

UNIVERSITY CIRCLE POLICE



2025 YEAR END REPORT



2025 IMPACT OVERVIEW

COMMAND & RANKING STAFF 2025

Thomas Wetzel - Chief of Police
Alanna Smith - Captain
Steve Brady - Lieutenant
Tim Caine - Sergeant/Patrol
Chris Hovan - Sergeant/Patrol
Kurt Keeper - Sergeant/Patrol
Jake Lockhart - Sergeant/Detectives
Bryan Skaricich - Sergeant/Patrol

Community K-9: GRACE

CURRENT STAFFING

Total Sworn Officers: 28
Full-Time: 21
Part-Time: 7
Dispatchers: 6
Full-Time: 4
Part-Time: 2
Executive Assistant (FT): 1
Crisis Intervention Specialist (PT): 1
Auxiliary Officers (PT): 3
Ambassador (PT): 1
Total Staff: 40

PATROL BREAKDOWN 2025

Total Patrol Activities: 16,565
Average per Day: 45.38
Motorists Assisted: 1380
Non-Motorists Assisted: 572
Suspicious Events Investigated: 620
Assists to Other LE Agencies: 241
Total Traffic Enforcements: 932
Parking Citations Issued: 851

CRIME BREAKDOWN 2025

Total Incidents Reported: 1,160
Total Crime Incidents: 533
Total Crimes Against Persons: 78
Total Crimes Against Property: 353
Total Officer-Detected Crimes: 72
Total Arrests: 205 (36 for OVI)
Criminal Citations Issued: 23
Total Guns Seized: 22

PROACTIVE PATROLS 2025

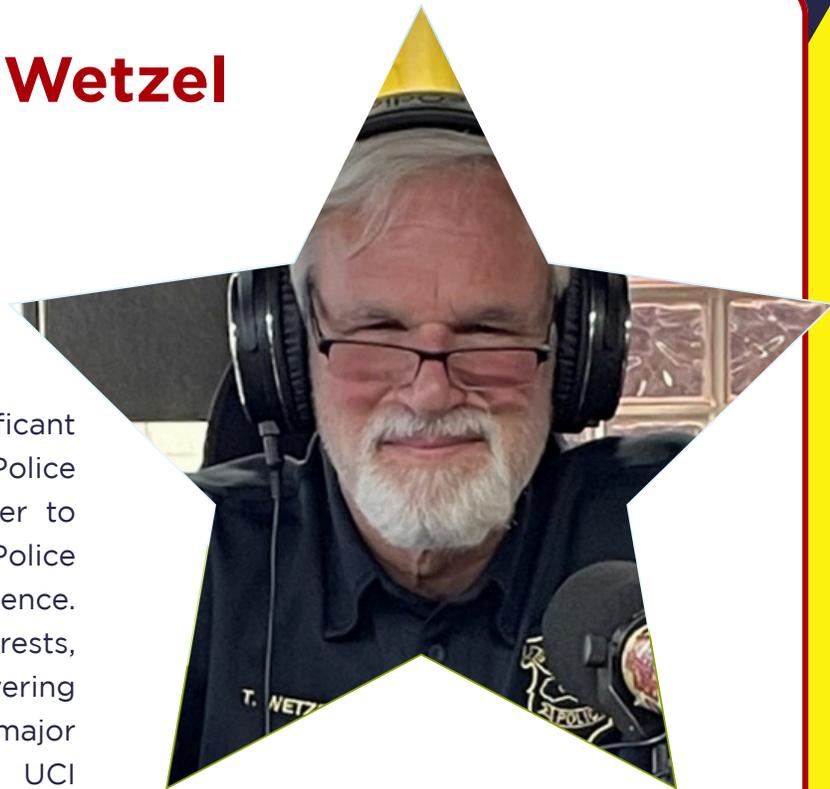
Directed Patrols: 6,486
Foot Patrols: 1,435
Institutional Visits: 549
Building Checks: 779
Property Checks: 451

ENGAGEMENTS 2025

Community: 88
Youth: 41
Institutional: 33
Law Enforcement: 33
Outward: 2

Message from Chief Wetzel

Thomas Wetzel



The year 2025 was a year of significant accomplishment for the University Circle Police Department and it brought our agency closer to achieving its vision of becoming an Elite Police Institution and National Model of Excellence. Whether it was saving lives, making critical arrests, developing new programming, or delivering excellent service, our department had a major impact on the safety and security of our UCI footprint. In doing so, we also built bridges of trust with those we serve.

Hiring good people was an important effort in 2025. We hired 11 people and 10 are still with us. The roles included full and part-time police officers, full and part-time dispatchers, auxiliary officers, and a new police ambassador named Kenny Foderaro. Kenny has been blind since birth and he is an inspiration to us. We believe his role is a first of its kind in the nation. Also in 2025, Officer Kelly Gabriel retired after 27 years and 9 months of service. We are very close to being fully staffed and are confident we will achieve that goal this year.

Members of our agency received noteworthy national recognitions in 2025. Officer Gloria Mercado received the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE) Civil rights Outstanding Youth Services Justice by Action award for her work with young people. Also, the American Police Hall of Fame recognized Sgt. Kurt Keeper, Officer Jim Fox, and Officer Jeff Ridler for their efforts in saving lives.

We started a Special Response Team (SRT) in collaboration with our partners at the Case Western Reserve University Police Department. This unit, once operational, will allow our members to respond to serious emergencies with advanced tactical training and equipment. This was also the first full year of operating under the Special Improvement District (SID) public funding model. Our personnel and their work product demonstrated that this was funding well spent.

We took our community policing efforts to another level with a specific full-time assignment of a Community policing/Community engagement officer. We also presented one-of-a-kind self-defense training programs, such one geared toward individuals with disabilities another for unarmed first responders such as paramedics and crisis intervention specialists.

We have big goals for 2026, one of which is to achieve our vision of becoming an Elite Police Institution and National Model of Excellence. We are inching closer each and every shift and will work hard to achieve this goal. In closing, it is a privilege for us to serve this special community and make a difference in the safety and security of all those who live, work, study, and visit here.

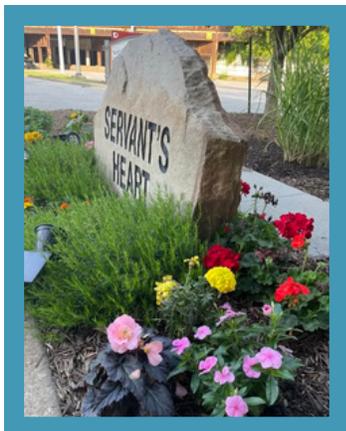
A SERVANT'S HEART Culture

Contributed by Chief Tom Wetzel

Our agency's culture continues to best be defined by the large rock in front of our station that reads "SERVANT'S HEART." It embodies our mindset in the delivery of services to our customers. It reinforces the importance of treating everyone with dignity and respect. It places a premium on balancing the spirit and the letter of the law and an attitude of clemency when applicable naturally flows through it.



We hire people who will endorse this mindset, and we incorporate it into the very fabric of our institution, protecting and serving. This culture will be a major reason we will eventually achieve our vision of becoming an Elite Police Institution and National Model of Excellence.



SID Update

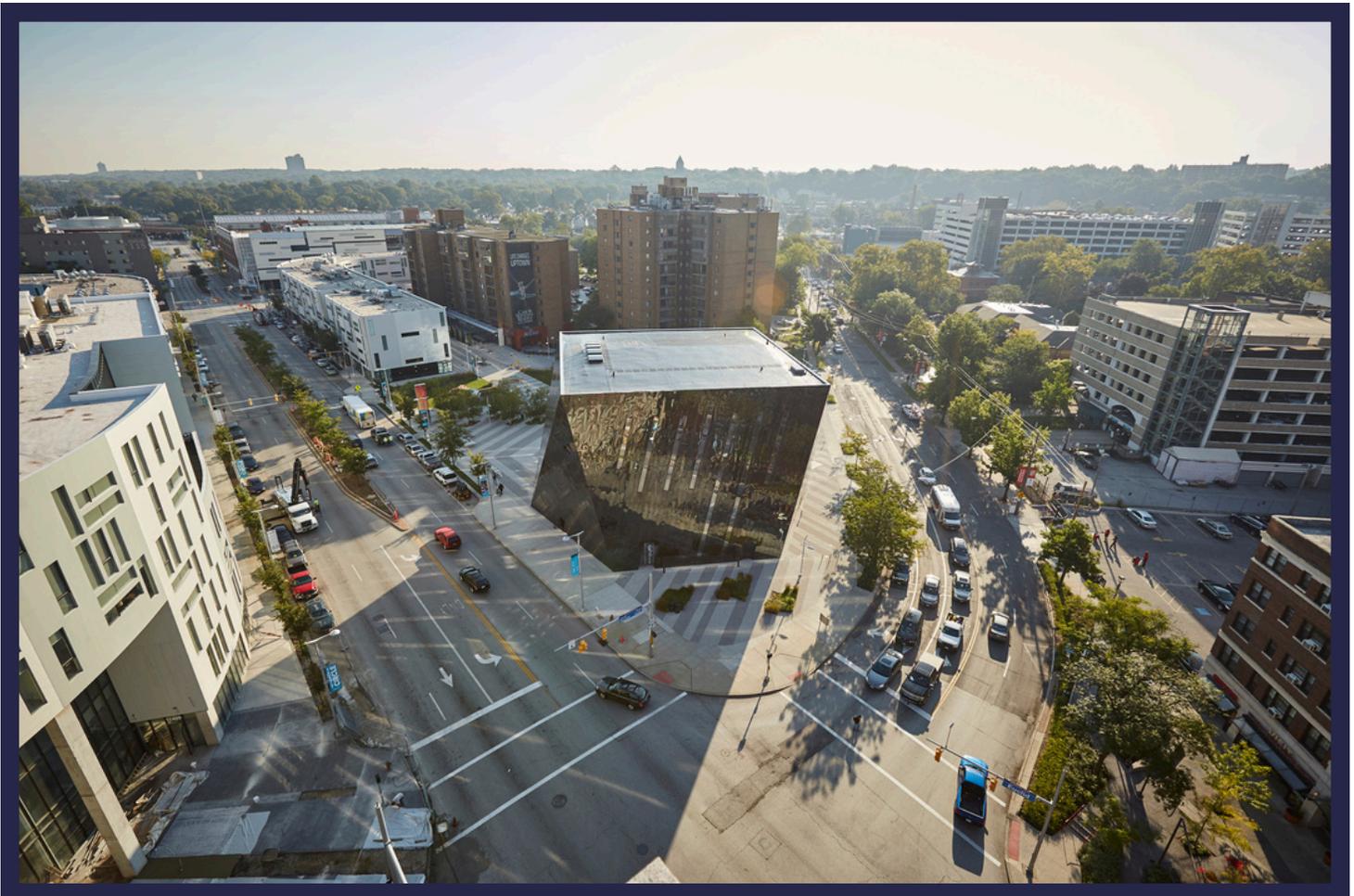
Contributed by Kate Borders, President of University Circle, Inc.

Looking back on 2025, we are grateful that we have now completed one year of operating with a Special Improvement District (SID) in place. The SID took effect on January 1, 2025 and as of today, four quarterly meetings have occurred. The SID is governed by a body that includes representation from UCI's largest stakeholders (Case Western Reserve University and University Hospitals), appointees from the Mayor and the Council President, general property owners, and other UCI trustees. Meetings have been held at both the University Circle Inc. Community Room and the University Circle Police Department (UCPD) Training room. The governing board has reviewed priorities of the UCPD and has reviewed and approved the annual budget.

We are happy to report that this first year of the SID governing board meetings have been educational, informative, and we have built relationship with the members. We are looking forward to many years of having this funding instrument in place to support the excellent work of the UCPD. It is a privilege to provide such excellent service to the residents, employees and visitors to University Circle every day.

For a copy of the Service Plan, service area map, Governing body members, or 2026 meeting dates, please visit www.universitycircle.org/SID.

Photo Credit: Jeff Downie

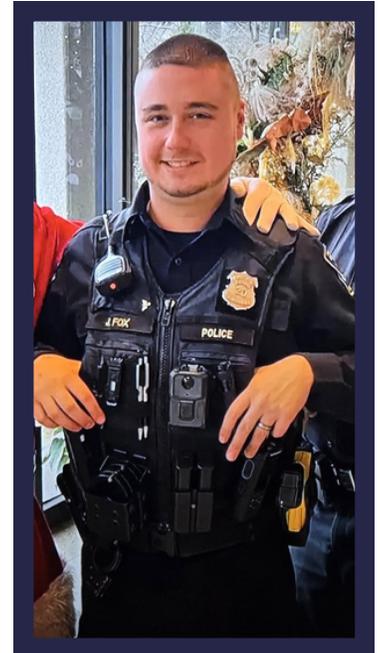


2025 Officer of the Year

Contributed by Chief Tom Wetzel



All personnel had the opportunity to vote for whom they felt deserved to be the employee of the year for 2025 and Officer Jim Fox received the most votes. Officer Fox is a well-respected police officer who is also a field training officer (FTO). This role allows him to have a positive influence on our newly hired officers and convey our culture, values, and principles to them. Congratulations to Officer Jim Fox for this recognition from his peers.



2025 Employees of the Quarters



**1st Quarter:
Dispatchers Emily
Beny & Katy
Michaels**



**2nd Quarter:
Detective Dray
Wilkerson**



**3rd Quarter:
Sergeant Tim Caine**



**4th Quarter:
Officer Jordan
Serrano**

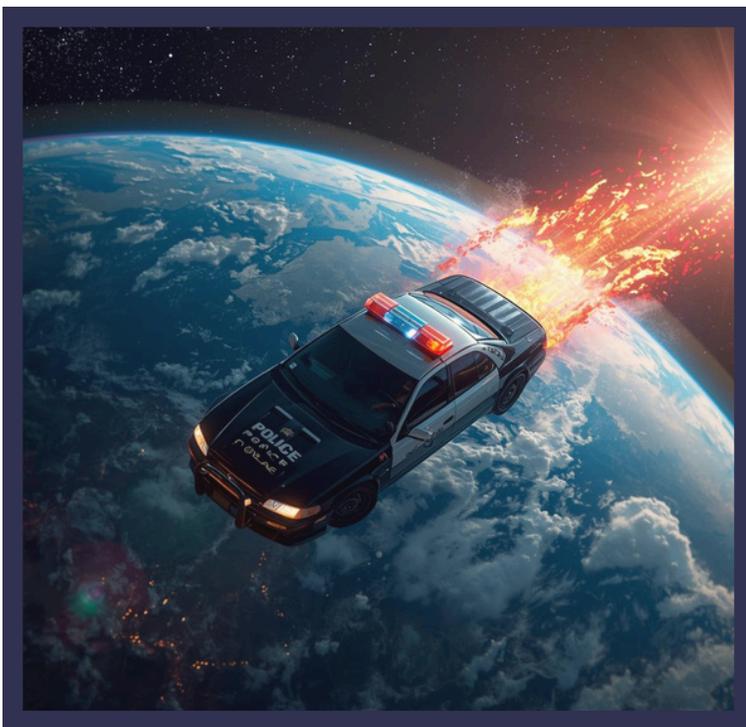
Special Recognition to our Police Mechanic

Contributed by Chief Tom Wetzel

Kevin Pye is our police mechanic and does a fantastic job keeping our fleet of cruisers up and running. Many of these vehicles are in operation 24/7 and in all kinds of weather conditions. Kevin works hard to make sure our cruisers are in good operational order. Kevin has been with UCI for 45 years and is a true Ironman with a wrench. Thank you, Kevin, for all you do for us at UCPD.



Around the World Over 3X



Our department mechanic Kevin Pye tracks our cruiser mileage and reported that our 9 uniform cruisers logged 96,918 total miles in 2025. A conservative estimate was made that at least 85,000 of those miles were direct patrol miles in our University Circle footprint of 1.2 square miles. That is a lot of patrol in a small area and the total mileage is over 3 times around the Earth! Last year we had an estimated 70,000 miles so this was a 21% increase. One of the most important roles we have is to provide a sense of safety and security for those we serve, and this level of high visibility can help achieve that goal as well as prevent crime.

Departmental Statistics

Contributed by Executive Assistant Susie Schwartz

University Circle Police Department tracks statistics that not only measure crimes reported to our agency, but also those which reflect our efforts to maintain visibility and provide service and safety for the people in our community and travelers of all formats throughout University Circle. The following data represent a sample of our departmental activities.

	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
Welfare Checks & 9-1-1 Hangups:	253	295
Psychiatric/Probated Patient Transports:	99	90
Medical and Other Transports:	27	25
General Assistance Rendered:	183	288

Some of the ways we help people.

	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
Disabled Motorists:	178	175
Lockouts:	247	297
Battery Boosts:	143	128
Street Accident Responses:	194	181
Private Property Accident Reports:	165	148
Other Motorist Assists:	441	453

Helping our motorists when things go wrong.

	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
Moving Violations Issued:	214	206
Criminal Citations Issued:	23	29
Written Warnings Issued:	75	175
Verbal Warnings Issued:	643	431
Parking Tickets Issued:	851	518
OVI (Drunk Driver) Arrests:	36!!	5

Using discretion, when appropriate, to enforce traffic laws which promote safety.

Departmental Statistics, continued

	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
Directed Patrols:	6486	5423
Directed Foot Patrols:	1435	1430
Institutional Visits:	549	741
Building Checks:	779	283

Other ways we show up to let the the community know we're looking out for them.

Crime in University Circle

Contributed by Executive Assistant Susie Schwartz

How much crime is occurring in University Circle is a concern for all our community members and anyone who is interested in spending time here. Here are some facts about what types of crime are reported in University Circle.

Criminal incidents can be viewed in three general categories - Crimes Against People include assaults, threats, robberies - crimes that involve a victim who is present at the time and fears for their safety. Crimes Against Property involve all property trespassing, damage or loss done criminally when the victim was either not present or not endangered by the event. Officer-detected crimes represent offenses against the common good with no named victim - such as drug offenses, illegal possession or use of weapons with no intended victim, driving under the influence, etc.

	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>
Total Reports Taken:	1160	948	+22.4%
Criminal Reports:	533	428	+24.5%
Non-criminal Reports:	627	520	+20.6%
Crimes Against Persons:	78	68	+14.7%
Crimes Against Property:	353	333	+6.0%
Officer-Detected Crimes:	72	27	+266.7%

The biggest crime trend in University Circle are those property crimes that target parked, unoccupied motor vehicles. Theft of money, credit cards and unattended firearms tend to be the motivation for the perpetrators. Of all the 533 crimes reported to University Circle in 2025, 281 (52.7%) were car break-ins or auto theft.

Patrol Operations

Contributed by Lieutenant Steve Brady

Patrol operations are directed at the prevention of criminal acts, traffic violations, and the maintenance of public order. Patrol officers respond to calls for service, both routine and emergency. Patrol responsibilities include the investigation of both criminal and non-criminal acts and the apprehension of criminal offenders. Patrol officers engage in community-oriented policing and problem-solving activities, such as citizen assistance and individual citizen contacts of a positive nature. The patrol division is the link between other divisions within the department, as well as other agencies within University Circle. The University Circle Police Department Patrol Division consists of four platoons that work twelve-hour shifts. In 2025 the patrol division affected 205 arrests, which includes fresh arrests and warrant arrests.



SRT Team

Contributed by Lieutenant Steve Brady

Within the past year UCPD began a partnership with CWRU PD to implement an SRT Team, which consists of officers from both departments. Team members from UCPD include Officer Joe Fazio, Officer Alex Bowers, and Officer Larry Karp, with Officer Joe Klepec as a team leader and instructor. The process of membership includes specialty training, an interview process, and a physical agility test to be part of the team. Throughout the year the team has done trainings in areas of building searches, team dynamics, medical, and shooting range. UCPD has the expectation for this team to be operational in mid-2026.

Lexipol

Contributed by Lieutenant Steve Brady

Lexipol is a company that provides integrated policy, training, wellness, and risk management solutions for public safety agencies (law enforcement, fire, corrections, dispatch) to help them stay compliant, reduce risk, and improve performance through standardized policies, daily training bulletins, wellness resources, and reporting tools. Currently UCPD uses eighty-one policies and utilizes the daily training bulletins generated by Lexipol.

Ohio Collaborative

Contributed by Lieutenant Steve Brady

Currently UCPD is a member of the Ohio Collaborative. The Ohio Collaborative is a 12-person panel of law enforcement experts and community leaders from throughout the state, established Ohio's first state law enforcement standards on August 28, 2015. These standards will hold everyone accountable and instill greater confidence with the public. The Collaborative works closely with partners, including the community and law enforcement agencies, to implement new standards. All law enforcement agencies are expected to meet or exceed these standards as they develop policies and procedures to meet new expectations. The Collaborative also provides model policies as a resource for agencies, and OCJS serves as a contact and is available to assist agencies with implementation. Over six hundred law enforcement agencies employing over 29,000 officers (in all eighty-eight counties, representing 87 percent of all law enforcement officers in Ohio and most of Ohio's metropolitan departments) are participating in the certification process. Currently the panel is reviewing UCPD's standards for recertification in Use of Force, Recruitment & Hiring and Community Engagement. UCPD is also seeking certification in Body Worn Cameras.

UCPD Bias-Based Policing Policy

Contributed by Lieutenant Steve Brady

During the annual review period, the University Circle Police Department conducted an evaluation of its bias-based policing practices. This review included an analysis of departmental policies, training programs, enforcement activity, complaint data, and supervisory oversight. Based on the evaluation, no concerns related to bias-based policing were identified.

The University Circle Police Department remains committed to providing fair, impartial, and equitable law enforcement services to all members of the community. Officers consistently complied with established policies and procedures, and there were no substantiated complaints or trends indicating biased conduct during the review period. Continued training and supervisory review ensure that bias-based policing remains a priority, reinforcing the department's commitment to professionalism, accountability, and community trust.

Noteworthy Incidents on Patrol 2025

Contributed by Lieutenant Steve Brady

On 04/10/2025 Officer Fox located a possible disabled vehicle, further investigation revealed the driver and passenger were experiencing a suspected drug overdose. Sgt. Keeper, Officers Fox, and Ridler administered several doses of Narcan to both the driver and passenger. Cleveland EMS transported both parties to the University Hospital Emergency Department in stable condition for further evaluation. Officer Fox did an excellent job recognizing the symptoms of a drug overdose. Sgt. Keeper, Officer Fox, and Ridler were able to utilize their training in the use of Narcan to help save the lives of the driver and passenger.



On 06/25/2024 UCPD received a felony theft complaint. The suspect had stolen multiple credit cards and personal information belonging to the victim. The UCPD Detective Bureau conducted an over a yearlong investigation. On 08/13/2025 the suspect was arrested by Det. Sgt. Lockhart who was assisting the United States Marshal's Service Violent Fugitive Task Force. The suspects charges included Aggravated Theft, two counts of Identity Fraud and Telecommunications Fraud. The suspect accepted a plea arraignment with the Cuyahoga County Court of Common Pleas and is currently serving a six-year prison sentence. Due to the detective bureaus relentlessness, they were able to give closure to the victim.

On 06/26/2025 UCPD Officers Bowers and Grubisic conducted a traffic stop on a vehicle. Two suspects were found in possession of multiple firearms, drugs, cash, electronic devices, and items associated with drug trafficking. With assistance from Officer Fazio the suspects were arrested and charged with drug trafficking, drug possession, possession of criminal tools, having weapons while under disability X2, improperly handling firearms in a motor vehicle and carrying concealed weapons.

On 10/28/2025 Sgt. Keeper, Officers Ridler, Fox, Cerha and Mercado were dispatched to assist the University Hospital Police Department locating a male who had left the hospital during a mental health crisis. Officers later observed the male walking into the Wade Lagoon pond. The male would not comply with officer orders to exit the pond. Officer Ridler observed the male struggling in the water, he took immediate action and entered the water. Officer Ridler was able to pull the male from the water, and it was discovered he was not breathing. Officer then performed CPR on the male, and they were able to revive him. Officer Ridler's heroic action saved this male's life.

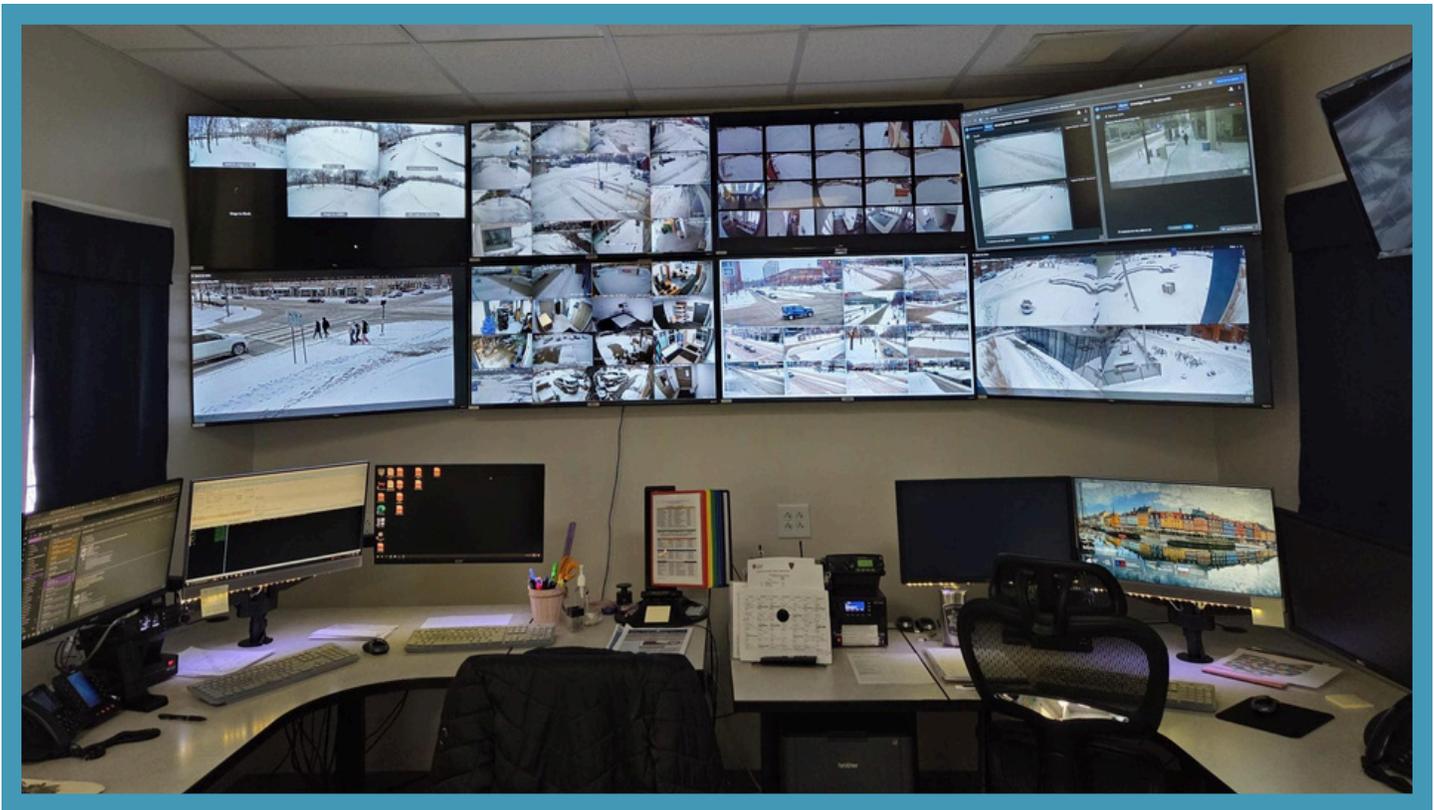


On 12/02/2025 Officers Serrano and Suleiman conducted a traffic stop on a vehicle and discovered a domestic violence situation in progress. Officers were able to determine that the suspect had been assaulting the victim for hours leading up to police interaction. The suspect was arrested and charged with kidnapping, domestic violence, robbery X2, falsification, obstructing official business, escape and resisting arrest.

Dispatch at University Circle PD

Contributed by Captain Alanna Smith

The Dispatch Center had its share of achievements and challenges in 2025. In the first quarter of 2025, Dispatchers Emily Beny and Katy Michaels earned the Officer/Dispatcher of the quarter award for their hard work, flexibility, and dedication to the overall mission of the Department. Both dispatchers worked together to create a Communication Training Program for the University Circle Police Department. This program was put in use when we found ourselves with two full-time vacancies throughout the year. After hundreds of applications were reviewed and multiple interviews conducted, we hired Aurielle Gilmore and Tanner Musson as full-time dispatchers. We added two part-time positions which were filled by Thy Halley and Nikol Saari. Three of our four hires are in training and doing very well in the program.



We continue to upgrade the dispatch center with new programs, software updates, and new equipment. We completed the video screen monitoring wall which will allow us to view many areas in the Circle in real-time from the dispatch center. This adds another layer of safety for our community.

Despite some of the temporary difficulties, our unit finished the year strong. We are looking forward to 2026 where emphasis will be on a new digital dispatch platform, increased training, and community engagement which will include our dispatchers.

Detective Bureau

Contributed by Detective Sergeant Jake Lockhart

The University Circle Police Department Detective Bureau consists of Detective Battista and Detective Wilkerson and is led by Sgt. Lockhart. The UCPD Detective Bureau is responsible for investigating, presenting, and completing casework for all Felony and Escalating Misdemeanor cases to both city and county prosecutors for charging, indictments, and warrants.

The Detective Bureau follows up on reports completed by the Patrol Division and handles evidence collected during the case, forwards evidence that needs to be sent to the Cuyahoga County Regional Scientific Forensic Lab, manages surveillance footage, and handles in depth interviews of both victims and suspects.



In 2025, the UCPD Detective Bureau investigated 188 cases, up from 163 the previous year. The Detective Bureau also worked closely with its safety partners to address an increase in vehicle break ins, which successfully led to the arrest and indictment of approximately 20 juveniles. Additionally, the Detective Bureau handled 490 pieces of evidence, up from 380 in 2025. 22 firearms were seized during criminal investigations. The Detective Bureau successfully investigated, indicted, and helped secure convictions on a wide variety of cases to include Felonious Assault, Identity Fraud, Theft of Motor Vehicle, and Domestic Violence.

Training

Contributed by Detective Sergeant Jake Lockhart

In 2025, all members of The University Circle Police Department successfully completed all 24 hours of their Continuing Professional Training through the State of Ohio, which includes Arrest Search and Seizure, Legal Updates and School Threats.

Additionally, UCPD hosted several regional trainings such as De-escalation Training, Leadership Think Tanks, BCI Critical Incident Training, and Railroad Safety. We also hosted numerous Roll Call Trainings that focused on topics such as Officer Wellness, Suicide Awareness, Cultural Humility, and Crisis Intervention, which were all taught by experts in their field.



UCPD continues to heavily invest in our Officers with In-House Training that includes ongoing Firearm Training (Pistol & Rifle), Taser training, Defensive Tactics, and Active Shooter Training. The Department has added more instructors to ensure we provide high quality monthly training.

In addition to hosting and teaching In-House classes, UCPD has invested significantly in sending Officers to outside trainings including Carbine Instructor, Case Law, Basic Criminal Investigations, SWAT, and Leadership classes.



Officers at the Department are encouraged to exercise while at work as part of our ongoing commitment to Officer Wellness. In 2025, we logged 496 workouts.



Community Engagement

Contributed by Officer Gloria Mercado

The University Circle Police Department (UCPD) continues to strengthen trust and positive relationships with residents and visitors through its Servant Hearts vision, emphasizing community engagement and safety.

Key Initiatives and Achievements

Community Education Programs:

- Graduated seven participants from the second Citizen's Police Academy.
- Offered CPR training, defense tactics, and specialized academies for citizens and L.E.O. family members.
- Expanded training to include de-escalation, senior safety, and crime prevention.
- Developing scenario-based safety exercises with institutions.



K9 Grace Outreach:

- Regular school visits, senior residence outreach, and event participation.
- Sgt. Keeper and Grace received the Community Connector Award for their impact.



Community Engagement, continued

Community Events:

- Officers hosted social events like Coffee, Ice Cream, Pizza, and Shop with a Cop.
- Maintained presence at major UCI events (Parade the Circle, Wade Oval Wednesdays, holiday celebrations).
- Shop with a Cop funded through challenge coin sales led by Officer Serano.



School Engagement:

- Continued Tip Our Badge awards at Mary Bethune School.
- Delivered seven educational presentations on safety topics to over one hundred students across multiple schools.
- Launched Navigator Mentoring Program for grades 8-12; first participant, Ayden Ealy, completed mentorship and received educational incentives, including music lessons and a donated trumpet.



Community Engagement, continued

2026 events (with more to come):

- Jazz with a Cop - January 29, 2026
- Yoga with a Cop - February 27, 2026
- Summer Musical Collaboration - An 8-week program with the Center for Arts-Inspired Learning (sponsored by the Cleveland Police Foundation) where officers and students learn instruments together, ending with a concert performance
- Navigator Program Expansion - Two students have already expressed interest for Summer 2026
- Resident's welfare checks
- Weekly visits to Judson Manor, Judson Park, and Abington Arms to chat with residents, assist and check on their well-being
- High School Presentations continued with new topics
 - Physical Bullying: "Using Hands to Help, Not Hurt"
 - Cyberbullying: "Your Digital Footprint and Responsibility"
 - Time Management: "Get Things Done and Still Have Fun"

In the works:

- High School Art Competition - A creative engagement initiative encouraging student expression and connection with officers
- Additional Community-Based Programs and initiatives are planned to strengthen engagement, build trust, and support youth development.



Impact:

These efforts foster trust, create safer environments, and highlight UCPD's commitment to meaningful community partnerships.

Auxiliary Unit

Contributed by Sergeant Chris Hovan

The University Circle Police Department Auxiliary Unit consists of trained volunteers who dedicate their time to our community's safety and help UCPD deliver our philosophy of Community Policing.

In 2025, Auxiliary Officers logged 373 hours of their time conducting high visibility directed patrols, institution visits and foot patrols. Auxiliary Officers regularly assisted and supplemented patrol officers with traffic control, security at special events and community outreach initiatives. Auxiliary Officers assisted with vehicle lockouts, scene security, and disabled motor vehicles, all while providing an extra set of eyes and ears for crime prevention.



2025 saw the addition of two more Auxiliary Officers who received departmental training in defensive tactics, traffic control, pepper spray, handcuffing, bodycam use, and department policies. Auxiliary Officers also regularly participated in department roll call trainings covering such topics as Officer Wellness and Court Room Testimony.

Since its inception the Auxiliary Unit has been a welcome part of the University Circle Police Department helping move forward toward the department's goal of being a national model of excellence.



Citizen's Police Academy

Contributed by Sergeant Chris Hovan

In the fall of 2025, University Circle Police Department hosted its second annual Citizens Police Academy. Headed by Det. Tony Battista and Sgt. Chris Hovan, 2025's Citizens Academy welcomed ten participants. Meeting once a week for two-hour sessions, students gained valuable knowledge about the workings of law enforcement and police procedure. Students received condensed versions of training that police officers typically endure. The first hour of each session consisted of a classroom lecture which then led to the second hour of hands-on participation.



Topics included police dispatch/911 calls, providing witness statements, police response, investigations, personal and home safety, along with defensive tactics. Participants had the opportunity to experience the MILO firearms simulator which allowed them to witness how quickly situations can unfold and how police officers need to make split second decisions under high stress. The class also had the opportunity to conduct simulated traffic stops and process a mock crime scene.

This year's Citizens Academy featured guest speakers, Holly Miktarian, and Cliff Kime. Holly shared the story of her husband Josh, a police officer who was killed in the line of duty in 2008. Cliff spoke of officer wellness and the programs available to help officers who are experiencing stress.

The UCPD Citizens Academy had a very positive result. Participants showed great interest and promising community involvement in the future.



CIS Report

Contributed by CIS Jaenin Deskin

In 2025, Crisis Intervention Specialist (CIS) had a total of 75 encounters. These encounters resulted from referrals by law enforcement, outside agencies, proactive outreach, and walk-in requests for CIS assistance. The focus has been on engagement, resource provision, and linkage to appropriate community services while minimizing the need for enforcement-based responses. April had the highest activity during months. Several interactions required welfare checks, hospital transports, or provider linkage.

In addition to direct services, the CIS unit completed a successful winter clothing and housing items donation drive. These donations were provided to a local community agency, NorthEast Ohio Coalition for the Homeless (NEOCH) to support its upcoming community programs, Tierra Marie Empowerment House and the low barrier Temporary Shelter. The unit also hosted a Connecting the Community meeting, bringing together local agencies and Crisis Intervention Teams to address service gaps, increase resource awareness and enhance collaborative efforts.

Overall, CIS engagement and activities demonstrate the unit's role in addressing complex behavioral health and social service needs within the community.

- Total Encounters: 75
- CIS Referrals - 69 (66 Referrals by LE and 3 Outside Agencies)
- CIS review of CAD: 3 (non-referral - CIS made/attempted contact based on CAD review)
- Foot Patrol: 2 (non-referral - CIS encounters during foot patrol)
- Walk-Ins: 1 (non-referral - Came into station seeking assistance)
- Initial Contacts (First contact with the referred person): 50
- Prior Referral (More than one referral - different report/CAD number): 5
- Family and Agency Contact: 11
- 3 people referred and CIS had contact with an agency or family member - Direct link to community agency.
- 8 people referred and CIS had contact with an agency or family member - CIS provided resources to community agency.
- 1 had a second referral (different CAD/report number)
- Unable to contact: 23
- 15 Unable to locate, or no returned call from attempts.
- 8 Out of the area, and no viable phone number.

Outcomes:

- Response to Resistance (hands on): 0
- Resources Provided: 41 (8, given to community agency or family member)
- Linked to Agency: 5 (3, given to community agency or family member)
- Welfare Check Only: 6
- Declined Services: 5
- Transported to the Hospital: 4
- Probate: 1
- Crisis Calls: 3
- § Pink Slip: 1
- § Substance Use: 1
- § Mental Health (Voluntary): 1

Sergeant Keeper and Community K-9 Grace

Contributed by Sergeant Kurt Keeper

K-9 Grace, a yellow Labrador retriever, has continued her specialized role as a community policing dog, focusing on fostering positive relationships with the public rather than engaging in traditional, enforcement-oriented duties. Her work has been instrumental in building bridges within the community and enhancing the department's outreach efforts.

Throughout 2025, Grace maintained an active presence in several key areas:



Active Community Engagement: Grace participated in numerous community policing initiatives, including regular interactions in institutions, schools and businesses. These efforts have significantly strengthened relationships with students, faculty members, and local residents across the University Circle and Little Italy jurisdiction.

Public Appearances: Serving as a friendly and approachable face of the department, Grace took part in various public events throughout the University Circle area. Her presence has supported the department's engagement with community members and institutions such as Judson Manor, further solidifying trust and goodwill.



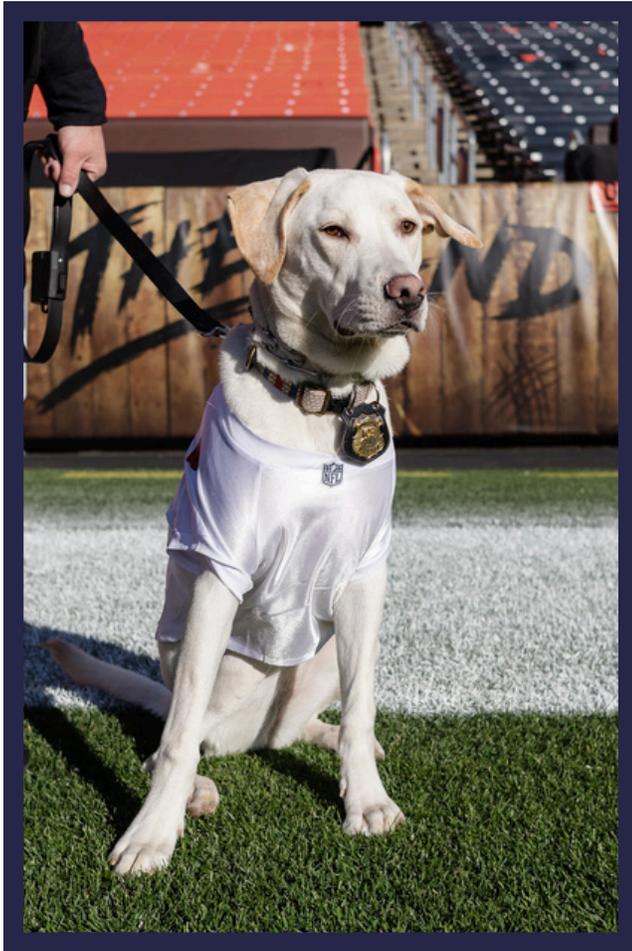
Comfort and Support: As a trained therapy dog, Grace provides valuable emotional support and comfort, particularly to children. Her role in easing tension during high-stress situations has been a critical component of the department's community services.

Sergeant Keeper and K-9 Grace, continued

Officer Wellness: Grace has also contributed to the well-being of our officers and staff by offering comfort and stress relief, thereby promoting overall departmental health and morale.



“Top Dog” Competition: Early in 2025, Grace gained recognition as a contender in a statewide “Top Dog” competition from the Light Ohio Blue organization, following her previous achievement of placing third in her category. This accolade highlights her outstanding demeanor and dedication.



Handler Partnership: Grace sustained a strong working relationship with her handler, Sergeant Kurt Keeper. Together, we have engaged the public through non-traditional methods, such as visits to local institutions and outreach programs, expanding the reach and impact of the department’s community policing strategies.



K-9 Grace stands out as one of the few K-9 units dedicated exclusively to community outreach, emotional support, and enhancing police-community relations within our region. Her continued presence and active involvement underscore the department’s commitment to compassionate and effective community service.

Transportation Planning & Programming

Contributed by Alex Abramowitz, Director of Transportation for University Circle, Inc.

Overview

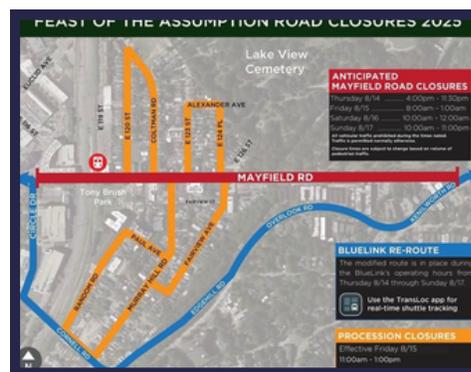
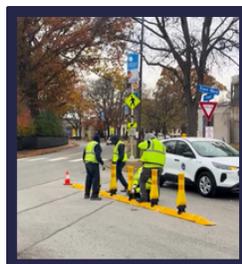
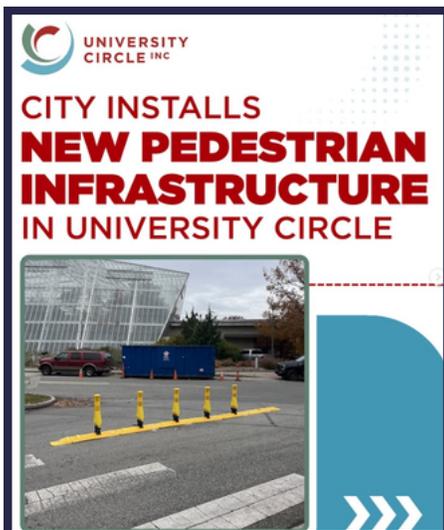
The University Circle Police Department (UCPD) and University Circle Inc (UCI) work collaboratively to promote a safe and efficient transportation network for all modes of transportation in University Circle. Through strategic planning, data driven initiatives, and multi stakeholder coordination, UCI has established a comprehensive and collaborative approach to transportation safety.

Key Metrics:

- 9 meetings of STAC (Sustainable Transportation Advisory Committee)
- 4 meetings of Pedestrian Safety Advisory Committee
- 12 installations of safe speed signage sets
- 17 CircleLink signs repaired
- Roughly 0.66 miles or 3,500 feet of roadway resurfaced (Circle Drive, Mayfield to Adelbert 2,000 feet; Magnolia, E 108 to Mistletoe 1,500 feet)
- 17 City of Cleveland 311 advocacy items
- 6 Streetlight outage advocacy items

Strategic Planning

UCI leads districtwide transportation planning and programming in University Circle. To support this work, in 2025 UCI undertook a public realm master planning process, titled Connecting the Circle. That plan will be published in early 2026. The plan emphasizes transportation safety and provides actionable recommendations for both immediate and long-term improvements. It places particular emphasis on the Harrison Dillard Trail, dangerous and stressful intersections, and uncomfortable spaces under rail underpasses. This planning process has catalyzed a transportation network study that is planned for 2026. That study will evaluate how University Circle's street network can be modified to enhance safety, efficiency, and attractiveness.



Transportation Planning & Programming, continued

Coordination and Implementation

Sustainable Transportation Advisory Committee:

UCI convenes the Sustainable Transportation Advisory Committee (STAC) with institutional and public sector representatives to advance transportation initiatives across University Circle. This employer-focused working group enables organizations to share information, identify problems, and coordinate solutions. In broad terms, the committee focuses on making it easier and more attractive for University Circle employees to commute via alternative modes of transportation. Making an impact in the area involves working on everything from employer benefits policies to sidewalk snow removal.

In 2025, UCI convened 9 STAC meetings with participating organizations including University Hospitals, Case Western Reserve University, the VA, CIA, CIM, and CCF, as well as the City of Cleveland, NOACA, GCRTA, and Laketran.

Capital Projects and Infrastructure:

UCI is actively implementing capital projects and programs that advance transportation safety. In 2025, UCI invested \$25,883.50 in its comprehensive wayfinding and transportation signage systems. The largest expenditure was a wholesale repair of aging identification and wayfinding signage at CircleLink shuttle stops, ensuring safe and stable structures with accurate, up to date information. UCI also invested in pedestrian wayfinding maps at strategic locations throughout the district, speed limit signage to encourage safe driving, and removal of unnecessary parking signage to maintain clarity within the district's wayfinding network.

UCI is working with the City on its Wade Park Avenue street redesign project, with construction slated to begin in 2027. UCI is collaborating with the City and Bike Cleveland to engage the community and solicit input as the City finalizes its design. This project will slow vehicle speeds, reduce high-risk pedestrian-vehicle conflicts, improve bike infrastructure, and enhance community safety.

Collaborative Problem Solving:

A notable 2025 example demonstrates UCI's capacity to advocate, coordinate, and spur results. The VA identified safety and traffic challenges at East Boulevard intersections with both Magnolia Drive and Wade Park Avenue. UCI evaluated the situation, collected and shared data, and led a coordinated response with UCPD and the City's Division of Traffic Engineering.

The intersection of East Boulevard and Magnolia Drive suffered from poor visibility due to street geometry and parking configuration, resulting in multiple crashes. Additionally, during afternoon rush, traffic backed up from East Boulevard and Wade Park Avenue all the way to the VA's employee garage exit. With a green light lasting only 27 seconds per cycle and a red light lasting one minute, these drivers were waiting through multiple light cycles before reaching the intersection. By the time that they did, many of these drivers would run the red light. UCI observed that a car was running the red light at this intersection at about 50% of the light cycles, creating serious hazards.

UCI's collaborative response included: UCPD deploying an officer during afternoon rush to assist with traffic control to exiting VA employees; the City reconfiguring street parking on East Boulevard to reduce blind spots; and adjustment of traffic light cycle timing at East Boulevard and Wade Park Avenue. After these changes, the VA's afternoon rush is barely noticeable. Drivers have better visibility, experience shorter wait times, and run far fewer red lights. Both intersections are now considerably safer and more efficient.

Transportation Planning & Programming, continued

Project Yield Engagement and Advocacy

On average, 20 pedestrians are struck by cars every year in University Circle. Project Yield, a community driven pedestrian safety initiative launched in 2020, addresses this critical public safety concern through enhanced data collection, increased public awareness, and advocacy for targeted infrastructure improvements. Through this work and recommendations emerging from Connecting the Circle, we are well-positioned to continue advocating and pursuing funding for the infrastructure needed to improve transportation safety.

UCI convenes quarterly Pedestrian Safety Advisory Meetings in collaboration with UCPD, bringing together community members concerned with pedestrian and bike safety. These meetings facilitate sharing of crash data, trends, analysis, project updates, and community input. Through these gatherings, UCI builds trust and identifying actionable safety concerns.

Also critical to transportation safety is the routine but essential work of identifying and addressing everyday infrastructure issues: broken streetlights, missing or damaged signage, and malfunctioning pedestrian signals. UCI systematically collects reports from community members and ensures they reach appropriate city departments or property owners for timely repair. UCI also deploys high-visibility signage around University Circle to remind drivers of speed limits and encourage safe driving. This unglamorous work forms the foundation of a safe transportation network.

Roadway Maintenance and Advocacy

UCI leads University Circle's annual roadway assessment and advocacy efforts to ensure city leadership understands the district's most pressing infrastructure needs. Since demand for repairs exceeds available funding, this advocacy is essential in helping prioritize projects and increasing the likelihood they receive the necessary attention and resources.

Each summer, UCI assesses the condition of all University Circle roadways, assigning letter grades in accordance with American Society of Civil Engineers guidelines. UCI evaluates these results alongside data on traffic volumes, crashes, and area construction projects to create a draft list of resurfacing advocacy recommendations. This draft is discussed with partner institutions through various channels, including STAC meetings. By year end, UCI finalizes recommendations and advocates to relevant council members and city departments. This advocacy led to the 2025 resurfacing of Circle Drive in April and Magnolia Drive in July, for a total of about 3,500 linear feet of new pavement.

Moving forward, UCI plans to include speed tables and other targeted safety related capital improvements in this advocacy campaign.

Community Engagement and Communications

UCI regularly communicates transportation information with the public, reaching approximately 1,500 subscribers through its uGO email newsletter and 2,000 transportation alert subscribers. The newsletter provides news and updates on topics like active transportation, bike and pedestrian safety, and public transportation. UCI's transportation alerts share time sensitive information regarding construction projects, events, service changes, and other disruptions to the local transportation network. These communications are supplemented with accompanying social media posts to maximize reach. UCI issued seven of these newsletters and eighteen transportation alerts in 2025.

Artist's Touch at UCPD

Contributed by Executive Assistant Susie Schwartz

This past year, visitors to our police station located at 12100 Euclid Avenue have been welcomed in the lobby by a colorful mask prominently displayed on the wall. This mask is a remarkable piece on loan to us from local artist Sylvia Munodawafa. Sylvia, selected as the inaugural Artist-in-Residence for University Circle, Inc., has generously shared several of her works for us to showcase in both our lobby and inner spaces and office walls.

We at UCPD have come to view this mask as a guardian for all those who come to our police station seeking the safety and assistance that our officers are here to provide.



Pictured from left to right: Capt. Alanna Smith, Artist Sylvia Munodawafa, Lt. Steve Brady and Chief Tom Wetzel



To find Sylvia's artwork on display or inquire about her art, she can be contacted on Instagram @artislife_28 or by email at tsere28@yahoo.com



A Look Ahead

Contributed by Chief Tom Wetzel

- **Recognition as an Elite Police Institution and National Model of Excellence**
- **Maintain an employee-centric focus with opportunities for professional self-actualization**
- **Continued focus on a blended law enforcement and community policing approach to service**
- **Fully staffed Police Department**
- **Expand our Officer Wellness programming**
- **Have a fully operational Special Response Team**
- **Establish our first Honor Guard Unit**
- **Increases our number of foot patrols, institution visits, building checks, and directed patrols**
- **Complete training garage project**

