

Kansas City Youth Commission



Annual Report 2008-2009

Letter from the Chairwoman:

During the past term, the Kansas City Youth Commission had the opportunity to connect the young people of Kansas City to their government officials. The Kansas City Youth Commission has addressed the underlying concerns of Kansas City's youth and conducted researches that will be used to motivate them to achieve their future goals, giving them opportunity for better education, improved health, community service projects, employment, special events and entertainment.

The commissioners faced challenges taking these tasks upon themselves, but succeeded in growing as a link between the young people of Kansas City and the civic government officials. We brought awareness to topics that haven't been fully addressed, and influenced our city government to help resolve these issues for the betterment of our city's youth.

The tennis and baseball clinics gave young people a great chance to express themselves in a healthy environment, while making friends. They received advice about their athletic abilities, giving them a healthy perspective on continuing their sports goals. National Youth Service Day gave young people a chance to give back to the community with other young people. Activities, like the Bright Future Employment Fair, give young people in the Kansas City area the opportunity to be viewed as young adults who make the impossible, possible.

As a commission, we are aware of the many concerns, which we have yet to address, to improve this city. We have faith that throughout the next few years, we can continue to establish connections with the city government to adopt our legislations, address important issues, and establish funding for activities, events and programs that can assist young people in building a better future.

Sincerely,

Michelle Wilson, Chairwoman
Kansas City Youth Commission

Dedication to Service

During the 2008-2009 term, the Kansas City Youth Commission put a tremendous amount of work and effort into improving Kansas City's living conditions for youth and for the population at large. They spent a collective 1,763 hours dedicated to serving Kansas City. Latia Thomas, Andrew Schofield, Kaprienne Johnson and Bernice Olivares put in more than 100 service hours, while Michelle Wilson, Claire West and MarShuna Parker each completed more than 200 hours. The Commission did its best to encourage other young people to contribute their time to community service in the city as well, and believes that by leading by example has a large impact on youth in the community.

First District



Second District



Third District



Fourth District



Fifth District



Sixth District



Committees

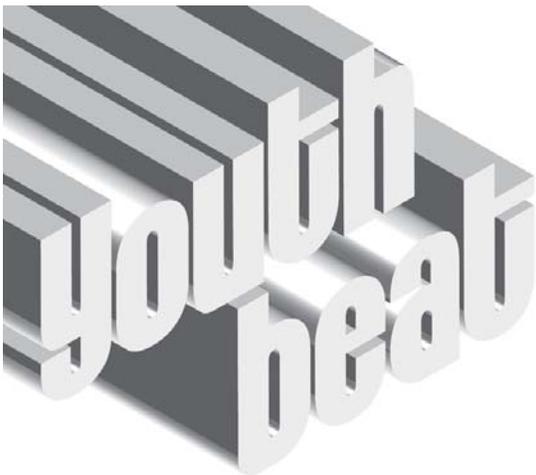
Neighborhood and Community

The Neighborhood and Community Service committee worked hard planning the National Youth Service Day Rally and President's Volunteer Award Ceremony in Kansas City, both held April 25, 2008. The President's Volunteer Service Award ceremony recognizes youth at the gold, silver and bronze category of service. Commissioners receiving the bronze level for community service hours include: Michelle Wilson, Jon Powell, Claire West, Marshuna Parker and Berneice Olivares.

The Neighborhood and Community Commission also addressed city recycling, suggesting that a city recycling program be mandatory for every company that purchases a newspaper subscriptions.

Media and Public Relations

The Media and Public Relations Committee focused primarily on the publication of the Fall 2008 Youth Beat Magazine. The magazine focused on fall fashion, with features including, 10 hot gadgets, getting ready for college and fall activities. The Fall 2008 Youth Beat also highlighted the goals of the commissioners in each district, including a letter from Claire West (6th district) and Andrew Schofield (4th district).



Special Events and Projects Committee

The Special Events and Projects committee spent a majority of their time planning Agenda KC.

Agenda KC:

Every year, the City of Kansas City, Mo., hosts the Agenda KC Leadership Conference for young leaders to convene for an exciting day of networking, leadership training and learning new ways to make a difference in their communities. Agenda KC is designed to foster professional skills and career exploration among high school juniors and seniors. The conference focused on fields such as:

- Professional development
- Personal finance
- Civic and Political engagement
- Personal development
- Education and Career exploration
- Entrepreneurship

The Second Annual Agenda KC Youth Leadership Conference was held Nov. 21, 2008, at the Kansas City Convention Center. Tom Bloch, former CEO of H&R Block and founder of University Academy, was the keynote speaker. Before Bloch's speech, the high school juniors and seniors from the Kansas City Metro area attended four workshops of their choosing.

The Committee took care of sponsor donations and planned everything from the catering services to the speaker.

The Special Events and Projects committee also planned and budgeted the City Manager's Luncheon, an event that recognizes high school juniors and seniors from the Kansas City School District, who have exceeded educational standards at their schools. Sixteen students were recognized for their outstanding performances during the 2008-2009 school year.

Legislative

The Legislative Committee's underlying concern was the enforcement and regulation of the youth curfew policy. The committee suggests that the current punishment (a fee of \$1), be changed to a minimum fee of \$50 and a maximum fee of \$500. In the committee's opinion, the \$1 fee is not harsh enough to keep youth from violating curfew. As an alternative, the committee suggests enforcing that violators perform service projects to reconcile the offense. The youth would have the opportunity to choose a service project that interests them. The goal of the service project is, not only to serve as a form of chastisement, but also to teach youth to be motivated to work toward something they enjoy and can feel a sense of pride and accomplishment for.

The Legislative Committee also set a goal to unify all Kansas City School District recycling programs to further the green initiative.

Employment

The Employment Committee focused on the Bright Future Employment Fair, held July 31, 2008, for the fourth consecutive year. The Bright Future Employment Fair provides employment opportunities to the young people of Kansas City, ages 15-22. This year 11 high schools participated.

The purpose of the Bright Future Employment Fair is to help and encourage young people to get started on their career paths, in turn, raising the employment rate for the state of Missouri. It has employed more than 1,000 young people in Kansas City, with one of the government or private-sector organizations involved with the fair. The Bright Future Employment Fair offers Kansas City youth the opportunity to develop their skills and gain entry-level experience. The Employment Committee aided in the planning of the fair and served as ushers, presenters and other various contributing roles for the employment fair.



Bright Future Employment Fair



Bright Future Employment Fair

In addition to the Bright Future Employment Fair, the City of Kansas City allocates various internship positions at city hall for young people in the area. The City Internship Program originated within the city manager's office; and, although it is in a direct partnership with the University of Missouri-Kansas City, the University of Missouri, the University of Kansas, Kansas State, and other area colleges are encouraged to join

The interns at city hall aided in training 1,100 high school students—who participated in the Bright Future Employment Fair—for professional development. With 90 interns participating during the 2008-2009 term, the City Internship Program provided Kansas City with a social cost-benefit of more than \$1 million.

Justice and Education

The Justice and Education Committee, along with the Legislative Committee, worked to adjust the youth curfew policy in downtown Kansas City, reasoning that stricter and harsher enforcement would negate the amount of teenagers out after reasonable hours. The committee would like to see the youth do a service for the city rather than pay a fine. The committee would like to work with the juvenile program to consider a rehabilitation process for all juvenile offenders to prevent potential future offenses. The committee wants to urge legislation to rethink youth punishment and give youth the opportunity to give their input on youth punishment.

The Justice and Education Committee would like to update graduation requirements for the city, making civic engagement a part of the curriculum.

Public Health

The Public Health Committee made it a priority to improve the safety of Kansas City teenagers. By coming up with safe places to hang out and making physicals mandatory for all enrolling students, the committee feels that conditions would improve.

The committee also finds it necessary to educate pre-teens, teens and their parents about the danger of prescription drugs and the severity of its effects on the body and mind as well as the family. The education will include warning signs of abuse or misuse and how to handle a situation when someone overdoses or is addicted. The committee would like to distribute an educational tool kit to all Kansas City area junior and senior high schools including a teaching curriculum for health courses, along with pictures, pamphlets and diagrams of prescription drug use. The committee would also like to run a campaign for additional media exposure. The campaign would include billboards, in high-traffic areas, informative television commercials and public service announcements, radio testimonials and public service announcements, and newspaper public service announcements. Lastly, in support of prescription drug awareness, the committee would like to create an educational documentary video, detailing the causes and effects of specific prescription drugs and giving live examples of teens who have had extreme cases of addiction.

Sports and Recreation

The Sports and Recreation Committee aided in the production of many Kansas City sports clinics, including:

- The Kansas City Explorers' tennis clinic, which held two clinics of 100 young people in each.
- Three Kansas City Royals' baseball clinics for youth 5-14, for which they acquired full registration.

- The Herm Edwards Youth Football Camp, which allowed 1,000 young people from around the area to get tips from the Kansas City Chiefs’ former coach, Herm Edwards.
- College Basketball Experience basketball clinics were held at eight local colleges and high schools and offered to youth, ages 6-18. In addition to the clinics, a camp was held for youth, ages 12-14. At the camp and clinics, college coaches and players assisted young people in ball handling, passing, shooting, etc.

During the 2008-2009 term, the Kansas City Royals donated 1,900 tickets to be distributed to Kansas City youth organizations—a \$30,400 value.

Meet the 2008-2009 Commissioners

Selchia Cain



Aimee Chau



Phyllis Cole



David Garrett



Stephen Harpe



Kaprianie Johnson



Kavion Martin



Sydney O’Dear



Berenice Olivares



MarShuna Parker



Jon Powell



Te'Audra Sanders



Andrew Schofield



D'Angela Sims



Latia Thomas



Jay Walters



Claire West



Michelle Wilson

