

# CITY PLAN COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

**CD-CPC-2026-00003**

## Smith Hall Historic Designation

**March 4, 2026**

### Docket #1

#### Request

Historic Overlay (H/O)

#### Applicant

Pendleton Heights Neighborhood  
Kansas City Bungalow Club

#### Owner

Kansas City University

#### Site Information

Location 1700 Independence  
Area 0.16 Acres  
Zoning MPD/ICO  
Council District 3  
County Jackson  
School District KCPS

#### Surrounding Land Uses

North: Institutional, zoned R-2.5/R-5  
South: Parking Lot, zoned MPD/ICO  
East: Institutional, zoned MPD  
West: Institutional, zoned MPD/ICO

#### KC Spirit Playbook Alignment

CD-CPC-2026-00001: High

#### Land Use Plan

The Truman Plaza Area Plan recommends Mixed Use Community for this location. The Historic Overlay has a high alignment.

#### Major Street Plan

Independence Boulevard is identified as an Established Boulevard in this location.

### Approval Process



### Overview

The applicant seeks approval to designate Smith Hall on the Kansas City Register of Historic Places (H/O Overlay).

### Existing Conditions

Smith Hall is located on the campus of Kansas City University. There is a one-story office building to the east that has been approved for demolition.

### Neighborhood(s)

This site is located within the Pendleton Heights Neighborhood Association, the Northeast Chamber of Commerce and NEAT.

### Required Public Engagement

Section 88-505-12, Public Engagement does not apply to this request.

### Related Case

Case No. 14608-MPD-1 - Rezoning an area of approximately 32 acres generally bounded by Missouri Avenue on the north, E. 9<sup>th</sup> Street on the south, Woodland Avenue and Maple Boulevard on the east and Paseo Boulevard on the west from Districts R-1.5, R-2.5, R-6, B1-1, B3-2, B4-2 to District MPD, and approving a MPD Development Plan for an educational institutional (approved by Ord. 170109 on March 5, 20217).

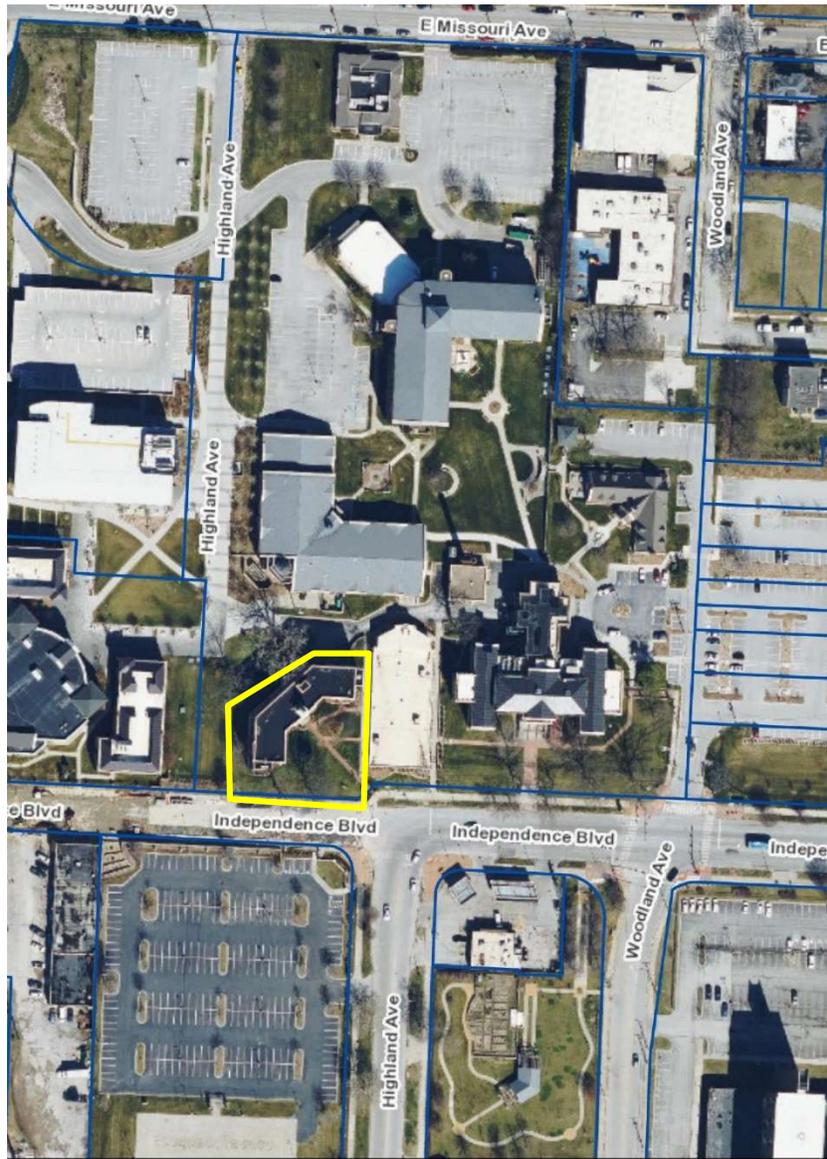
### Historic Preservation Commission Recommendation

Approval

### Professional Staff Recommendation

Docket #1 Approval

### VICINITY MAP



### PLAN REVIEW

This case began with a demolition review for Smith Hall by the Historic Preservation Commission on September 26, 2025 and the commission delayed the demolition by 45 days. During the 45-day waiting period an application was filed to designate the building to the Kansas City Register of Historic Places (H/O Overlay) by the Pendleton Heights Association, and a separate application was filed by the Kansas City Bungalow Club. Both applications were reviewed together at the December 19, 2025 meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission. The commission found that Smith Hall meets the review criteria set out in the U.S. Department of Interior’s National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in Healthcare in as significant to the growth of health care and Criterion C in

Architecture as a good example of the Georgian Revival Style. Accordingly, the Commission recommended approval of the designation of the Property at 1700 Independence Boulevard to the Kansas City Register of Historic Places (H/O Overlay).

Historic Overlay Districts are used to identify sites, structures, and areas within the City that are historic, stylistic or have thematic significance, or identified by historic resources survey. This designation is intended to help protect, preserve, and enhance places, districts, sites, buildings, structures, and other features having a special historical, architectural, cultural, or aesthetic value.

## **SPECIFIC REVIEW CRITERIA**

### **Historic Designations (88-580-01-D)**

In reviewing and making decisions on proposed historic landmark and historic district designations, the Historic Preservation Commission, City Plan Commission, and City Council must consider at least the following factors:

**1. The criteria used in determining eligibility for listing on the U.S. Department of Interior's National Register of Historic Places, including the historic, cultural, aesthetic or architectural significance of the building, structure, site, object or district;**

Smith Hall meets the review criteria set out in the U.S. Department of Interior's National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in Healthcare as significant in the growth of health care and Criterion C in Architecture as a good example of the Georgian Revival Style.

The building has alterations, including new stairwell additions built in 1993 and a 1933 copula that was originally on the administration building added at the same time. Overall, that building conveys its original architectural appearance and retains historic integrity for listing.

**2. The economic impact of the designation on the subject property and the surrounding area;**

There hasn't been any evidence submitted on the economic impact of the designation on Smith Hall.

**3. Conformance with the city's adopted plans and planning policies.**

The Master Plan Development, MPD 14608MPD1 was adopted on 2/23/2017 by Ordinance 17019 calls for the renovation or removal of Smith Hall. The proposed designation would not conflict with the adopted MPD.

The Truman Plaza Area Plan supports the recommendation to designate Smith Hall by registering and promoting historic and architecturally significant buildings in the Truman Plaza area. Throughout the continuing public engagement to create the updated Truman Plaza Area Plan, the advisory committee and members of the public who appeared at meetings and provided comments cited historic and architecturally significant buildings as a positive asset of the plan area. The building's overall design supports the design review guidelines of the currently adopted area plan, with a prominent main entrance, street-facing windows, and high-quality architectural features and building materials helping to define the

boulevard designation of Independence Boulevard. Preservation and registration of the building supports the history, arts, and culture goal of the KC Spirit Playbook, which supports the preservation of buildings and sites that make Kansas City unique and help define an area with distinctive architecture and civic pride serving as a locally significant asset.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Nomination form for Smith Hall with staff recommended corrections for CPC
2. Findings of the Historic Preservation Commission
3. KC Spirit Alignment
4. Public Testimony

## **PROFESSIONAL STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

**City staff recommends APPROVAL.**

Respectfully submitted,



Bradley Wolf, AICP

City Historic Preservation Officer



# Kansas City Register of Historic Places Application and Nomination Form (H/O Overlay Zoning)

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, please refer to the National Register Bulletin 16A: *How to Complete the National Register Form*. The bulletin is available online at <http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb16a/>. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets.

## 1. Name of Site or District

Historic Name(s) Leonard Smith Hall; Joseph T. Bird Nurses' Home and School for Child Nursing; Alumni Hall

Are you amending an existing historic district?  If yes, Name of District

## 2. Location

Address if Individual Designation 1700 Independence Blvd

Street Boundaries if a District

County: Jackson Zip Code(s): 64106 Council District: 3rd

## 3. Geographical Data

Acreage of Site or District 0.160 acres

Legal Description (If a district please attach legal description on a continuation sheet using the attached template)

A 20,305 square foot lot. BEG at 375' W of SE corner of Lot 20, Block 1, Dykington Place, TH N 147', TH 77' W, TH SW 95', TH E Returning to POB.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected below or on a continuation sheet using the attached template)

The boundaries identify the section of the lot that includes Smith Hall, the building of significance, which is currently part of a larger lot that includes multiple buildings which are not part of the nomination.

Zoning Classification for Site or District: MPD/ICO

## 4. Applicant Information

Applications are now submitted through CompassKC. Please contact the Historic Preservation Office for instructions on submission. (816)513-2902.

Name/Title Jonathan Cokely - President, Pendleton Heights Neighborhood Association

Street & Number 2119 Lexington Ave

Telephone 816-645-4949

City or Town Kansas City

State MO Zip Code 64124

## 5. Property Owner(s) (If in a district please enter 'multiple' and work with City Planning Staff for an owners list)

Name/Title Kansas City University

Street & Number 1750 Independence Ave

Telephone 816-654-7000

City or Town Kansas City

State MO Zip Code 64124

Leonard Smith Hall

Name of Historic Site or District

**6. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(check as many boxes as apply)

**Category of Property**  
(check only one box)

**Number of Resources within Property**

**Contributing**

**Noncontributing**

**BUILDINGS**

- public-Local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- District
- Site


**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

**7. Function or Use**

**Historic Function(s)**  
(Please enter historic functions, i.e., single family dwelling)

HEALTHCARE – HOSPITAL

**Current Function(s)**  
(Please enter current functions, i.e., single family dwelling)

EDUCATION - COLLEGE

**8. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Please enter the predominate architectural styles i.e. Colonial Revival, etc.)

CATEGORY: LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTRY REVIVALS

**Walls:**

**Materials**  
(Enter predominate materials of the buildings on the site or in the district)

**Foundation:** STONE > LIMESTONE

**Roof:** SYNTHETICS

**Other:**

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets using the attached template)

SEE CONTINUATION

Leonard Smith Hall

Name of Historic Site or District

**9. Description**

**Applicable Kansas City Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for Kansas City Register listing.)

X **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

**B** Property is associated with the lives of person significant in our past.

X **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or **represents the work of a master**, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

**D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

It was a notable feature

in 1982 when the Administration Building was demolished students and staff of its history.

Property is:

**A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

**B** removed from its original location.  
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

**C** a birthplace or grave.

**D** a cemetery.  
Hospital, which was founded by two sisters in the years Katharine B. important

**E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

**F** a commemorative property.

**G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets using the attached template)

SEE CONTINUATION

**Areas of Significance**

(enter categories from instructions)

**A&B.** It provided both housing and training space for nurses at a time when Children's Mercy, founded by Dr. Katharine B. Richardson and Dr. Alice Graham, was expanding its services. It was part of a broader effort to attract and retain nursing staff

**C.** Designed by Hoyt, Price, and Barnes

**Period of Significance**

**Significant Dates**

The clock tower was originally on top of the 1933 the Administration Building to the east. on the campus and was used as a college logo. Hall, reminding past

**Significant Persons**

The funeral of Dr. Katharine B. Richardson (a founder of Children's Mercy Hospital) was held on the front lawn of Smith Hall in 1933.

**Cultural Affiliation**

Needed & built by the founders of Children's Mercy when few females could be doctors, Dr. Richardson and Dr. Alice Graham; They broke barriers.

**Architect/Builder**

Kansas City Museum, Longview Farm, RA Long's mausoleum in Washington Cemetery, & the Beaux Arts Mack B. Nelson house on the southwest corner of Ward Parkway & 55th Street (Nelson was Vice-President of the Long-Bell Lumber Company)

## 10. Major Bibliographical References

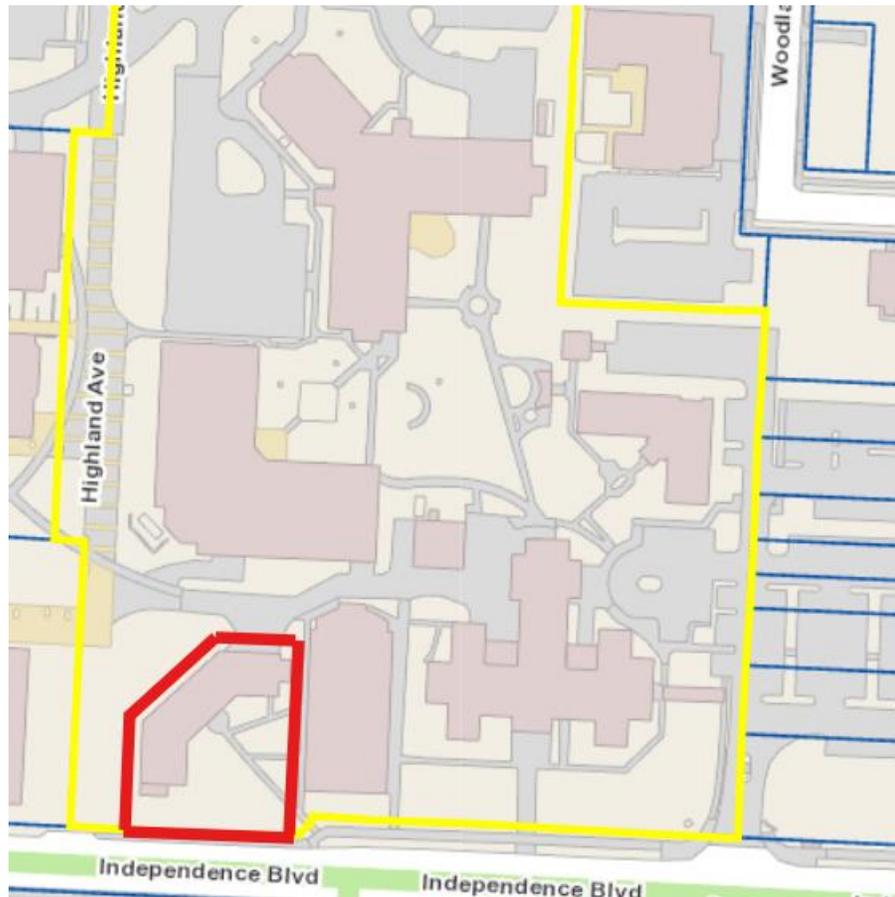
### Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets using the attached template)

## 11. Additional Documentation

The following items must be included with a final application and nomination. Staff will work with the applicant to prepare these items.

1. **Maps:** **For an Individual Landmark:** Site map showing location of buildings and proposed boundary.  
**For a Historic District:** Map showing building footprints, the boundary of district, and the buildings that



2. **Photographs:** Representative high quality photographs of the historic site or district













Dr. Richardson with other staff at Wheatley Provident Hospital, proving again how she broke barriers by creating a pediatric ward there to help African American children.

## 11. Additional Documentation (continued)

- 3. Historic Resource Survey Forms:** A survey form must be prepared for every building, except non-contributing outbuildings, in the proposed designation area, whether a district or an individual landmark. Please contact the Historic Preservation office to see if there is a form already prepared.

Other items may be required by the Commission to assess whether the site or district meets the requirements for listing on the Kansas City Register of Historic Places. Staff will work with you to make sure the nomination is complete. This nomination form will be uploaded as part of the online application through [CompassKC](#). When you are ready to apply, please contact the Historic Preservation office for assistance completing the application.

Historic Preservation Office, Community Planning Division  
City Hall, 16th Floor, Room 1603  
414 East 12th Street, Kansas City, MO 64106  
[KCHP@kcmo.org](mailto:KCHP@kcmo.org) (816) 513-2902

## 12. Fees

- A fee is required to process the application and will be billed through CompassKC. Please contact the Historic Preservation Office for the current fee schedule.

### Kansas City Register Designation Fee Schedule

(1) Historic Landmark	\$ 207.00
But, if the Building has been previously listed in the National Register.	\$ 52.00
(2) Historic District	\$ 311.00
Plus, per building survey form	\$ 104.00
Not to exceed a total of	\$2,072.00
But, if the building has been previously listed in the National Register individually or as part of a district	\$ 52.00
Plus, per building survey form	\$ 21.00
Not to exceed	\$ 414.00
(3) Amended a Historic District	\$ 104.00
Plus, per building survey form	\$ 104.00
Not to exceed a total of	\$2,072.00
But, if the building(s) has been previously listed in the National Register individually or as part of a district	\$ 52.00
Plus, per building survey form	\$ 21.00
Not to exceed	\$ 414.00

# Kansas City Register of Historic Places (H/O Overlay) Continuation Sheet

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Site or District Name

Smith Hall

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## Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets using the attached template)

Leonard Smith Hall, previously known as Joseph T. Bird Hall, is a four-story building designed in a combination of Colonial Revival and Georgian Revival styles. Its plan is a modified V-shape with a 4-story bay entrance and very wide wings that are 35 feet deep, creating a graceful presence on the grounds. Its foundation is made of local limestone. The façade of the first floor is clad in limestone. The three upper stories are faced with brick of a deep red color. The front facade has limestone trim, two pediments over the entrance bay, and two cartouches. The flat roof is covered with a waterproof membrane and edged with a parapet. Its significant architectural features include its solid appearance, gracefulness, entrance bay with pediments, and clock tower on the roof. It sits on the southwest side of the KCU campus and faces Independence Avenue.

It resides in a park-like setting of lawn and trees in front and back, with a huge old maple tree in front between the building and Independence Avenue. Its exterior appears to be very well-maintained.

It has historic integrity in terms of Location because it sits on a major intersection facing Independence Avenue, the historic road that leads east from downtown Kansas City to its first suburb, Pendleton Heights. Independence Avenue and Pendleton Heights were both originally filled with large mansions for Kansas City's wealthy who were trying to escape the smells of the stockyards below downtown on its west edge. Many of those mansions still exist in the surrounding neighborhoods of Pendleton Heights and Scarritt Renaissance.

It has historic integrity in terms of Design because it was designed by the noted Kansas City architectural firm of Hoit, Price and Barnes, who also designed many local notable buildings such as the Kansas City Power and Light Building, Independence Boulevard Christian Church, the R. A. Long Building (one of Kansas City's first steel framed skyscrapers), Long's home at Corinthian Hall Kansas City Museum, Long's mausoleum in Washington Cemetery, and the Beaux Arts style Nelson mansion at 5500 Ward Parkway.

It has historic integrity in terms of Setting because it is set back on the lawn, providing breathing space, sunshine, shade, and a work of art for pedestrians and cars on busy Independence Avenue.

It has historic integrity in terms of Association since it was originally a Nurses Residence that was built by the Berry Sisters, who were doctors and co-founders of Children's Mercy Hospital in 1903. Children's

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Mercy is now one of the largest children’s hospitals in the nation. The maple tree in front shaded the 1,000 attendees of the 1933 funeral of one of the sisters, Dr. Katharine Berry Richardson, who lived in an apartment in this building during the last three years of her life. It is associated with other local history due formerly being named for Joseph T. Bird, who was a co-founder of one of Kansas City's top department stores, Emery Bird Thayer.

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Smith Hall

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## Narrative Statement of Significance:

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets using the attached template)

9. Description Applicable Kansas City Register Criteria Areas of Significance (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property (enter categories from instructions) for Kansas City Register listing.)

X A Property is associated with events that have made A. It provided both housing and training space for a significant contribution to the broad patterns of nurses at a time when Children's Mercy, founded by our history. Dr. Katharine B. Richardson and Dr. Alice Graham,

X C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or C. Designed by Hoyt, Price, and Barnes represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, Period of Significance information important in prehistory or history. Criteria Considerations (Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes. Significant Persons

B removed from its original location.

C a birthplace or grave.

D a cemetery.

E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

F a commemorative property.

G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years. Narrative Statement of

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Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets using the attached template)

## SUMMARY

Due to the noted architectural firm of the building's construction combined with the groundbreaking of two female doctors into the area of children's medicine and hospitalization, this building is significant. Other Kansas City landmarks built by the same architectural firm are also responsible for the construction of the Kansas City Museum, Longview Farm, R. A. Long's mausoleum in Washington Cemetery, the Beaux Arts Mac B. Nelson house on the southwest corner of 55th Street and Ward Parkway. (Mr. Nelson was vice-president of the Long-Bell Lumber Company.)

The clock tower was originally on top of the 1933 the Administration Building to the east. It was a notable feature on the campus and was used as a college logo until 1982 when the Administration Building was demolished. It was reinstalled on top of Smith Hall about 12 years ago. To this day, the sisters who founded Children's Mercy Hospital are revered not only because of their gender within their profession, but also because of the impact they had on sustaining and improving the quality of children's lives.

## ELABORATION

### Criteria A "Healthcare" (*in its entirety*):

**History of Smith Hall's Founders:** Smith Hall is a later extension of Children's Mercy Hospital, which was founded by the Berry sisters, Katharine Berry Richardson (1858-1933) and Alice Berry Graham (1850-1913). Their mother died when Katharine was only three, and their father, an abolitionist during the Civil War, insisted they get an education. He got them through high school and they began college, with the sisters alternately working to help pay each other's tuition. Alice graduated as a dentist and Katharine as a surgeon. But few hospitals were hiring women, leaving Katharine with no place to operate. They also found it difficult to get patient referrals, so they relied on word of mouth and operated out of their house. Alice married but was soon widowed, so they moved to Kansas City in 1897 and began a medical practice downtown while living above their office. One day Alice found a 5-year-old girl who was sick and abandoned on the streets. She took her home and told Katharine it was time to take care of kids like her and they were the ones to do it. They rented one bed in a small maternity and children's hospital. In 1899 they decided to purchase that hospital and named it the Free Bed Fund Association for Crippled, Deformed, and Ruptured Children. It was at 15th Street and Cleveland Avenue.

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Word spread on how they were willing to treat orphaned patients and families who couldn't afford to pay, which was rare at the time. The patients poured in and they moved to a house on Kansas City's east side that had been donated by a socialite. They also started a training program for nurses. Traditionally, nursing had required no training except "on the job", with doctors as instructors. Their new training greatly improved patient care. They also began offering another novelty: bedside and classroom teaching to help children keep up with their education. In 1903 it was officially renamed Mercy Hospital but they soon outgrew it. They moved to 414 Highland Avenue and opened with five beds.

The sisters dedicated the rest of their lives to treating thousands of children who needed medical care. With grit, tenacity, and community help, they continued to provide pediatric care, conduct innovative research, train doctors and nurses. They also defied the times and created bridges by establishing a pediatric ward in Wheatley Provident Hospital, the first hospital in Kansas City for African Americans.

Soon they had 27 beds but needed more, so \$375,000 was raised for a new hospital that opened in 1917 at 1710 Independence Avenue. It operated as a charity hospital and was renamed Children's Mercy Hospital. Alice died before it was completed, and Katharine had this inscription carved into the cornerstone: "*Dr. Alice Berry Graham founded this hospital for sick and crippled children – to be forever non-sectarian, non-local, and for those who cannot pay.*" To this day this crucial reminder of Mercy is visible on the cornerstone.

Planning began in 1964 for a new hospital at 2401 Gillham Road. The funding campaign was chaired by former President Harry Truman and Hallmark Founder J. C. Hall. Children's Mercy is now one of the largest children's hospitals in the country with \$2 Billion in annual revenue.

**History of Smith Hall:** By 1927, Children's Mercy nurses were living in crowded space in a wing of the hospital. Long hours, hard work, and extra hours for classroom instruction were the norm for nursing students. It left little time for rest or socializing. They were also required to remain unmarried until their program was complete. All this was hurting job retention and recruitment. Katharine had long held a vision for dedicated space for her nurses. So Smith Hall was constructed as their new residence and study hall. It was the largest residence for nurses in the city, providing spacious accommodations for 75

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nurses. It was originally named for Joseph T. Bird, Sr. (1848-1918), a philanthropist and co-founder of one of Kansas City's top department stores, Emery Bird Thayer. It immediately improved job retention and recruitment, which also helped ease patient wait times. And it helped the hospital grow and improve. In 1930, Katharine lived in an apartment in this building until her death in 1933. She was so revered that over 1,000 people attended her funeral on the lawn in front of the building. She is buried in Mount Washington Cemetery in Independence, MO.

In 1971, this building and the campus were sold to the Kansas City College of Osteopathic Medicine Alumni Association. The former Children's Mercy building of 1917 was renamed the Administration Building, and this building was renamed Alumni Hall. Stairwell additions and some renovations were done and it was topped with the handsome clock tower that had once stood atop the 1933 Administration Building. In 1999 it was renamed again as Smith Hall in honor of alumnus Dr. Leonard Smith (1928-2017), who had spearheaded KCU's capital campaign in 2000. Dr. Smith was an osteopathic doctor and philanthropist who had volunteered at the largest free health clinic in Florida before moving to Kansas City, where he championed the founding sisters' mission of providing for the poor.

Smith Hall is in good condition, at least externally, and retains its overall architectural integrity. It also presents a welcoming, beautiful, and historically consistent entry at the intersection of two of landscape architect George Kessler's historic boulevards, The Paseo and Independence Avenue, which lead to the two neighborhoods that retain Kansas City's oldest and grandest residences, Pendleton Heights and Scarritt Renaissance.

(912 Characters).

## Criteria A "Healthcare"

Smith Hall is a later extension of Children's Mercy Hospital, which was founded by the Berry sisters, Dr. Katharine B. Richardson, a medical doctor, and her sister Alice Berry Graham, a dentist. They had established a medical practice together in downtown Kansas City for neglected and poor children who were not being attended to at the time. Since no hospital in the city allowed a woman physician on the staff at the time, the sisters rented beds in a small maternity and children's hospital for their patients. In 1899 they decided to purchase the small hospital and named it the Free Bed Fund Association for Crippled, Deformed, and Ruptured Children, in order to care for all the sick children they were seeing

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who were not getting medical attention. It was soon renamed Children’s Mercy Hospital and a new building was completed in 1897. The inscription on the cornerstone to this day still reads as “Dr. Alice Berry Graham founded this hospital for sick and crippled children – to be forever non-sectarian, non-local, and for those who cannot pay.” By 1927, the nurses were all living in crowded space in a wing of the hospital, which was hurting nurse recruitment. So Smith Hall was constructed as their new residence and study hall, providing for 75 nurses.

## Criteria C “Architect”

Leonard Smith Hall, previously known as Joseph T. Bird Hall, is a four-story building designed in a combination of Colonial Revival and Georgian Revival styles. Its plan is a modified V-shape with a 4-story bay entrance and very wide wings that are 35 feet deep, creating a graceful presence on the grounds. Its foundation is made of local limestone. The façade of the first floor is clad in limestone. The three upper stories are faced with brick of a deep red color. The front facade has limestone trim, two pediments over the entrance bay, and two cartouches. The flat roof is covered with a waterproof membrane and edged with a parapet. Its significant architectural features include its solid appearance, gracefulness, entrance bay with pediments, and clock tower on the roof. It sits on the southwest side of the KCU campus and faces Independence Avenue. It resides in a park-like setting of lawn and trees in front and back, with a huge old maple tree in front between the building and Independence Avenue. Its exterior appears to be very well-maintained.

It has historic integrity in terms of **Location** because it sits on a major intersection facing Independence Avenue, the historic road that leads east from downtown Kansas City to its first suburb, Pendleton Heights. Independence Avenue and Pendleton Heights were both originally filled with large mansions for Kansas City’s wealthy who were trying to escape the smells of the stockyards below downtown on its west edge. Many of those mansions still exist in the surrounding neighborhoods of Pendleton Heights and Scarritt Renaissance.

It has historic integrity in terms of **Design** because it was designed by Kansas City’s most highly influential architectural firm of Hoyt, Price and Barnes, shaping our city’s early 20th century skyline with skyscrapers and grand mansions. Their work showcased both Beaux Arts and Classical influences. Smith Hall is a beautiful example of their Classical work and part of their legacy in Kansas City. Its local notable buildings include the Kansas City Power and Light Building, Independence Boulevard Christian Church, the R. A. Long Building (one of Kansas City’s first steel framed skyscrapers), Long’s home at Corinthian

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Hall nka Kansas City Museum, Longview Farm, Long’s mausoleum in Washington Cemetery, the Beaux Arts-style Mack Nelson mansion at 5500 Ward Parkway, the Fidelity Building, and the Southwestern Bell Telephone Building.

It has historic integrity in terms of **Setting** because it is set back on the lawn, providing breathing space, sunshine, shade, and a work of art for pedestrians and cars on busy Independence Avenue.

It has historic integrity in terms of **Association** since it was originally a Nurses Residence that was built by the Berry Sisters, who were doctors and co-founders of Children’s Mercy Hospital in 1903. Children’s Mercy is now one of the largest children’s hospitals in the nation. It is associated with other local history due formerly being named for Joseph T. Bird, who was a co-founder of one of Kansas City’s top department stores, Emery Bird Thayer.

Architect Henry F. Hoit (1872-1951) lived in Kansas City from 1901 until his death in 1951. He also designed the Palace of Varied Industries for the 1904 World’s Fair in St. Louis.

# Kansas City Register of Historic Places (H/O Overlay) Continuation Sheet

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## Bibliography:

- "KCU History"

<https://www.kansascity.edu/about-kcu/who-we-are/kcu-history>

- "Hoit, Price and Barnes - Wikipedia"

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hoit,\\_Price\\_and\\_Barnes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hoit,_Price_and_Barnes)

- "Significant Dates in the History of Children's Mercy"

<https://www.childrensmercy.org/about-us/our-history/significant-dates-in-the-historyof-childrens-mercy/>

- "Missouri Women in the Health Sciences - Biographies - Alice Berry Graham & Katherine Berry Richardson"

<https://beckerexhibits.wustl.edu/legacy-exhibits/mowihsp/bios/GrahamRichardson.htm>

- "Berry sisters break barriers in founding Children's Mercy Hospital"

<https://www.kshb.com/news/womens-history-month/berry-sisters-break-barriers-infounding-childrens-mercy-hospital>

- "KCU Libraries: KCU D'Angelo Library Historical Archives"

## Additional web resources

### Sources:

<https://www.childrensmercy.org/about-us/our-history/>

<https://www.childrensmercy.org/about-us/our-history/significant-dates-in-the-history-of-childrens-mercy/> (timeline)

<https://www.childrensmercy.org/about-us/phenomenal-women/>

<https://missourencyclopedia.org/people/richardson-katharine-berry>

# Kansas City Register of Historic Places (H/O Overlay) Continuation Sheet

Section  
Number 10 Page 1 Site or District Name Smith Hall

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<https://www.kshb.com/news/womens-history-month/berry-sisters-break-barriers-in-founding-childrens-mercy-hospital>

Info on the Cornerstone: <https://theclio.com/entry/140729>

On JT Bird: <https://martincitytelegraph.com/2024/03/24/breaking-barriers-emery-bird-thayers-female-president-annie-bird/>

On Smith Hall: <https://library.kansascity.edu/archives/smith>

<https://www.facebook.com/HistoricKC/posts/the-site-now-occupied-by-kansas-city-university-has-longstanding-ties-to-the-ear/1278357247655773/>

Graves: <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/6870906/katharine-richardson#view-photo=339095>

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/6870907/alice-graham>

# Kansas City Historic Preservation Property Information Form

## Address

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1700 Independence Blvd

**City:** Kansas City      **County:** Jackson      **Other Info:**

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**Property Name:** Children's Mercy Hospital Nurses Reside **Date Built** 1927

**Property Type:** DOMESTIC: multiple dwelling

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**Architect:** Hoit, Price & Barnes

**Builder:** Unknown

**Developer:**

**Permit/Original Owner:**

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**Water Permit #:** 1396

**Building Permit #:**

## Research Comments:

Kansas City Star, Dec. 25, 1927; p1D; File.

## Legal Description:

SEC 33-50-33 SW1/4 SE1/4 SUWANEE ADD LOTS 32-49 & LOTS 95-100 & LOT 5 BLOCK 3 & DYKINGTON PLACE LOTS 1-3 & 15-20 BLOCK 1 & PT OF SW 1/4 DAF: BEG AT SW COR OF SD LOT 20 BLOCK 1 TH W 50' TO POB

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## National Register:

## Multiple Property:

## Kansas City Register:

**Eligibility:** eligible

The building would be eligible under Criterion C in the area of architecture as a good example of the Colonial Revival/Georgian Revival and the work of the firm of Hoit, Price and Barnes.

## Survey Report (s):

BEFORE THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

IN THE MATTER OF THE DESIGNATION )  
OF THE PROPERTY AT 1700 INDEPENDENCE ) Case No. CH-PRES-2025-00003  
BOULEVARD TO THE KANSAS CITY ) and  
REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES KNOWN AS) Case No. CH-PRES-2025-00004  
H/O OVERLAY ZONING )

FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

A hearing was conducted on the above-referenced matter on December 19, 2025. The case was heard by the Historic Preservation Commission ("Commission") and after considering the testimony and evidence presented, the Commission makes the following findings of fact and conclusions of law, and hereby recommends approval of the application:

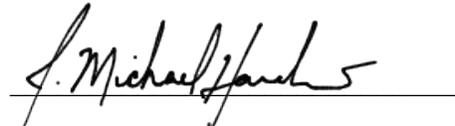
FINDINGS OF FACT

1. The applicant for Case No. CH-PRES-2025-00003, the Pendleton Heights Neighborhood Association, the neighborhood of record for the property, submitted an application on November 7, 2025 to designate the building at 1700 Independence Boulevard (the "Property") to the Kansas City Register of Historic Places (H/O Overlay).
2. The applicant for Case No. CH-PRES-2025-00004, the Kansas City Bungalow Club, a historic preservation organization, submitted an application on November 26, 2025, to designate the building at 1700 Independence Boulevard to the Kansas City Register of Historic Places (H/O Overlay).
3. That both applicants agreed to have the cases reviewed jointly.
4. Both applications requested to designate the building at 1700 Independence Boulevard known as Smith Hall to the Kansas City Register of Historic Places (H/O Overlay).
5. That the owner of the Property, Kansas City University, opposes the designation of the building to the Kansas City Register of Historic Places (H/O Overlay).
6. Sec. 88-580-01 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Kansas City, Missouri (the "Code") outlines the regulations for the Commission's review of applications to designate a property to the Kansas City Register of Historic Places (H/O Overlay). Specifically, Sec. 88-580-01-F of the Code requires the Commission to consider the follow factors in making a recommendation to designate a property: 1) the criteria used in determining eligibility for listing on the U.S.

Department of Interior's National Register of Historic Places, including the historic, cultural, aesthetic or architectural significance of the building, structure, site, object or district; 2) the economic impact of the designation on the subject property and the surrounding area; and 3) conformance with the city's adopted plans and planning policies.

#### CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

The Historic Preservation Commission finds that pursuant to Sec. 88-580-01-F of the City's Code of Ordinances, the standard for recommending approval of a property to the Kansas City Register of Historic Places (H/O Overlay) to the City Council. The Commission finds that the Property meets the review criteria set out in the U.S. Department of Interior's National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in Healthcare in as significant in the growth of health care and Criterion C in Architecture as a good example of the Georgian Revival Style. Accordingly, the Commission recommends approval of the designation of the Property at 1700 Independence Boulevard to the Kansas City Register of Historic Places (H/O Overlay).



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Michael Hardin, Chair

## Chambi, Larisa

---

**From:** Feverston, Jonathan  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 3, 2026 2:20 PM  
**To:** Chambi, Larisa  
**Cc:** Wolf, Bradley A; Williams, Gerald  
**Subject:** CD-CPC-2026-00003

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Larisa,

Please see the narrative below for CD-CPC-2026-00003. The KC Spirit Playbook and Truman Plaza Area Plan alignments are high. No corrections or conditions are applied to the case.

The proposed registration of Leonard Smith Hall supports the recommendation and action in the Truman Plaza Area Plan to register and promote historic and architecturally significant buildings in the Truman Plaza area. Throughout the continuing public engagement to create the updated Truman Plaza Area Plan, the advisory committee and members of the public who appeared at meetings and provided comments cited historic and architecturally significant buildings as a positive asset of the plan area. The building's overall design supports the design review guidelines of the currently adopted area plan, with a prominent main entrance, street-facing windows, and high-quality architectural features and building materials helping to define the boulevard designation of Independence Boulevard. Preservation and registration of the building supports the history, arts, and culture goal of the KC Spirit Playbook, which supports the preservation of buildings and sites that make Kansas City unique and help define an area with distinctive architecture and civic pride serving as a locally significant asset.

Please let me know if you have questions,



**Jonathan Feverston, AICP** (*he/him*)  
3<sup>rd</sup> District Planner

**City Planning and Development Department**  
Community Planning Division  
**City of Kansas City, MO.**

**Desk Phone:** (816) 513-2869  
**Email:** [Jonathan.feverston@kcmo.org](mailto:Jonathan.feverston@kcmo.org)

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Larisa Chambi  
Planning Supervisor  
City of Kansas City  
414 East Twelfth Street  
Kansas City, MO 64106

February 20, 2026

**RE: Case Number CD-CPC-2026-00003.  
Application to place Smith Hall on the Kansas City Register of Historic Places**

Dear Ms. Chambi:

I am writing to express my support for the placement of Leonard Smith Hall, located at 1700 Independence Avenue, on the Kansas City, Missouri, Register of Historic Places.

While the historical significance of this place and its architect are already well documented in the application, I would like to emphasize the architectural significance of this structure to the city and its neighborhoods. Smith Hall is a stunning example of the Colonial / Georgian revival architectural styles being practiced at the time. However altered the interiors may be presently, the exterior brick, stone coursing and detailing, window sills, front entry projection and pediments, rubble stone base course, parapet detailing, stand out as a well-composed exterior edifice. Consistent in its appearance with other institutional and residential buildings of the area (the rubble stone base course on the first floor is particularly a unique regional aspect) this building makes an extremely important contribution to the surrounding neighborhoods' historic fabric - which, in turn, provides the character which makes the Pendleton Heights and Scarritt Point neighborhoods so attractive and compelling.

Many a resident have toiled for years restoring homes and other structures, with the dream of bringing this area of Kansas City back to its former glory. The investments made by the City and it's Parks Department does not go unnoticed in trying to achieve that same goal. It is obvious and apparent that it is the history of this place that make it special. That history is manifested in its legacy structures - the historic structures and styles of buildings made of brick and stone that Smith Hall so well embodies.

For those that have spent their lives living and working to improve the physical and social infrastructure of these neighborhoods - restoring the historic homes and structures with their own labor and resources, and giving this district the resurgent life and neighborhood feel they now enjoy, I humbly implore the Planning Commission to uphold the Preservation Commission's unanimous decision and approve this nomination.

Sincerely,  
**Piper-Wind Architects, Inc.**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Eric J. Piper", with a large, decorative flourish at the end.

Eric J. Piper, AIA

## Chambi, Larisa

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**From:** Faith B. <fbrennan820@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 24, 2026 9:46 PM  
**To:** Public Engagement  
**Cc:** Chambi, Larisa  
**Subject:** CD-CPC-2026-00003 Smith Hall Historic Designation

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I am a resident of KCMO and of the Old Northeast neighborhood. I am writing to support the addition of Smith Hall to the Kansas City Register of Historic Places.

I believe Smith Hall is a vital part of our city's heritage and contributes significantly to the unique character of the Old Northeast.

Thank you,

Faith Brennan  
4439 Sunrise Drive  
KCMO 64123

## Chambi, Larisa

---

**From:** James Wendleton <james.wendleton@glmghotels.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 24, 2026 8:53 AM  
**To:** Chambi, Larisa; Public Engagement  
**Cc:** Linda Fleischman; Bryan Barton  
**Subject:** CD-CPC-2026-00003 Smith Hall Historic Preservation

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

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Dear Members of the Public Engagement Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for preserving Smith Hall and maintaining its historic designation. Smith Hall is far more than a building on a campus — it is a symbol of the Northeast community's heritage, resilience, and cultural identity. Its architecture, its stories, and its longstanding presence reflect generations of students, neighbors, and families who have helped shape the character of this historic area of Kansas City.

As a resident of Pendleton Heights and the proud owner of a home built in 1880, I am deeply invested in the balance between progress and preservation. Many of us who call the Northeast home are focused on building a community that is not only forward-thinking but also committed to protecting and honoring what we currently have. The historic fabric of our neighborhoods is not simply aesthetic — it is foundational to our shared identity and sense of place.

For decades, Smith Hall has served as a cornerstone not only for the campus it calls home but also for the surrounding Northeast neighborhoods. It stands as a physical reminder of a time when education, culture, and community development were deeply interconnected. The building represents an era of investment in people and place — something that continues to define the spirit of the Northeast today.

The future of this area depends on thoughtful revitalization that honors its past. Preservation is not an obstacle to progress; it is a pathway toward meaningful growth. Cities thrive when they protect the structures that give them authenticity, texture, and a sense of belonging. Kansas City has already experienced the loss of too many historic landmarks in the Northeast over the years, and each demolition has erased a piece of the community's collective memory. This pattern must halt if we are to preserve what makes the area truly unique.

Maintaining Smith Hall's historic designation would send a powerful message that progress and preservation can coexist. It would demonstrate a commitment to honoring the stories of those who came before while investing in a vibrant and sustainable future. Revitalization rooted in history can inspire economic development, strengthen neighborhood pride, and attract new generations who value authenticity and cultural continuity.

The Northeast is at a pivotal moment. Decisions made today will shape how future generations understand their city and their shared history. By protecting Smith Hall, you are not only saving a building — you are safeguarding a legacy and reinforcing the identity of a community that has long contributed to Kansas City’s cultural fabric.

I respectfully urge the committee to prioritize preservation and to recognize Smith Hall as an irreplaceable asset to both the campus and the Northeast community. Let us ensure that revitalization enhances what already exists rather than erasing it. Preserving Smith Hall is an investment in history, in community, and in the rich future of this remarkable area.

Thank you for your time, your consideration, and your commitment to thoughtful stewardship of Kansas City’s historic places.

Sincerely,

Bryan Barton &  
**James Wendleton**

Director of Sales & Marketing

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## Chambi, Larisa

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**From:** Catherine Satterwhite <CSatterwhite@kansascity.edu>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 24, 2026 5:45 PM  
**To:** Public Engagement  
**Subject:** Testimony: (March 4, CH-PRES-2025-00003) Smith Hall should not be included on the Kansas City Register of Historic Places

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To the Honorable Members of the City Plan Commission,  
I am writing to respectfully ask that **the Commission vote NO to including Smith Hall on the Kansas City Register of Historic Places**. Smith Hall is located at 1700 Independence Avenue on the campus of Kansas City University (KCU). The building that will replace Smith Hall allows KCU to invest more in our surrounding neighborhood than if we needed to keep an old building that has passed its usable lifespan. Importantly, a new building will facilitate space critical to the operations of KCU's new Center for Population Health and Equity.

KCU's Center for Population Health and Equity was launched just over two years ago. As Executive Director, I value KCU's deep community connections and am committed to continuing to partner with community organizations to live out KCU's mission to improve the well-being of the communities we serve. We work closely with:

- **Care Beyond the Boulevard** - KCU's collaboration with Care Beyond the Boulevard (CBB) leads directly to expanded patient care. KCU funds a part-time physician and clinical psychologist, both of whom see patients directly and support our KCU student learning. KCU also started the Street Wise Scholar Program with CBB, an award-winning initiative that pairs our KCU students with a CBB client currently experiencing homelessness and associated health challenges. Together, they work to overcome barriers to improving health and well-being. Finally, many of our student clubs volunteer with CBB: the Wilderness Medicine Club, the Public Health Club, the Student Osteopathic Medical Association, and the KCU Stitches Club, to name a few.
- **Samuel U. Rodgers Health Center** - In addition to KCU's growing clinical faculty presence at Sam Rodgers, the Center for Population Health and Equity piloted a Student Health Advocates program, a collaboration designed to engage students directly with patients who have diabetes to advance Sam Rodgers' work and address social drivers of health. As a result of this pilot, we are expanding the program to engage more KCU students and serve more patients receiving important healthcare services at Sam Rodgers.
- **Della Lamb Community Services** - KCU has a long-time relationship with Della Lamb, our Pendleton Heights neighbor. We have partnered on many service projects over the years. Recently, the Center for Population Health and Equity launched two new collaborations. The first, the Refugee Health Navigator Program, pairs KCU students with Della Lamb clients (under the guidance of Della Lamb staff) to support their health journey, focusing primarily on developing skills to navigate the very-challenging U.S. healthcare system. The second collaboration invites partners to KCU's campus from across the region: KCU hosts Della Lamb's annual Welcoming Day, a celebration of opening our doors to our refugee neighbors.

Further, **Score 1 for Health** is KCU's flagship program that has been in existence for over 30 years, providing health screenings (physical, oral, and vision) to thousands of elementary students annually. In the 2025-2026 academic year, Score 1 is providing screenings to students at 18 elementary schools across Kansas City, MO, in our neighborhood and beyond. Identifying health issues early sets kids up for long-term success. KCU also hosts an annual event on our campus, OneSight, that provides glasses to 700 children across the KC metro area.

These are just a few examples of KCU's commitment to our neighborhood and greater Kansas City. We want to expand what we're able to do, and a new, collaborative space for the Center for Population Health and Equity is an important step in the right direction. While we would be happy to use Smith Hall, the original design/layout and the age of the building make using the building impossible. Please support our efforts to continue to invest in our city by voting NO to adding Smith Hall to the Register of Historic Places.

If I can provide any additional information or answer questions, please let me know. Thank you for your consideration,  
Catherine Satterwhite

Catherine Satterwhite, PhD, MSPH, MPH  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR POPULATION HEALTH AND EQUITY  
816-654-7112

