



TOLEDO URBAN IMPACT . . .

History of Toledo Urban Impact

For over 20 years Chuck & Marilyn Hull worked with children and teenagers in Bowling Green, OH, where Chuck was an environmental engineer and Marilyn a teacher. They were attending Bowling Green Alliance Church when they felt called to stretch beyond their comfort zone and reach out to inner-city youth in Toledo.

In June 1995, they volunteered at Solid Rock Ministries in Toledo where they were trained by Pastor Keith and Shannon Stepp. Between 200 and 300 children and teens were bussed to SRM one night every week for an evangelistic program. The Hulls performed many tasks at SRM; but their main ministry was mentoring kids on their bus route, where Chuck drove a school bus and Marilyn was Bus Pastor.

In the Fall of 1997, the Hulls sensed God calling them to investigate the potential for starting an urban ministry at First Alliance Church in Toledo, since most of the kids in whom they were investing lived in the geographic area near FAC. They wanted to connect their calling to urban ministry with an Alliance church in Toledo.

On September 4, 1997, they met with Pastors Tom Fraser and Jeff Kempton. Both pastors had been praying for a way to make good use of their location and growing campus to reach the population in their urban neighborhood. They all shared a vision for urban ministry and began to formulate a plan. The Hulls began meeting with church leaders and other church groups to share their vision and to get to know the people who attended FAC.

At the same time, Chuck & Marilyn continued to expand their knowledge base about urban ministry. They had visited COMPASS Ministries in Omaha, NE in June 1997, which was affiliated with Christ Community Church (a CMA church); and then went to Allegheny Center in Pittsburgh in October 1997 to meet with Pastor Ed Glover who had created Urban Impact Foundation. They also attended Multi-Cultural Ministry Conferences at Crossroads College in Indianapolis, in addition to National CMA conferences where they heard speakers like John Perkins share wisdom about urban ministry.

From the Fall of 1997 through Spring 1998, the Hulls also met with a variety of organizational leaders in Toledo to investigate possible partnerships for Toledo Urban Impact: Randy Taylor – principal at Toledo Christian Schools; the local FCA chapter; Don Andrews – Cherry Street Mission; Toledo Art Museum; etc.

Hulls transferred their church membership to FAC from BGAC in October 1997 and resigned from ministry at Solid Rock in December 1997 to begin a solid relationship with First Alliance where TUI would be established. In January 1998, they met with FAC elders to report on the status of the proposed ministry. Pastor Frasier started a month of sermons about missions, leading up to the annual Missions Conference in February; and a TUI Kick-Off Banquet was held in February, featuring Pastor Bruce Jackson from Allegheny Center.

As people from FAC heard about the vision for TUI, they began to approach the Hulls, wanting to become involved. In March 1998, they held the first TUI training and orientation meetings. On March 21, 1998, the first After-School Klub (ASK) registration was held at the church after flyers had been passed out in the neighborhood. No one came to register, so Hulls went to the streets and registered a dozen children from grades 4 – 8.

A few weeks later, in April 1998, a pilot ASK program began to meet at FAC on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:30 to 6:30 implementing these elements: an opening Jesus Talk (devotional); Recreation time; snack; Homework Assistance (*all adult volunteers*); and classes in Reading (*Marilyn Hull*), Science (*Dick Blausey*), Art (*Sandy Spang*), and Math (*Chuck Hull*, and later *Tim Castor*). Social Studies, led by *Dr. Charles Carter*, was added as a class later in the program. ASK started with about 10 students and 10 adult volunteers.

ASK operated through the end of that school year when summer programs then began and TUI staff could develop relationships in the context of the FAC neighborhood. In September 1998, ASK commenced its first full school year of operation.

Other ministry programs that TUI developed were:

SONShine Projects – These were creative programs to donate items for food baskets at Thanksgiving; gift stockings at Christmas; gift bags for Mother’s and Father’s Day; and filled book bags at the beginning of school. This provided the opportunity to minister to the whole person, meeting tangible needs in specific ways.

Camps -- TUI sent deserving ASK students to camp at Youth Haven in MI during the school year for weekend retreats, and to summer camps. This provided at-risk or needy inner-city children and teens with the opportunity to grow and develop personally and spiritually. We partnered with YH in their Leadership-in-Training (LIT) program where we sent some of our older students (who had been with TUI for a few years) to receive leadership training in the camp setting.

Visitation of ASK students and their families provided opportunities to encourage, nurture, and maintain close relationships with TUI families, in order to establish new contacts in the neighborhoods and ultimately to serve more people as needs became apparent.

Mentoring - a labor-intensive commitment by adults to become instruments of change to one inner-city child or teen at a time, so that they could become more productive citizens through academic, character, spiritual, and career development. Mentors were recruited, trained, and then assigned to

In February 2000, Hulls moved into a neighborhood near FAC and near the families to whom TUI ministered. They used their home as a place to minister to the TUI students, particularly when those students became too old to attend ASK. They began to transport TUI students to FAC Wednesday evening programs.

In the summer of 2000, TUI hired a part-time intern, Nicole Koral, to help with TUI operations. In September 2001, TUI became a non-profit organization, and in Fall 2002, TUI hired Bethany Baldwin as ASK Director. At that point, the TUI Board of Directors had been in place for a few years.

The Hulls resigned from their leadership in Toledo Urban Impact in August 2003 to pursue their affiliation with an urban church plant – Northgate Community Church (now called That Neighborhood Church) – which was located in an area where many TUI students lived.

The following is a report submitted by the Hulls at the time of their resignation in 2003 at the request of the FAC leadership:

Since its inception in 1997, Toledo Urban Impact has ministered to approximately 200 people from at least 70 families in the neighborhood surrounding First Alliance Church. Those ministries have included:

The After-School Klub (just concluding its sixth season);

Annual SonShine Projects (back-to-school, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Mother’s and Father’s Days);

Sending almost 40 students to year-round camps at Youth Haven Ranch in MI (since 1999) and to summer camps at Beulah Beach (2000 and 2001), including the development of four teens as Leaders-in-Training at YRH;

Three neighborhood Bible Clubs (2001, 2002);

Individual and small-group discipleship of teens;

Mentoring by 13 adults at FAC;

Many TUI students involved in FAC Christian Education ministries;

Prayer Partnerships;

Regular home and hospital visitation;

Partnerships with area schools for the benefit of ASK students;

Leading many children to a saving knowledge of Christ in Boys' Brigade and at the After-School Klub.

Toledo Urban Impact has been featured in publications of the Alliance of Nonprofits, New Hope Foundation, and in the Toledo Blade. TUI has been affiliated with several organizations in the last six years. Some are listed here:

Christian Community Development Association (CCDA); Crossroads Bible College/Antioch Global Network; Mayor's Youth Summit; Mission Year (Bart Campolo's urban ministry); Martin Luther King Elementary School (and other area schools); New Hope Foundation; Northgate Community Church; Northwest Ohio Toledo Food Bank; Robinson Jr. High School; Toledo Metropolitan Mission; Toledo Youth Commission; Youth Haven Ranch.

Praise be to God for all He has done in and through Toledo Urban impact. May He grant wisdom in the future development of TUI ministries.

Chuck and Marilyn Hull

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