

*A joint collection
of the
University of Missouri
and the
State Historical Society
of Missouri*

302 Newcomb Hall
University of Missouri-Kansas City
5100 Rockhill Road
Kansas City, MO 64110
Tel. (816) 235-1543
Fax. (816) 235-5500
WHMCKC@umkc.edu
www.umkc.edu/WHMCKC/

*Columbia
Kansas City
Rolla
St. Louis*



The Charles N. Kimball Lecture
Monday, November 8, 2010, 4:00 p.m.
Pierson Auditorium, University Center, UMKC

Alvin Brooks

Founder and president, Ad Hoc Group Against Crime
former Councilman and Mayor Pro Tem of Kansas City
and member of the Board of Police Commissioners

Kansas City's Racial Climate: Past, Present, and Future

Dear Friends,

You are invited to the Fall 2010 Charles N. Kimball Lecture, a series established by the Western Historical Manuscript Collection-Kansas City to honor our late friend and civic leader. This series shares the primary goal of Charlie's popular Midcontinent Perspectives to encourage a discussion of issues vitally important to our region. Our particular focus is on understanding how historical developments affect and inform our present and future.

Kansas City, like most of America's cities, had a difficult racial history. Missouri was a slave state. In the early 20th century Jim Crow was alive and well in our city forcing African-American citizens into densely populated pockets like that around 18th and Vine. Shifts in demographics since World War II have left schools predominately African-American. Troost Avenue became a stark line dividing the White and Black communities physically, socially, and culturally. Regardless, great strides have also been made. We have had an African-American mayor, elected two Black U.S. Congressmen, and as a community invested significant sums into the city's east side with cultural amenities such as the Bruce R. Watkins Cultural Heritage Center, the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum, and the American Jazz Museum.

Among the most respected, influential, and authoritative individuals on the topic of race in Kansas City is our speaker, **Alvin Brooks**. For more than 50 years he has served the Kansas City community. He was a Kansas City police officer from 1954 to 1964, known for his work with runaways and gangs. After the civil disorder of 1968, he organized the city's Human Relations Department serving as its first director—the first African-American to be head of a city department. Then from 1972 to 1991 he was an assistant city manager. Mr. Brooks founded Kansas City's Ad Hoc Group Against Crime in 1977, and was its president and CEO from 1991 to 2000, a position he returned to in 2008. In 1989, President George H. W. Bush honored him for his work with Ad Hoc and appointed him to the President's National Drug Advisory Council. He was elected to the Kansas City Council in 1999 and 2003, serving as Mayor Pro Tem and chair of numerous committees including Public Safety, Police Capital Improvements Oversight and Police Site Selection, and as vice-chair of the Aviation and Finance and Audit committees. This year Governor Jay Nixon appointed him to the Kansas City Board of Police Commissioners.

Alvin Brooks earned an Associates of Arts degree from Lincoln Junior College, an undergraduate degree in history and government, and a master's degree in sociology from the University of Missouri-Kansas City. For his many, many good works and contributions he was honored as the 2009 UMKC Alumnus of the Year.

I hope you can attend to share in Alvin Brooks' insights. This is a free lecture. I look forward to seeing you there.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Boutros".

David Boutros
Associate Director