

CITY VISION

More Images From
the City Hall Lofts Opening



CITY NOTES

SUMMER 2005

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE FRIENDS OF CITY VISION MINISTRIES

City Hall Lofts Open in a Grand Way

City Vision Ministries celebrated the Grand Reopening of the Historic City Hall building at 6th & Ann and the completion of Historic City Hall Lofts on June 17. On hand to help cut the ribbon on two first floor units were current Mayor Joe Reardon, 1911 Mayor James Patterson (a reenactor from the Wyandotte County Museum), who presided over the building's original opening, Scott Berghaus with Bank of America, Congressional staffers, Commissioner Bill Miller and BPU President George Powell. Helping celebrate were young steppers, harpists, two dozen antique cars (including a Model T of 1911 vintage), a big band, a barbecue courtesy of BPU and several hundred people. Many coming through the building knew it long ago and could be overheard in the hallways saying, "Now the Mayor's office was around here somewhere..."



The building is not yet fully leased, though the penthouse in the former women's jail was one of the first leases signed. Amenities include keyed entry, parking garage, outdoor courtyard, laundry rooms, dishwashers, spacious lobbies and high ceilinged units with tall windows. The remaining units are reserved for those with modest income – for more information, call 913-233-2500. "We are excited to finally see this building lit up at night. We believe it is the beginning of more residential development in the downtown area," says City Vision President John



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HOW'S THIS FOR A SUMMER JOB?

Nearly every morning this summer, nine high school students have arrived at City Vision Ministries, mixed paint, strapped on harnesses, and climbed scaffolding to go to work painting a nearly 3000 square foot mural at 749 Minnesota that takes the form of the traditional embroidered art of the Hmong culture—a storycloth.

Come help us celebrate.
Mural Dedication
August 13, 4 – 6 p.m.

The mural is the kids' own design. With the help of veteran muralists and teachers Joe Faus and Alisha Gambino, they

researched Hmong culture and textiles, brainstormed and asked for feedback from Hmong leaders. This yielded a design about work, celebration and bridging the old world and the new. The students decided to place a traditional Hmong courting ritual as one of the centerpieces of the mural – the ball toss. A ball tossed between a scene representing village life in East Asia and one of urban life in Kansas City, Kansas "marries" both sides.

The students in the program were recruited by their art teachers at Wyandotte High School or recommended through a Hmong youth group. Together, they represent four high schools. They cite a combination of reasons for signing up: they intend to go to art school and will add this to their portfolio, they have an interest in murals, and they want to explore their own history and culture. Through the program, the youth have had the opportunity to talk about the project with downtown leaders and stakeholders and to sit down with Congressman Dennis Moore.

This is the third of a dozen murals of culture and community that City Vision hopes to install downtown. The Hmong Church at 7th Street and Washington Blvd. is a significant institution downtown and community leaders had a strong vision for a mural that they wanted to share. This is the first youth mural that City Vision has sponsored. Funding from LISC and the Kauffman Foundation's Youth Advisory Board will make it possible for these students to continue their jobs into the fall – installing a mural for Pandarama Daycare at 7th & Nebraska, and to continue the program next summer.

Young artists and Congressman Moore in front of mural after a work day in June. From left to right: Starbright Jackson, Jerry Her, Liz Smith, Luis Hernandez, Darrel Taylor, Congressman Moore, Mandy Her, Jerry Moua, Andy Xiong. Not pictured: Ku Her, Maria Mijares.

NEW EMPLOYEE WORKS WITH DOWNTOWN

City Vision Ministries hired Silvia Honda in June to be the new Commercial and Business Services Manager. Silvia's position represents a commitment on the part of City Vision and its funder LISC to increase delivery of services to downtown merchants and stakeholders.

City Vision Ministries has worked with the Downtown Shareholders for over two years. It started as a grass roots group of organizations, businesses and neighborhood leaders convening to reexamine the downtown plan done in 1991. It now has a mailing list of five-hundred and four active committees. People know it to be a clearinghouse for information, a forum for conversations and the force for a cooperative solution to issues involved in revitalizing the Minnesota Avenue corridor. Up until now, it's been staffed by volunteers.

Silvia will administer and expand City Vision's Façade Improvement – which gives small retail businesses matching grants to add new signage, awnings, windows and to paint and repair their storefronts. She will work with Community Policing, facilitate regular merchant meetings, and work on joint promotions for businesses and events. She will also provide asset management for City Vision's downtown residential loft and townhouse properties.

Originally from Brazil, Silvia moved to Kansas City in 1999. She graduated from Park University with a degree in finance and international business. Silvia has worked for Olathe based Transformational Journeys, a non-profit organization that sponsors humanitarian trips, the Applied Language Institute at Penn Valley Community College and in the restaurant industry. She says of her move to City Vision, "I am thrilled to be a part of a team that is working toward the progress of downtown KCK."

