

Wyatt Board Application

Name: Rev. Leon Kelly
Address: [REDACTED]
Phone: [REDACTED]
email: [REDACTED]

1. What experience do you have in any of the following areas: finance, legal, governance, fundraising/development/grant writing, teaching, and foundation /non-profit work?

See Attached

2. Do you have Board experience; if so, please share what that experience has been. If not, please express how you think you will make an impact as a Board member.

I have been on many boards over the last 40 forty years, including Kiwanis Club of Denver, True Change and the Denver Ministerial Alliance, to name a few.

3. Why is Wyatt Academy important to you?

My family and I have had a long history with Wyatt since the 60's. Not only did I grown up in the community, but a couple of my siblings attended Wyatt. Over the last twenty twenty plus years I have been involved with Wyatt running programs and providing support the the students, families and community. Wyatt holds a special place in my heart.

4. A Board term is three years. Can you commit to this amount of time?

Yes

5. We do not see Board work as passive work. We rely on each Board member to be present in the school when possible and work proactively to share their skills and expertise for the benefit of the school. Tell us what time commitment you have to serving as a Board member to Wyatt Academy?

Over these twenty plus years, my schedule has been open and flexible to whatever is asked of me. I would be available, as I have been, and flexible with my schedule. As this is my eleventh hour in my career, it has been my desire to finish it at Wyatt where I have dedicated much of my energy and time over the years. With that being said, I would work to support the boards mission and goals and provide support when asked and needed.



Dr. Leon Kelly, Jr.

Profile

Reverend Kelly serves as the Executive Director of Open Door Youth Gang Alternatives. He is the founder and driving force behind this ministry. Open Door is the oldest anti-gang program in existence in the Denver metro area, a one-of-a-kind agency that was founded in 1986. It is a non-profit and non-law enforcement agency with the sole mission of curbing gang recruitment and reducing street gang violence. His experience, dedication and personal faith have made him an awesome agent of change.

A man of genuine stature, Reverend Leon Kelly was born in Denver into a very religious family. His grandfather and father were both ministers. He was raised in a working class family that taught him morals and values. His parents knew how important education was for their children's success and encouraged all of their children to attend college. Reverend Kelly attended the University of Colorado and played AAU basketball while there. Upon graduation, he continued playing semi-professional basketball. But, subsequently, chose a path not unlike many of the youth who had experienced the Vietnam Era, one that led to riches and fame – a path coupled with illegal drugs and immediate gratification. Unfortunately, the path ended abruptly.

In 1979, Leon Kelly was convicted of drug-related charges and received a five to eight year prison sentence in the Colorado State Penitentiary system. While there, Reverend Kelly had time to reevaluate his life and realized that God had a purpose for him. So, just as the Prodigal Son returned to his father, so did he. He redirected his life and instead of living for the street and the moment, he devoted himself to serving Jesus and those who needed help. Choosing to follow in his father's footsteps he became an ordained minister with a special focus on helping the youth of Colorado. Reverend Kelly holds three doctorate degrees from the Family Bible Institute of Denver, an honorary doctorate degree from Colorado Christian University, and an honorary doctorate degree from the Denver Institute of Urban Studies and Adult College. In 2010, Reverend Kelly received a "full and unconditional" pardon from then governor, Bill Ritter.

During the mid-1980's, Reverend Kelly witnessed first-hand, the introduction of organized street gangs into Denver. He was first on the scene and acknowledged, long before the City Fathers, that the California gang phenomenon was here to stay and wreaking havoc in Northeast Denver. Reverend Kelly has been a positive force in helping curtail gang violence by being a mediator between rival gangs and also serving as a positive role model for the younger youth at risk. He is a leader and a significant role model for the children and young men and women who are susceptible to gang membership and violence. He understands the streets and he loves the young people that many have forgotten. His ministry has changed the course of thousands of young lives. The rough road ridden by Reverend Kelly has produced a man with a unique combination of "street smarts" and knowledge coupled with a deep sense of compassion.

Reverend Kelly is almost the first and foremost name associated with gang activity and intervention in the Denver metropolitan area. From providing gang education to schools, other non-profit agencies, law enforcement and civic groups, to providing victim and family support during tragic times, Reverend Kelly is there.

Reverend Kelly and his staff have organized and provided after-school programming in a number of schools in Northeast Denver providing homework assistance, counseling and enrichment activities to thousands of children. The programming also provided support in the areas of choices and alternatives. He and his staff served children from the ages of 5-14 in an intensive redirection and support program. On any given day, Reverend Kelly's schedule could range from officiating at a funeral, visiting a gunshot victim in the hospital, counseling a convicted felon in jail, presenting to a community group and finally, to reading a story to a group of ten year olds.

He has been a member of the California Gang Investigator's Association for over thirty years and maintains an open line of communication with many law enforcement officers throughout the country in an effort to stay current and share information relative to gangs and drug trafficking.

Recently, Reverend Kelly developed a program in conjunction with the State of Colorado, Department of Corrections, called "Flippin' the Script". It was an intensive and specialized course that created individualized plans for gang-affiliated parolees and inmates in an effort to provide alternatives to gang involvement and ensure successful re-entry into society. Components of the program include support in finding housing, employment, job readiness, transportation, money management, mentoring and family relationships.

Reverend Kelly's call to action has led him to be widely recognized throughout the region and honored by many who work in the field of non-profits, law enforcement, sports, media,

education and governmental agencies. He continues to learn and share his knowledge with others.

Reverend Kelly and his programs have been recognized by the following government officials:

- Governor Jared Polis
- Former Colorado Governors - Roy Romer, Bill Owens, Bill Ritter and John Hickenlooper
- Mayor Michael Hancock
- Former Denver Mayors - Frederico Pena, Wellington Webb and John Hickenlooper
- Former Senators, Ben Nighthorse Campbell and Tim Wirth
- Denver District Attorney, Beth McCann and Former DA Mitch Morrissey
- Arapahoe County District Attorney, George Brauchler and former, Carol Chambers
- Adams County District Attorney, John Quick
- Former District Attorney, Norm Early
- Denver City Council members, past and present
- Former Aurora City Mayors, Paul and Ed Tauer
- Denver and Aurora Public Schools Superintendents
- Former Denver Managers of Safety, Stephanie O'Malley, Al McCabe, Butch Montoya and Ari Zavaris
- Denver and surrounding cities - Chiefs of Police
- Denver Sheriff Department, Director of Corrections – Fran Gomez
- Denver Sheriff Department, Former Director of Corrections – Pat Ferman
- Denver Sheriff Department, Former Director of Corrections – Gary Wilson
- Denver Sheriff Department, Division Chief – Elias Diggins
- Colorado Bureau of Investigation, Former Director – Ron Sloan
- Federal Bureau of Investigations, Former Director – Bob Pence

- Colorado Department of Corrections, Director – Dean Williams
- Colorado Department of Corrections, Former Director – Tom Clements
- Colorado Department of Corrections, Former Director, Division of Adult Parole, Community Corrections and Youthful Offender System – Dave Johnson
- Colorado Department of Corrections, Former Director, Division of Adult Parole, Community Corrections and Youthful Offender System – Tim Hand
- Inducted into Blacks in Colorado Hall of Fame

Education and Training

- Bachelor of Science – University of Colorado, 1976
- Job Survival Skills Training, 1981
- Bachelor of Science in Biblical Studies – Family Bible Institute, 1985
- Doctorate of Letters – Family Bible Institute, 1986
- Honorary P.H.D. – Colorado Christian College, 1987
- Honorary P.H.D. - Denver Institute of Urban Studies and Adult College
- National Gang Enforcement and Prevention Training- (476 hrs.), 1990 – 2025
- Marade Marshall Training 1990-2025
- Health and Sciences Department of Pediatrics, Child Abuse and Neglect Training, 2009
- HSS Security Training, 2010
- Combatives Defensive Tactics International (CDTI Church Defensive Tactics Course), 2011
- National Rifle Association Training (NRA Certified Instructor), 2011
- Rocky Mountain Safety and Security Inc. (Certification of O.C. Training- Basic Use and Decontamination of Chemical Weapons Course), 2012
- Personal Defense Simulations, LLC (Colorado Concealed Handgun Permit Training), 2012
- Community Emergency Response Training, 2012

- United States Concealed Carry Instructor Certification, 2015
- Heads Up, Concussion in Youth Sports Training, 2015
- NRA, "Refuse To Be A Victim", Instructor Certification, 2016
- United States Concealed Carry Association Certified Instructor, 2017
- Insight, Deadly Accuracy Course – Mental Dynamics/Defensive Pistol, 2017
- Insight, Speed Shooting and Use of Force/Shoot – Don't Shoot Training, 2017
- Mental Health First Aid USA Training, 2017
- Insight, Killer Low Light Reactive/Night Fire, 2018
- Critical Emergency Response Training (CERT), 2018
- Gunshot Wound First Aid, 2019
- Shotgun Home Defense, 2019
- NRA Range Safety Officer Certification, 2019
- USCCA Certification Countering the Mass Shooter Threat, 2019
- USCCA Certification Concealed Carry and Home Defense, 2020
- Food Bank of the Rockies Diversity and Inclusion Training 2020-2025
- Church of God in Christ, Church Security Team Training
- CPR and First Aid Training

Achievements

- Pastor, Maranatha Church of God in Christ
- Founding member of Metro Gang Coalition
- Senior Member of California Gang Investigators Association

- State of Colorado – Youth Offender System (YOS) 1996-1998
- Coordinator of Gang Awareness and Management Program
- Orchestrated gang retreats that included members of opposing gangs
- Facilitated production of anti-gang videos, “Home Boys” and “Street Fighters”
- Hosted radio “Community Focus and Gospel Hour”, show
- Former Pastor of Refreshing Springs, C.O.G.I.C.
- Vice President, President Elect of Kiwanis Club of Denver
- Member of Key Community Response Team, Aurora, CO
- Member of Aurora Public Schools, VISTA Committee
- Martin Luther King Parade – Marshall and Security Staff (34 consecutive years)
- Juneteenth Celebration - Security Commander (25 years)
- Office of the Governor-Executive Order – Full and Unconditional Pardon
- Certificate of Appointment – Denver Sheriff Advisory Board
- Certificate of Appointment – Denver District Attorney Advisory Board
- Ambassador, Centennial Gun Club
- Ambassador, Shoot Indoors Gun Club

Proclamations, Honors and Awards

- “9 Who Cares” – KUSA 9 News
- “Commitment to Excellence” – Manual High School
- “Liberty Bell Award” – Denver Bar Association
- El Pomar Award of Excellence
- 17th and 19th Annual Academy Awards – “Outstanding Achievement and Service”\
- Denver Victim Assistance – Certificate of Appreciation

- United States Senate – “Congressional Award”
- Jefferson Award Voluntary Public Service
- Syl Morgan Smith – “Outstanding Achievement and Service”
- U.S. Postal Service – Black History Committee
- United States Treasury – “Afro-American Award”
- Colorado Crime Prevention – “Certificate of Appreciation”
- Word of Life Church – “Appreciation Award”
- Grief Clinic – “Certificate of Appreciation”
- United Methodist Church – “Community Service Award”
- Aurora Police Association – “Community Service Award”
- Mile High United Way – “Outstanding Volunteer Service”
- Denver Council of Ministers and Wives – “Service as a Christian Making a Difference”
- Coors Brewing Company – “Certification of Recognition”
- Lowry Air Force Base – “Certificate of Appreciation”
- Church of God in Christ – “State Sunday School Awards”
- Kiwanis Club of Monument – “Certificate of Appreciation”
- Ford Warren Library – “Nominee of the Juanita Ross Gray Community Service Award”
- Colorado Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics – “Children Health and Welfare Award”
- Nigerian Association – “Award for Outstanding Contribution to Youth”
- Lewan and Associates – “Community Award”
- Recipient of the “Colorado African-American Male Image Award”
- Regis College – “Civic Pinceas Service Award”
- Sertoma Community Award
- Dan Issel – “Community Award”

- Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority – “Community Service Award”
- VFW Voiture '97 – “Hero of the Year”
- South Denver Optimist Club – “Law Enforcement Award”
- U.S. Department of Justice – “EEO Appreciation Award”
- Federal Correctional Institution – “Achievement Award”
- CMMO – “Outstanding Citizen Award”
- Denver’s “150 People Who Make a Difference”
- LARASA – “Community Service Award”
- Dr. Martin Luther King – “Community Service Award”
- Terrell Davis Community Service Award
- Conflict Center – “Ambassador of Peace” Award
- Rohi Ministry – “Community Service Award”
- Ladies of Distinction – “Service to Youth Award”
- Toys for Tots – “Outstanding Volunteer Award”
- Making a Difference Award – Mile High Church Service to Humanity
- Urban Land Conservancy – “Inspirational Guidance Award”
- Metropolitan State College – “Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Peace Award”
- Kiwanis Club of Denver – “Outstanding Leadership as President”
- Denver Post, Season to Share - 1996-2000
- Jon D. Williams Cotillion - Certificate of Excellence
- City of Englewood – Parks and Recreation First Place Men’s Basketball
- State of Colorado, Senate and House of Representatives, 66th General Assembly – Honorable Mention
- Senate of the United States, Washington, D.C. – Opening Session Prayer
- City and County of Denver, Proclamation – July, 2013

- International Parole Board National Award, 2014
- City and County of Denver, Proclamation – 2014
- Church of God in Christ, Superintendent's Civic Aware, 2017
- Certificate of Appointment, Denver Sheriff Advisory Board, 2017
- Martin Luther King Pioneer Achievement Award, 2019
- City and County of Denver, Proclamation – April 2019
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Publications/Video's

- Open Door, Stand by My Side, (Recording), 1989
- Gangs are a Dead End – 1996
- Handbook, Youth Violence and Gangs - 1995
- Agenda – The Alternative Magazine of Critical Issues - 1993
- Denver Daily News – July, 2001
- Urban Spectrum – March, 2007, 2012
- Aurora Sentinel –May, 2008
- Body of Christ – June, 2008
- Denver Magazine – February, 2010
- Westwood – (Nov, 1998; June, 2004; Sept, 2005; Feb, 2007; July, 2007; Jan, 2008)
- The Rocky Mountain News – 1989 through 2008 (numerous articles and references - exact articles and/or dates can be provided)
- The Denver Post – 1992 – 2013 (numerous articles and references - exact articles and/or dates can be provided)
- Home Boys I, II, III – 1988 – 1993
- Street Fighters – 1995
- Skills Like This – 2010

- Local News Agencies – 1986 through 2011
- CNN Witness Protection Story – 2000
- La Voz Magazine – July, 2013
- Imagine Book Project – 2013
- Way to Happiness, 2017
- Children's Book, "Room 23 and Lock-Down Drill", 2018
- "Voices for Humanity," Mile High Gangs, 2018
- "Freedom", Special Edition, March, 2018
- The Holly, 2023
- Documentary, Way to Happiness, 2021