

# The Five Purposes of Rohs Street Café

1. We exist to provide a gathering place for our community.

In a culture of drive-thrus and paper cups, coffeehouses, once classic places of informal community gathering, are becoming less and less an integral part of the local community. From the very first Arab cafes of the 16<sup>th</sup> century to the 1960's beatnik coffeehouses in San Francisco, people have gathered around a cup of coffee to converse, debate, dream, and create. Fearing the power of these social meetings to breed political and social unrest, King Charles II of England even banned coffeehouses for a short time.

Rohs Street Café is committed to provide a space that encourages these social meetings. In addition to the informal gathering of people in our community, neighborhood associations, community organizers, political activists, religious groups, and university classes all use our space to host meetings. The service we provide, the business decisions we make and the attention paid to the atmosphere are all done with this purpose in mind.

2. We exist to generate financial resources for our community.

As a non-profit business, Rohs Street Café is self-sufficient. This means that, while a large portion of other non-profits' time and energy has to go into raising funds to operate, we are able to focus all our time on serving our community. However, we are not satisfied with being only self-sufficient and nothing more. Our goal is to be a profitable business dedicated to providing financial resources for our community.

Rohs Street Café is officially a non-profit entity organized within the 501c(3) status of University Christian Church. While we do receive some assistance from the general funds of University Christian Church, profits from the café are kept separate from and do not return to the general church fund. The board of directors for Rohs Street Café serves as the decision making body for the dispersing of the profits.

3. We exist to encourage, promote, and facilitate local artists.

Started by artists, musicians and arts enthusiasts, Rohs Street Café has always valued the important role of the arts in our community. A large portion of our initial investment and design went to creating a quality venue for the arts. Over 300 performances have been hosted at the café to date. Visual artists have used our space to display, sell and auction their works. The majority of our volunteer hours, over 4000, have been spent facilitating this. While Uptown Cincinnati has a few other performance spaces for local musicians, Rohs Street is unique in its larger but intimate

space, quality of sound, variety of music, and no cost to customers or artists policy (artists can charge a small door fee of which they receive 100%)

4. We exist to promote socially conscious trade and consumption.

In our age of increasing global trade, we as consumers are by and large unaware of where our purchases come from, who made them and at what cost. In light of this, Rohs Street Café is committed to offering only Fair Trade certified coffee, tea and chocolate. The Fair Trade certification guarantees that consumers are buying products that are traded in a manner that is equitable and sustainable to the producers and their environment. We offer these products as well as opportunities for consumers to become more educated about the issues surrounding Fair Trade.

5. We exist to better connect the local church with the community at large.

Uptown Cincinnati is a community that is diverse in race, religion, culture and politics. Many churches have seen this as a reason to leave to a more homogenous neighborhood in the suburbs. In contrast University Christian Church was started and has remained in Clifton Heights for 14 years desiring to be a resource and vital part of this diverse community. Rohs Street Café was born out of that vision. On one hand we offer the church and its members an opportunity to interact in the larger community while on the other we offer the community an opportunity to interact with the work of the church. There are many values prevalent in Uptown Cincinnati which are shared by University Christian Church including the desire for social justice, revitalizing our neighborhoods and developing the artistic community. Rohs Street Café's purpose is to facilitate this connection for the betterment of our community and world.

# Commitment to Quality

We are in a very competitive business. There are far more coffeehouses that close within their beginning years than there are that survive. Starbucks has gotten to where they are because of their consistency and quality. Many independent shops fail because they cannot match Starbucks quality let alone beat it. That is why we at Rohs Street Café are dedicated to offering the best quality drinks in Cincinnati. It's not only satisfying to serve someone the best drink we can; it's also a matter of survival.

What makes our drinks better?

## Beans – The Foundation

In conjunction with our roaster, we select the best available Fair Trade beans from around the world. These are then roasted in small batches locally and used within a week. We are equally choosy about our other base products such as chocolate and tea.

## Drink Preparation

Good beans can only get us so far. That's why we need to pay special attention to the details of preparation. From extracting the perfect shot of espresso in 28 seconds to steaming milk into a thick velvet texture, small changes can either produce a great drink or a very mediocre one. In paying attention to these details we can produce a much better drink.