

MIAMI UNIVERSITY'S
CENTER FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
IN OVER-THE-RHINE

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center for community
engagement

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Fellow Miami Alumni:

Since 1997, our Over-the-Rhine DesignBuild students have renovated several affordable housing units, including our flagship building at 530 E. 13th Street. The building is substantially complete, including the recent successful installation of a rooftop terrace with a remarkable city view. Residents have been living there since last October, and they love the building and its amenities.

There is an outstanding challenge at 530 E. 13th, and we need your help to solve it. The Cincinnati building department has mandated that we replace 15 windows that are not code compliant. Estimates for the replacement windows and installation will be between \$8,000 and \$10,000, and we have exhausted our funding for the project.

Briefly, here's what happened:

- The building's wood sashes were in poor repair (a 4th story sash actually fell out during a storm)
- A Miami student contacted a major residential vinyl window supplier, who provided over 20 custom sized windows free of charge. Our non-profit partner and owner of the building purchased several additional windows at cost from the supplier (about \$2,900).
- We contacted the Cincinnati historic review board to ensure that the window type was acceptable for the historic district. The urban conservator granted approval.
- The supplier installed the windows during our renovation of the upper residential unit.
- During the final inspection of the upper residential unit, a City of Cincinnati building department field inspector said that 15 of the vinyl windows did not meet code because they were adjacent to the fire escape, stairwell, and zero lot line. Only aluminum or steel framed double-hung windows with tempered glass would be acceptable.

- We contacted the chief plans examiner at the city building department. He allowed for building occupancy, provided we submit for a building permit for the replacement of the vinyl windows that do not meet code.
- We got a permit from the City, and got bids for the window replacement. We need to get the windows installed soon to remain in compliance with that permit.

Now, we need Miami Alumni assistance to complete this project. It could be in the form of your financial support or your connections with a commercial window supplier/manufacturer.

Building in an urban context brings risk and expense—the density, height, structure, age and configuration of these structures make them more complex than a typical residence. However, we are committed to providing a challenging educational experience for Miami architecture and interior design students while creating dynamic living spaces for affordable housing in Over-the-Rhine. We appreciate your help in this endeavor. Please call or send me an email if I can provide more information.

All the best,

John Blake
DesignBuild Studio Project Manager,
Visiting Assistant Professor