



Photos: © Bill Timmerman

**DESIGN ARCHITECT**

CO Architects  
Los Angeles, California

**ARCHITECT OF RECORD**

Helix Architecture + Design  
Kansas City, Missouri

**CONTRACTOR/INSTALLER**

Jim Plunkett Inc. (JPI Glass)  
Kansas City, Missouri

**GENERAL CONTRACTOR**

McCown Gordon Construction LLC  
Kansas City, Missouri

**KAWNEER PRODUCTS**

1600 Wall System™1 Curtain Wall  
1600 Wall System™2 Curtain Wall  
Custom glazed veneer 1600 Wall System  
Trifab™ VersaGlaze™ 451 Framing System (front set)  
Trifab™ VersaGlaze™ 450 Framing System (center set)  
500 Heavy Wall™ Entrances  
500 Wide Stile Entrances

**GLASS**

Solarban® 72 Starphire® Ultraclear  
by Vitro Architectural Glass

University of  
Kansas Medical  
Center Health  
Education  
Building

KANSAS CITY, KANSAS

# University of Kansas Medical Center Health Education Building

KANSAS CITY, KANSAS

PROJECT PROFILE  
EDUCATION

## THE "LANTERN" BOX

The University of Kansas Medical Center (KUMC) Health Education Building serves as the primary teaching facility for the schools of medicine, nursing and health professions. The modern building showcases the range of high-tech learning environments within its walls, including studios, classrooms, a medical simulation center, labs and spaces that encourage connectivity and collaboration.

## DESIGN HIGHLIGHTS

The Health Education Building features a distinctive building-within-a-building design. A transparent, glazed "lantern" box surrounds two interior structures, which are embedded with terracotta tubes, referred to as ribs. In addition, the KUMC Health Education Building was designed with features to help sustain the environment. These include a green roof, LED lighting in all occupied spaces, heating and cooling controls and more.

A range of curtain wall systems, storefront framing and entrances enhance natural light and illuminate the building at night, enabling students, staff and visitors to view the dynamic world within.

## CHALLENGES

- Decrease high cost of specialty structural steel framing system originally specified to support the wide expanses of glass.
- Design a landmark structure that serves as a gateway to the campus and a connector to surrounding buildings.
- Provide durable materials that will withstand the heavy traffic of an educational facility.

## SOLUTIONS

- Glazing contractor and installer JPI Glass created several mockups to determine the most effective methods of curtain wall application that would meet the design criteria.
- A custom glazed veneer system based on Kawneer's 1600 Wall System™1 Curtain Wall and 1600 Wall System™2 Curtain Wall was attached to structural steel tubes to support large expanses of glass. This dramatically decreased the original budget.
- Kawneer's curtain wall solutions also created the glass-enclosed pedestrian bridge, which spans 250 feet across the site and serves as an additional space for students to gather, study and connect.
- To accommodate the high traffic of the medical center, Kawneer's 500 Wide Stile Entrances and 500 Heavy Wall™ Entrances are featured throughout.
- Kawneer's Trifab™ VersaGlaze™ 451 Framing System is also featured on the building to further support the design and performance goals of the project.

Through a blend of high-performing architectural systems alongside traditional and state-of-the-art technologies and learning spaces, KUMC achieved its design, sustainability and educational goals for the project.

