



Clarence Decker

Appears on the top of the mural,
to the left of the horse

Dr. Clarence Raymond Decker was the President of UKC during Quintanilla's residency. President Decker was an English professor at Western Illinois State College until 1934 when he was hired as the head of UKC's English department. In April 1938, after a student petition to remove the university's previous president, Dr. Decker became UKC's President. He became the youngest university president in the U.S. at the nation's youngest university.

Dr. Decker was an avid supporter of the arts and, during his first year as head of the English department, he founded the university's literary magazine, *The University of Kansas City Review*. He often invited authors, artists, and political leaders from around the world to teach, speak, or give presentations on campus. Among world leaders, he invited Miguel Aleman (President of Mexico, 1946-1952), Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan of Pakistan (1947-1951), and U.S. President Harry S. Truman (1945-1953). President Truman honorary degree presentation was held at Kansas City's downtown at Municipal Auditorium.

President Decker invited Luis Quintanilla to become a resident artist at UKC and chose *Don Quixote in the Modern World* as the theme for the murals. After his residency finished, President Decker asked Quintanilla to return to teach at the university. However, Quintanilla did not wish assume the responsibilities associated with a teaching position. Clarence Decker ended his term as President of UKC in 1953.

Sources: Clarence Raymond Decker and Mary Belle Decker, *A Place of Light*, Paul Quintanilla, *Waiting at the Shore*)