

***Council for the Spanish Speaking, Inc.***

[www.spanishcenter-milw.org](http://www.spanishcenter-milw.org)

Tel. 414-384-3700

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**Hillview Building, 1615 S. 22<sup>nd</sup> Street, Milwaukee WI 53204**

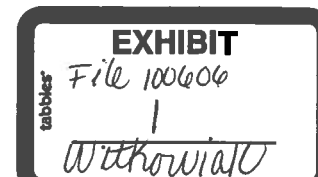
The description that follows helps to further inform what our Hillview building means to the community we serve. The Council provides services at 18 locations throughout the city, and it is the oldest serving Latino organization in the Milwaukee area.

Over the past two decades there has been a growth of the Latino population in the Clarke and Muskego Neighborhoods to close to 67%. The Hillview building is properly in the Muskego Neighborhood and our general service area. Most of those we serve come from zip codes 53204, 53215. With this growth come many social, cultural and linguistic needs that many of us have been addressing with our programs and services. The Council for the Spanish Speaking, Inc has been one of the most prominent organizations in the area. By turning the Hillview building from a nursing home to a community center, we provide additional access to English language learners and other residents.

Annually, well over 2,000 persons are served by programs at our Hillview building. Persons in need of education and training for jobs are using its very large and modern classrooms, its wireless community room, and the two computer labs (approximately 50 computers) provided by our partner, MATC. The Council, the HIRE Center, Marquette University, and MATC all hold classes at Hillview. The building's large conference and meeting rooms have also been made accessible to many non profits in the community and to institutions that need to offer conferences or workshops. For instance, meetings and training sessions have been held there by the South Side Organizing Committee; the Milwaukee and Chicago offices of Immigration; Disabilities Wisconsin; Community Advocates; Alianza Latina; our Head Start' Professional Development component; and the Milwaukee Public Schools. Most recently, we held information and training sessions by the staff with the US Census 2010. Harris Bank has also provided financial literacy workshops to residents, and health and educational conferences have also attracted hundreds of participants. Now working at Hillview are approximately 32 full time staff. We also have several student/summer workers and some 20 law students and 8 lawyers that provide services that were not in that neighborhood before.

Specifically, on the first floor, we have our HUD subsidized senior housing management and service center. The Housing Management program provides services to 154 residents in another 6 buildings for the elderly and disabled. The program is staffed by three (3) full time staff and several student/summer workers. In addition, we have a partnership with Community Advocates that has offices for five (5) transitional housing staff. We also partner with Alianza Latina to provide home services to parents with disabled children. Well over 375 families are helped to better understand how to relate to and prepare their disabled children for school participation. Three (3) full time staff members have offices at the site; large parent training sessions are held at Hillview by the program; and some 11 board members of the program use a conference room for their regular meetings. On the first floor we also have an industrial kitchen that we have not fully developed, but we can surely use help in its complete renovation.

On the second floor, we have a successful partnership with Community Advocates for a Transitional Housing Program. The program has 28 bedrooms dedicated to the homeless and mildly mentally ill adults. Clients may spend as much as 3 months living on site, and are assisted with assessments, paperwork to access county and state services, and placement at permanent housing. That program has gone very well, and on a 24/7 basis they help us with building security and beautification. The 16 Community Advocate staff loves the facility and would appreciate any help in correcting the problem to ensure complete access to the back of the building.



Hillview's 3rd floor was totally renovated. We created 8 large classrooms, 2 computer labs, offices, meeting rooms, and a large wireless community room. Approximately 10 teaching staff and several student workers provide on-site educational services. Typically, the place is full of life, packed with adult students seeking pre-employment training, bilingual GED, Civics, ESL other adult education. The program receives funding from the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, the Wisconsin Technical College, MATC, UMOS, and we have worked very closely and contracted for services with the Milwaukee Workforce Development Board, the HIRE Center, and The Trade Adjustment Act (TAA).

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, we also offer the Legal Clinic in partnership with Marquette (again, we have well over 20 law students and some 8 lawyers and faculty who volunteer every Wednesday to provide free legal advice to residents). Marquette is also offering a required course on diversity and cultural competency to its nursing master level students. Regularly, Head Start also uses the location for their staff professional development and to offer courses and workshops necessary for certification. Many local community groups use the 3rd floor for meetings, including the recently established organization of home child care providers from the area, which meets regularly and is a promising community oriented initiative.

This combination of services is a refreshing accomplishment in a neighborhood that needs this type of community center. It has added stable jobs and added significantly to the ecology of an area with one of the highest rates of population density in the city.

Our Hillview building has quickly turned into a community resource, and we feel strongly that it needs to be supported and made even more accessible with weekend employment training and education programs.

Pictures of the Hillview Building follow below:



