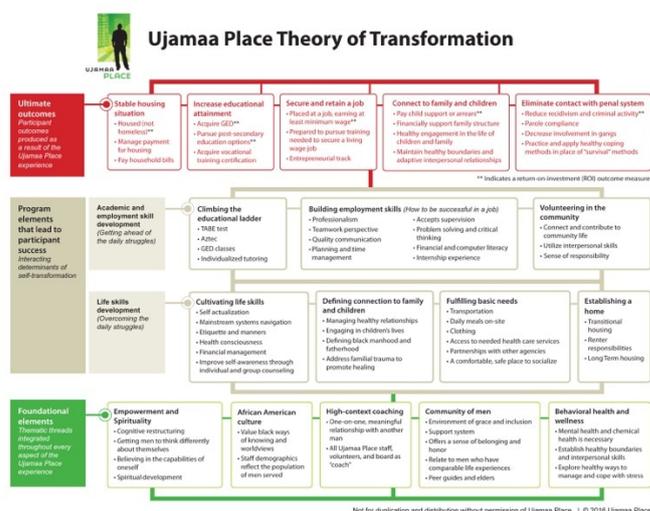




## Ujamaa Place's Q3 Data Shows Strong Results Delivering Services To the Men Enrolled In Its Trademark Theory of Transformation



*Ujamaa Place transforms marginalized men through education and training to assist them with gainful employment that keeps them out of prison and in safe housing.*

**ST. PAUL, Minn. - Dec. 18, 2017 - PRLog -- Wilder Foundation** released its Q3 report showing there were 459 men enrolled in at least one program at Ujamaa Place under its trademark Theory of Transformation model from July 1, 2017 to September 30, 2017. Ryan Evans, Wilder Research Associate reported "Ujamaa men can enroll in multiple programs. On average men were enrolled in at least two programs. At the end of Quarter 3, there were 167 men in the education program, 118 men in the housing program, 67 men in the employment program, and 59 men in the behavioral health and wellness program."

The report further shows that of the 167 men in the education program, about one-third (31%) do not have a high school diploma or equivalent. Of the 118 men in the housing program, about 2 in 5 (39%) are homeless. Of the 67 men in the employment program, more than half (55%) are unemployed. Roughly 3 in 5 men (58%) have children, and roughly 3 in 4 men (77%) have been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor.

This data does not include the many partnering education and job training programs that Ujamaa Place offers to a community of young men who come to Ujamaa Place looking for guidance, often referred by family members and extended family. These programs include construction certification, automotive training, entrepreneurship, innovation, [film production](#) and financial literacy classes. In addition, Ujamaa Place forms strong corporate partnerships that offer job opportunities, mentorships, apprenticeships and training.

Since opening its doors in 2010, Ujamaa Place has served over 2,000 men. An average of 10 men attend weekly orientation sessions, a majority of whom are homeless and unemployed. They all need jobs making a "living wage". All of the men who walk through the front door of Ujamaa Place receive help. A large

percentage of the men enroll in the Ujamaa Place "Theory of Transformation" program. Some are referred to appropriate mental and chemical health services and homeless men are housed in the Ujamaa housing program or sent to partner housing facilities. All men are offered hope, support, education, employment training and opportunities, health and wellness services, and brotherly and family love that was absent from their life growing up.

Ujamaa Place is an organization with strong leaders who are passionate about their mission of transforming the lives of the most marginalized population in the Twin Cities - African-American men aged 18-30. Led by President/CEO Otis Zanders, a graduate of Gustavus Adolphus College, with a 30-year career with the Minnesota Department of Corrections, which gave him a deep perspective on the barriers that these men encounter daily. Mr. Zanders believes being raised in the Mississippi Delta during the Jim Crow era and the civil rights movement led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. prepared him for his calling at Ujamaa Place.

Otis Zanders puts things into perspective regarding the release of the men from the criminal justice system back out into society, stating that "the system breaks both their legs and upon releasing them tells them to walk. We address a lot of trauma when these men walk through the door. The hardest journey is walking in the front door. Once they're here, their journey begins with LOVE."

Ujamaa Place integrates African culture into its theory of transformation programming to give men a strong sense of their identity and self-worth. Culture is weaved throughout their journey using principles that originated in villages in Africa. The word "Ujamaa" means "brotherhood", "extended family", where a person thrives through a community and prospers through cooperative economics.

In 2017, Ujamaa Place took a leadership role in addressing violence in our communities. Violence destabilizes communities. Ujamaa Place felt violence control must no longer be seen as the exclusive domain of police and criminal justice systems. It must be approached and supported as a public health community issue. Partnering with The King Center, Ujamaa Place presented their 2-day [Nonviolence365](#) certification education and training based on the nonviolent methodology and teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The City of Saint Paul, Saint Paul Police Department and Ramsey County criminal justice system partnership embraces Ujamaa Place's nonviolence teachings through support, research and culturally-driven violence prevention tools and resources.

Otis Zanders humbly thanks great community leaders in their belief of the Ujamaa Place [Theory of Transformation](#) that include coaches, staff, donors, supporters, volunteers, clergy, law enforcement, community and corporate partners, policy makers and the community that believes in its Theory of Transformation.

It is not surprising that Ujamaa Place deals with a population of men that have suffered an enormous amount of systemic trauma. In 2018, Ujamaa Place will start measuring its impact and cost-savings as a healthcare delivery model. The current data proves that Ujamaa men enrolled in its Theory of Transformation are less likely to reoffend, and graduate out of the program healthier, stable in housing and employment, allowing them to positively contribute to their family and their community. "Ujamaa Men never really graduate out of the program, stated Mr. Zanders, they continue to use the services, resources and volunteer their time to their Ujamaa family after they are stabilized and transformed. At this year's annual Holiday awards, a Ujamaa Man spoke of the impact Ujamaa Place had on him and as a stable business owner with contracts from several large corporations, he is able to hire Ujamaa Men to work for his company. This is an outcome that brings the Theory of Transformation full circle.

<https://youtu.be/RTaEOPKxh4U>

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## About Ujamaa Place

Ujamaa Place transforms marginalized men through education and training to assist them with gainful employment that keeps them out of prison and in safe housing. Since opening its doors seven years ago, Ujamaa Place has served over 2,000 black men – 18 – 30 years old. All of the men who come to Ujamaa receive help. Some of the men enroll in Ujamaa's five step Theory of Transformation program. Some are referred to appropriate mental and chemical health services. The homeless are housed at Ujamaa's housing facilities or sent to partner housing facilities and all receive GED assistance and job skills training. These men are offered hope, support and the love that has been missing in their lives. For more information, go to: [ujamaaplace.org](http://ujamaaplace.org).

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