll often find her at the monthly resident

meetings, and Beecher Leadership Group meetings, volunteering to assist with whatever task is at hand.

During one Urban Strategies Resident Meeting, several residents suggested forming a walking group. Mrs. Allen took the next steps to bring this idea to life by starting the “Beecher Walks” walking group. Before she moved from Beecher, you could find Mrs. Allen walking, usually with other residents and Urban staff, every Monday and Wednesday in Baxter Park. During those walks, Mrs. Allen would catch up on relocation activities and the construction work underway at Beecher Terrace, while providing updates on her children’s activities and the latest news from her church, the Quinn Chapel AME, located in the Russell neighborhood.

“I’m always excited to share information and connect people to various activities and events throughout Louisville,” says Mrs. Allen, who is also an active member of the Vision Russell Education Task Group. “The Education group,” which meets on a quarterly basis, and is open to Beecher and Russell residents, as well as teachers, early childhood providers and anyone interested in education, “is a great opportunity for me to share my ideas and opinions from a parent and resident perspective.”

Through her connection with the Education Task Group and case management, Mrs. Allen makes sure that she and her family stay engaged with events and programming that will continue to enhance their daily lives.

Mrs. Allen was one of many parents that took advantage of the Metro United Way BLOCS Partnership. Through the BLOCS Partnership, all four of her children were able to participate in a quality summer program that will continue to offer programming and tutoring during the school year. Urban Strategies would like to salute Mrs. Allen for her commitment to case management, Beecher Walks and her ongoing efforts toward achieving her life goals.

BEECHER TERRACE MOBILE IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE!



Did you know that you can own a home with less than perfect credit?

Did you know that there are several careers with such high demand that employers will train and pay you while in training?

Did you know someone is waiting to help you start your business, right now?

Urban Strategies Inc. (USI) is working with several supportive service partners that can help with all of the above and more. Core to their mission is upward “Economic Mobility” - the ability of individuals and families to increase their income, which helps ensure that families are stable and thriving. Everyone’s path to a higher income looks different and USI is available to help you and your family navigate the way.

USI’s dynamic case management team is well qualified and able to share information about the many resources that are available to all Beecher Terrace residents. Every member of your household who chooses to participate in case management will receive in-depth coaching, as well as motivational and teaching tools that can help navigate systems and sustain positive changes. USI’s employment specialist Case Managers can help open doors into many high demand careers in Louisville, including but not limited to medical, hospitality, manufacturing, construction, and transportation. Most importantly, USI Case Managers can help remove the barriers and obstacles that often stand in the way of making these changes, such as access to transportation or childcare.

The following are just a few of the partners who are invested in helping families and communities become more economically mobile:

- Catholic Charities
- Community Coordinated Child Care (4-C)
- Dress for Success
- Goodwill Industries
- Louisville Central Community Centers
- Louisville Metro Housing Authority
- Louisville Urban League
- MOLO Village
- Transit Authority of River City (TARC)

No matter what the need, USI Case Managers work with families and assist all members, especially youth, to improve their incomes. Under the Choice Neighborhoods grant, all Beecher Terrace families are also eligible for free financial counseling. Please connect with your Case Manager to find out how to enroll or contact USI at (502) 384-0786.