

Communiversity Fast Facts

Background: Communiversity is a 501(c)3 organization at the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC). It was founded in the fall of 1970 and remains, to date, the largest all-volunteer adult education program in the country. Enlisting the help of an advisory board made up of our constituents (UMKC students, conveners, community leaders, UMKC faculty and staff), Communiversity maintains its history of true collaboration and community action-oriented goals. Currently, its staff of one full-time employee, one part-time employee and work study positions manages all daily operations, including the yearly wholistic health fair. The mission of this lifelong learning center is to provide the Kansas City Metro area with an open forum in which to learn, teach, and discuss a wide array of topics.

Services: Communiversity provides the following services and programs: 1) A continuous schedule of classes and seminars provided at no charge to UMKC students, and at a nominal fee for everyone else. Class topics include such topics as *Much Ado About Shakespeare*, *Bead Looming 101*, *Belly Dance*, *Estate Planning*, *English Language Composition*, *Basic Bicycle Maintenance*, *Real Estate Spanish*, *Gemstone Identification*, *Kundalini Yoga*, *How to Meet Your Mate in 90 Days or Less*, *Labyrinth Exploration*, *UFO's in the 21st Century*, and *Tae Kwon Do*, among others. Over 900 classes are offered each year;. 2) A "Wholistic Health Fair" offered yearly, to promote awareness and education in the field of health and preventative services; 3) An on-going series of featured courses entitled "Outside the Box," in which panelists hold discussions and debates regarding important current issues and their social ramifications; 4) Communiversity brings in local celebrities such as Bryan Busby and Erin Little of KMBC Channel Nine and Lewis Diuguid, Aaron Barnhart and Bill Tammeus of the Kansas City Star to offer short classes on a variety of subjects.

Achievements: A 35 year tradition of providing community education and awareness about issues ranging from crocheting to political activism, Communiversity has a distribution of approximately 140,000 catalogs per year, at over 500 locations in the Kansas City area, generating roughly 8,500 registrations per year. Because of our wide distribution and usage, there are many success stories that have emerged from class offerings. Here are a few:

Kansas City's Community Radio Station got its start as a Communiversity class. It was offered as a way for people to find out about the possibilities inherent in community radio. People signed up and volunteered in hopes to start a community radio station. After 10 years of hard work and continuing to offer the class KKFI was a reality.

City in Motion is a not for profit dance school that offers scholarships to needy children. At one point the organization was dangerously close to closing. They began offering beginning classes through Communiversity which helped market their offerings to a larger community. City in Motion is now in it's 20th year of operation.

Partnerships: Communiversity has partnered with area public libraries, community centers, and various conveners to provide a unique forum for teaching and learning. Communiversity gratefully acknowledges the time and effort provided by over 450 conveners per year in carrying out this organization's mission for diversity and inclusion in the collaborative process that is education.

Funding & Budget: Communiversity is a self-supporting organization and raises 90% of its own annual budget, receiving in-kind assistance from its affiliate, UMKC with office space and class rooms. Our expenses are approximately \$95,000 per year which includes salaries, phones, and printing of the catalogs. Our income is derived from registrations, ads, the Wholistic Health Fair and corporate donations.

The Near Future: We continue to make access to our program as easy as possible. We hope to have registration on-line by this fall. Our widespread distribution, popular classes, and easy and free access have made Communiversity a unique addition to the Kansas City landscape. With help, together we can make Communiversity a household name.

For more information, call the Communiversity office at 816-235-1448 or write us at Communiversity/UMKC , 5327 Holmes, Kansas City, MO 64110, Fax #: 816-235-5612; email: commu@umkc.edu; web site: www.umkc.edu/commu