

CITYvision

Transforming Communities by Changing Lives



2009 Annual Update

Thank you for your interest in helping children and families in poverty. Prayers and support from friends like you have been the reason we have been able to see incredible results. When I began City Vision, we prayed that God might multiply community transformation through sharing the gospel in the highest crime, lowest income neighborhoods – beginning in Columbus and growing from there. God blessed this prayer in 2009 by giving City Vision the opportunity to have a long-term impact not only in Central Ohio but in Western New York as well. Some of the results from 2009 are listed below.

Strengthening Urban Ministries:

- **Community Partner Lunches** ~ City Vision organizes a monthly fellowship lunch for **fourteen Community Partners doing urban ministry** in Columbus. This time allows for relationship building, support, sharing needs/resources and planning events. **Three more Community Partners were added in 2009.** City Vision provides services and programs developed to meet needs expressed by our Community Partners.
- **Connecting Volunteers** ~ One of the greatest needs identified by our Community Partners was for more volunteers. City Vision connects volunteers to ongoing needs throughout the year through opportunities posted on our website. KJ provided leadership to our annual event called ServeFest on October 3. **ServeFest had more than 700 volunteers from nine churches.** Hundreds of volunteers served in the inner city on over 60 projects with our Community Partners (see www.servefestcolumbus.com).
- **Mobilizing and Training** ~ Many people are hungry to know what they can do to be more effective in helping the poor! City Vision continued for the second year a **Christian Community Development Core Training in 2009** with 75-100 participants at the quarterly trainings! I was also involved in **training more than 1,365 people this past year** through speaking engagements at churches, training events and a workshop at our national CCDA conference.
- **Serving and Consulting with Others Involved in Community Transformation** ~ I continue to **meet with suburban churches** interested in initiating a work with the poor as well as **providing assistance to urban ministry leaders.** This year I also provided ongoing consultation to SON Ministries through a “Coaching Engagement” as well as a “Training Engagement” with First

Baptist Church of Granville. I continue to serve on boards and ministries that are making a difference with the poor such as Mission Columbus, Oyate Concern Board (Pine Ridge Reservation, S.D.) and the national Christian Community Development Association Board. KJ served on the Board of Urban Connections.

City Vision Expands to Buffalo:

- **Leading the Buffalo Christian Center (BCC) in New York** ~ Our goal is to also establish a network of City Vision Community Partners in Buffalo and help them transform communities in need. A key part of this strategy is the Buffalo Christian Center! I have been directing the ministry at the BCC for three years through an “Operational Engagement”. Located on the edge of downtown in the theater district, this facility has a 700-person theater, an indoor pool, roller rink, gym, indoor miniature golf course, game room, snack bar, a Christian Bookstore and more. What a great place for urban kids to have fun and grow spiritually! At the close of 2008, the finances were in the black for the first time in recent history! Area churches have responded well to the vision with support and volunteers. The skeleton staff has been mobilized and programs have been developed and are bearing fruit. After years of decline, the center now sees over 3500 visits per month, which are mostly people in great need! Hundreds of people who aren’t interested in church have heard the gospel at the BCC and dozens have received Christ. We have over 30 urban church/ministry partners that are being mobilized for outreach and follow-up with these newly walking Christians.
- **Relocating the City Vision headquarters to Buffalo** ~ The ministry in Buffalo is advancing! After months of prayer, we decided to **relocate the City Vision headquarters to Buffalo** for the next few years so that I can complete this engagement more effectively. Instead of living in Columbus and traveling to Buffalo, we now live in Buffalo and travel to Columbus. We will continue our ministry in Columbus with our monthly Community Partner lunches, trainings and ServeFest. We will also continue serving churches and urban ministries in Columbus and other cities through encouragement, consultation and training as God gives us opportunities.

God continues to manifest his grace through the encouragement of friends like you. What a joy it is when we see the needs of others and know that God has given us the privilege to serve the poor during these hard financial times. **Would you consider giving a special year-end gift?** We rely on God to move in the hearts of others to give to this work and our prayer is that you will **consider supporting us as we move into the coming year.** Thank you for partnering with us! Together with God we can make a difference in the lives of those in communities of need!

In His Service,

Jim

Jim Swearingen
Director

“Tis the Season for Giving”

Giving gifts at Christmas is one of the ways we let people know how much we care. It is a reminder of the most precious gift God gave to us – Eternal Life through Jesus Christ.