

HCCI retains two FTE staff for this program. As reported earlier, two new counselors were hired in September 2012 to fill two positions that were staffed by two HCCI employees who had been employed since 2007. In June 2013, Miosha Wagner, one of the two new persons hired in September 2012, resigned her position with HCCI to pursue other career goals.

HCCI immediately began to interview candidates and on July 1, 2013 hired Elias Garcia. Elias and Lisa Jewsome (a long-time Lawrence resident) are now staffing this program.

Elias has extensive background in housing and community development. He previously was a Human Resources Professional with the Kansas Department of Corrections (KDOC) where he served as the Equal Employment Opportunity Manager and American with Disabilities coordinator. Elias is a graduate of Kansas State University with a Masters of Education. Elias has extensive experience providing a wide range of executive, administrative and support duties related to collaborative partnerships and coalition building for the Kansas Hispanic & Latino American Affairs Commission, the City of Topeka, Kansas Insurance Department, and Kansas Department of Transportation.

HCCI is fortunate to have these two highly skills individuals leading the Rental Housing Counseling Program. Even though they both bring a wealth of experience to their positions, HCCI is allowing ample time within their work week for them to study, collaborate with other agencies and nonprofit groups, and "learn the ropes" of their very specific and detailed work responsibilities.

Lisa is carrying a full client load (July 2013) and HCCI expects Elias will be able to manage a full load of client counseling within the next few months. It has been important to HCCI to allow ample time for newly hired employees to learn the many ways federal Fair Housing Law, the Kansas Landlord Tenant Act, and city code policies define and protect the rights and responsibilities of both tenants and landlords.

Requirements for HCCI's Tenant-Landlord Counselors include previous experience in property management, teaching adult education classes, and/or experience implementing local or state housing programs. Preference is given when hiring to individuals who are renters themselves or have past experience as a renter. Preference is given for persons with experience implementing state and federal grant funded programs, and persons who have been landlords. HCCI staff serving as Tenant-Landlord Counselors must be able to research questions and respond to callers within 24 hours, as renters and landlords typically are dealing with issues that either require – or are perceived to require -- action in a timely manner. Therefore, it is important that HCCI counselors be knowledgeable about federal, state, and local law and codes. This work requires counselors that can respond to callers in a professional, courteous manner while also researching answers to questions, counseling, and documenting their work.

Bios for Lisa Jewsome and Elias Garcia are attached. Lisa is a Lawrence resident and she is working from the Lawrence HCCI office as well as the Topeka HCCI office. HCCI was very pleased to recruit and hire Lisa. She was formerly the Director of Section 8 Housing for the Lawrence-Douglas County Housing Authority and she has extensive experience implementing federal and state funded housing grant programs.

Rental Housing Education Classes

Typically HCCI Rental Housing Counselors teach several public education classes each year. These classes are always free. The classes are marketed to renters, social service providers working to assist persons with special needs, staff and volunteers of nonprofit agencies, landlords and property managers. Classes are often presented for Douglas County Housing Authority, Haskell Indian Nations University, USD 492 (Lawrence and Free State High Schools), and for the Lawrence Landlord Association.

No education classes were presented August through December 2012 as HCCI's new staff needed to concentrate time on learning their responsibilities. In summary, the number of persons actually served in 2012 was about 50% less than HCCI expected because (1) HCCI had a change of staffing and (2) because education classes were not offered for the last part of the year while new staff was being fully trained to provide counseling and do the extensive research necessary to provide counseling.

A note about HCCI's Tenant and Landlord Website Pages

HCCI does not count Tenant and Landlord website visitors because HCCI staff does not make follow-up calls with persons choosing to use the website and therefore no measurement of their outcome results has been documented.

While the HCCI website resources for Tenant and Landlord issues are valuable, they do not replace the benefit of direct telephone counseling where HCCI staff are able to respond to the client's direct question and, as importantly, engage the caller in a dialogue that enables the HCCI counselor to better understand the client's particular circumstance and give viable options, based on the Kansas Residential Landlord and Tenant Act, for their particular problem/s.

Regarding Tenant-Landlord Unmet Public Education Goals:

HCCI predicted about 20% of the 360 unduplicated persons HCCI expected to serve in 2012 would be through group education classes. HCCI expected to serve about 72 participants (20% of 360) through classes at Lawrence Douglas County Housing Authority, Salvation Army, USD 497 and other community groups.

In 2012, HCCI served 40 participants through education classes for Tenants and Landlords.

As noted above, Lisa Jewsome is now providing Rental Housing classes. She is an excellent speaker and relates well with her audiences. Lisa developed and presented a class titled "On My Own" in April 2013 for high school graduates and their parents at Free State and Lawrence High Schools. The classes were well received and parents at both schools were very glad to have the special tips for first-time renters that Lisa presented. In April, Lisa also interviewed on KLWN Radio with Hank Booth and she has been invited back to share her expertise. The Lawrence Journal World has asked HCCI to prepare an article addressing common errors in judgment renters make that can cause issues with rental housing situations. That article will be published in August.

Regarding HCCI's Tenant-Landlord Professional Development Education Goals:

Lisa has been invited to serve on the Steering Committee for the Kansas Housing Resources Corporation's annual "Bringing Kansas Home" Conference that is scheduled in Lawrence in Fall 2013. Lisa will also be presenting at that conference.

Lisa presented a breakout session for 90 persons at the Kansas NAHRO Conference (National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials) May 8, 2013 in Manhattan. This conference was attended by Housing Authority personnel statewide including staff from the Lawrence Douglas County Housing Authority.

Anju Mishra (HCCI's Consumer Credit Counselor) and Lisa were invited by United Way of Douglas County to lead a major collaborative effort of local nonprofits focused on developing a United Way Self Sufficiency Program. With HCCI as the lead funded agency, partnership work is continuing with the Salvation Army, Ballard Center, and the Lawrence Community Shelter. Anju and Lisa recently presented a series of four classes for the staff of this United Way Self-Sufficiency partnership. Anju addressed how to counsel low-income persons in transition to permanent housing about their financial issues and Lisa taught classes about how the Kansas Landlord Tenant Act, Fair Housing law, and city code policies protect the rights and responsibilities of both tenants and landlords.

These recent initiatives by HCCI Rental Housing Staff are important opportunities to educate professionals working to secure and maintain rental housing opportunities for all persons.

Regarding Tenant-Landlord Affiliation with Other Community Groups:

HCCI Counselors, Lisa and Elias, have made contact with and are partners with other community groups including: Lawrence Douglas County Housing Authority, Tenants to Homeowners, and Salvation Army to counsel individuals and families who are in transition from homelessness to subsidized housing and/or to permanent housing. As mentioned above,

3. How have you impacted the citizens of Lawrence?

HCCI's counseling by two capable counselors and the extensive resources on HCCI's website are a valuable resource for Lawrence renters and landlords. The attached narrative of a client situation case study is an example of HCCI counseling for Lawrence renters. The primary reasons renter's contact HCCI is about poor maintenance and unlawful entry by landlords. The primary reasons landlords contact HCCI is about their rights to pursue eviction notices due to non-payment of rent.

4. What barriers, if any, have you encountered?

As described above, HCCI experienced the loss of two staff in August 2012 and loss of one of those two individuals in June 2013. HCCI has been able to employ two very qualified and experienced staff (in September 2012 and July 2013). The orientation and training of these two "new" staff persons is moving ahead successfully. HCCI expects the Tenant and Landlord Program will progress well and meet goals by the end of 2013.

HCCI's Tenant and Landlord Counseling are very effectively provided by phone. Caller's questions are entered into a call log and HCCI counselors typically return calls within 24 hours. An HCCI counselor returns the call immediately if the caller (tenant or landlord) has an issue that they describe as a situation related to a court action involving an eviction.

The primary barrier for this program is that the telephone number of some callers is discontinued before HCCI can return their call within 24 hours. Most often these are persons who are experiencing severe financial hardship. HCCI counselors are able to return calls to the majority of renters seeking counseling within 24 hours.

5. Review the line-item budget you provided in your application. How much of your allocation has been spent?

During the time period January 1 – June 30, 2013, 100% of the funding was spent.

Attachments:

- Bios for Lisa Pennington-Jewsome and Elias Garcia
- flyer "On My Own" (a presentation for Lawrence and Free State High School students and parents)
- HCCI 2012 Annual Report
- Client Story – Preserving the Rights of Tenants with Credit Issues



Lisa Pennington-Jewsome
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www.hcci-ks.org

Lisa Pennington-Jewsome joined the staff of Housing and Credit Counseling, Inc. in September 2012. She previously was employed as a Housing Manager with the Kansas Department of Commerce and Housing where she was responsible for administering five separate housing programs in six Kansas communities. Lisa has experience providing oversight of Emergency Shelter Grant Programs in 25 Kansas communities.

At HCCI, Lisa provides Rental Housing Counseling for both renters and landlords. There is no charge for this HCCI community service that is also a valuable resource for city law and code enforcement officers, social service providers, family, friends and neighbors who are assisting persons who are unsure of their rights as renters and/or are experiencing rental housing issues. HCCI's website includes extensive resource materials for both tenants and landlords. HCCI's *Kansas Tenants Handbook* is available free to the public. There is a small charge to cover the cost of publication for HCCI's *Kansas Landlords Handbook*.

For nine years, Lisa was the Director of Section 8 Rental Housing for the Lawrence Douglas County Housing Authority. In that role, she was certified by HUD to provide supervision of the Section 8 staff and to document outcomes for that agency. Her responsibilities included briefings with both tenants and participating landlords and presentations at semiannual housing conferences. Lisa also has work experience in the area of maintaining medical records and outcomes and providing direct patient care.

Lisa attended the University of Kansas. She lives in Lawrence with her husband, Jeffery, and their four children.

About HCCI: Housing and Credit Counseling, Inc. was founded in 1972 and serves a 22 county area in Northeast Kansas with offices in Topeka, Lawrence and Manhattan. HCCI is approved by HUD, certified by the Council on Accreditation, and is licensed and regulated in Kansas by the Kansas Bank Commissioner.



Elías García
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Elías García joined the staff of Housing and Credit Counseling, Inc. in July 2013. He previously was a Human Resources Professional with the Kansas Department of Corrections where he was responsible for outreach and recruitment, as well as serving as their Equal Employment Opportunity Manager, agency representative to the Kansas State Diversity Network, agency designee to the PaYs Program, American with Disabilities coordinator and agency Spanish translator.

Elías provides Rental Housing Counseling for both renters and landlords. There is no charge for this HCCI community service that is also a valuable resource for city law and code enforcement officers, social service providers, family, friends and neighbors who are assisting persons who are unsure of their rights as renters and/or are experiencing rental housing issues. HCCI's website includes extensive resource materials for both tenants and landlords.

Elías is a graduate of Kansas State University with a Masters of Education. He received his BA from Wichita State University. Elías has extensive experience providing a wide range of administrative and support duties related to collaborative partnerships and coalition building for the Kansas Hispanic & Latino American Affairs Commission, the City of Topeka, Kansas Insurance Department, and Kansas Department of Transportation.

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LEARN THE INSIDE STORY OF RENTING ON YOUR OWN! BEFORE YOU DO!

Workshop Topics include:

- Roommates
- What to look for in a lease
- Move In Inspections
- Tenant Rights

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This class is for Lawrence High &
Free State High Seniors and Parents.

Speaker: Lisa Pennington-Jewsome
*Rental Housing Counselor
Housing and Credit Counseling, Inc.*

**There will be games and a chance to win a \$20 iTunes gift
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REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED!!

Please register by 4/30/13 by contacting
Lynisha Thomas at
lthomas@usd497.org
785-330-4631

For individual assessability needs contact Lynisha
at least 24 hours prior.
www.hcci-ks.org
800-383-0217

ON MY OWN

MAY 2, 2013 7:00 P.M.
LAWRENCE HIGH SCHOOL CAFETERIA

TIPS FOR FIRST TIME RENTERS
WWW.HCCI-KS.ORG



...DON'T SIGN THE DOTTED LINE UNTIL
YOU GET THE FACTS