

UMAR

LIVE • WORK • THRIVE

On this International Day of People with Disabilities, we wanted to share with you a heartwarming story of how UMAR participants were able to give back.

"This is a good thing to do."

UMAR has been empowering adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities since 1983. Working to promote community inclusion and independence for our residents has been one of the key components of our residential services.

UMAR strives to make a difference in the lives of those we serve, but we also endeavor to encourage our residents to make a difference in the communities in which they live, work, and thrive.

Earlier this year, to give back to their community, a group of UMAR residents partnered with Charlotte Green to pick vegetables for hospice patients and their families.

Our residents were all smiles and eager to get started picking vegetables as we stopped at the first of four participating community gardens within the Charlotte metropolitan area.

They quickly got to work picking green beans, zucchini, tomatoes, squash and green peppers. The sun was hot, and the humidity high after an evening of rain, but our residents were delighted with the opportunity to help people.

Justine was all business as she diligently searched for green beans among the vines. Hanes did not let anything stop him as he maneuvered his cane around the raised beds and uneven ground to look for tomatoes and okra. Karen was so intent on finding perfect green peppers that we could hardly get her to raise her head for a quick picture.



Ron, holding a basket of vegetables, beamed as he said “I like helping people a lot. My mom taught me that I should help people whenever I can. So, we work together, and we are a team!”

There was laughter and smiles as the residents and staff moved from one garden plot to another, but the true moment of satisfaction came as the residents walked up the steps to the hospice building. The residents were overjoyed with the opportunity to share the fruits – or vegetables – of their labor.

A hospice nurse welcomed the group and said that all the produce would be taken to the homes of patients within the hospice program to provide meals for them and their families. She smiled as she explained that the generosity of the UMAR residents is an encouragement to these families, and it makes their journey a little easier to know that someone is thinking of them.

There was a moment of pause among the group. Ron put his hand on his heart. “It gets you right here,” he said. “This is a good thing to do.”

We couldn’t be prouder of our residents’ beneficence and unconditional willingness to do good for those in need.



It is this principle of kindness and the desire to improve lives on which UMAR was founded, and it is pure joy to see our residents live by the same values each day.

As the vegetables nourished the bodies of those receiving families, we hope this story has nourished your soul and encourages you to also give back to a cause important to you.

As a non-profit organization, we rely on the goodwill of donors to advance our mission to foster community inclusion and provide support to adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Make an impact at umarinfo.com/donate.