

January 19, 2022 Update

EDUCATION

- Tutors --The College of Education has raised about \$1.5 million from the Houston Endowment and others to fund tutors for schools served by ACES including the schools in Third Ward. Recently, the College of Education was able to secure a contract with HISD to perform tutoring in select schools. This is a major achievement that will make the program more sustainable going forward.
- Operation Love is an annual Blackshear Elementary school holiday celebration that includes a mini health fair and the distribution of donated gifts, games, and food that took place in early December. UH College of Medicine (UHCOM) students and staff volunteered along with others from the UH campus.
- Yates Summer STEM Labs -- Dr.Thomas Thesen (UHCOM) and College of Education TeachHouston faculty plan to recruit Yates high school students to work in STEM labs this summer as a way of demystifying science and encouraging the students to think about possible science careers. The program will feature the following:
 - UH students in the TeachHouston program will teach the high school students research methods.
 - High school students will engage in real scientific research with the guidance of UH post doc and College of Medicine students.
 - High school students will learn about college requirements, the application process, and what it means to be college ready.

Dr. Thesen and his colleagues requested NSI help in identifying community members who could help recruit students and/or join an advisory group. Dr. Thesen was thrilled when Vice President Lee connected him with Dr. Reagan Flowers, a former Yates teacher and the founder of C-STEM that provides STEM Training modules to school districts. After dialogue Dr. Flowers accepted the offer for C-STEM to be a subcontract in Dr. Thesen's new NSF grant application seeking a bigger budget, around \$3-5 million dollars.

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

SURE Program

- Spring classes will be held on Monday nights between 5:00 and 9:00 p.m. About 150 aspiring potential entrepreneurs are expected.
- The Deadline for SURE spring semester applicants is January 31, 2022. As usual, NSI is helping to recruit potential participants.

- Classroom space is still a huge challenge for the SURE program. NSI has been working with Dr. Khumawala to develop a workable solution. **With assistance from NSI, large spaces in the Student Center have been identified for 5 of the 12 spring meeting dates.**
- Center for Economic Inclusion (CEI) - The final proposal for the Center has been submitted to the Committee on Academic Centers and Institutes (CACI) for its review and final approval from Provost Short. The chair of that committee has asked Dr. Khumawala to confirm that she has adequate space for the SURE program.

The President of Wells Fargo, Charles Scharf, will visit the campus on February 24th and spend 90 minutes hearing from 4 SURE graduates and aspiring entrepreneurs, and 4 BAUER student consultants.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- **Third Ward Community Garden** - UH students working through the Wesley Foundation that has an office on the UH campus in the AD Bruce Religion Center are assisting Riverside Methodist Church in building a garden which will be the model for gardens they hope to teach residents to create and maintain. The UHCOM Third Ward Community Working Group meets monthly. Rev. Denise Caulfield, Riverside UMC and UH Wesley Foundation campus minister, made a presentation about the Third Ward Community Garden at its November meeting.
- UHCOM staff and students partnered with the Tejano Center and Christus Healthy Living Mobile Clinic to offer COVID and Flu vaccines to the community in the East End. COVID vaccines were made available for persons 5 years and older beginning December 8th.
- The UHCOM's Household Centered Care program has enrolled 39 families from Third Ward and 30 families from the East End. Community health workers provide health and social service navigation and support to participants. Students from the UH colleges of Nursing, Social Work and Medicine are part of Inter-professional Education Teams who have begun making home visits with the community health workers in late November.
- Linda Civallero, the UHCOM Director of Community Engagement & Community Health, has successfully become part of Third Ward organizations:
 - a. Helped write a letter of intent to Houston Methodist for a DEI grant for community gardens that was accepted.
 - b. Was invited to serve on the UH Wesley Foundation that works closely with Riverside Methodist church and the Third Ward Community.
 - c. Was invited to be on the Advisory Board to the Third Ward Implementation Project, a program funded by a grant from Wells Fargo and housed at Change Happens.
 - d. Along with Dr. Buck hosted a Holiday gathering at Lucille's for Third Ward community leaders who have partnered with the COM on so many initiatives.
 - e. Joined the Third Ward Community Cloth that meets virtually monthly.
- NSI Distributed 151 Thanksgiving meals for seniors in collaboration with UH staff council.
- Food Distributions – Despite the Covid surge, Third Ward churches, SHAPE, and Project Row Houses (in conjunction with Urban Harvest Mobile Market) provided fresh food available at discounted prices to

those in need throughout December.

ART & CULTURE

- History Preservation – NSI connected Rev. Linda Davis with UH History professor Josiah Rector who has a CITE project that funds graduate student engagement in the community. UH student Walker Shores prepared applications concerning Boynton United Methodist Church’s history with the Houston Historic Preservation office, and the Texas Historical Commission after conducting extensive research. As part of the application process he presented before the Houston City Council in December. One significant aspect of the church is that it was designed by John Chase, the first black University of Texas (UT) graduate in architecture and the first licensed black architect in the state. Chase designed and built his home in Third Ward where he lived until he died.
- Professor Lowe has submitted a thoughtful proposal to the Project Row Houses (PRH) board that would have PRH expand its role in developing social sculptors in a big way if adopted. More universities are graduating students with degrees in social and community engaged art with minimal post graduate opportunities available to them. Under his proposal the KGMCA would provide an academic layer to this greatly expanded residency program at PRH. The residencies would be varied: Long-term live-in residencies; Short-term Nonresidential Residences; Entrepreneurial Residencies; and Neighborhood Artisan Residencies. His proposal will be discussed by the PRH Strategic Planning Committee on January 20th.
- The Office of Neighborhood & Strategic Initiatives (NSI) publicized local art exhibits that revealed the black experience. Third Ward artists were among those highlighted.
 - a. *The Dirty South* exhibit, November 5 - February 6, 2022 at the Contemporary Art Museum.
 - b. *Afro-Atlantic Histories*, ended January 17, 2022, Atlantic Slave Trade, Houston Museum of Fine Arts, comprised of over 130 works of art and documents that explore the 500 year transatlantic slave trade. Artists from 24 countries are represented.
- Third Ward Holiday Activities
 - a. Kwanzaa Celebrations at various locations December 18, 2021 – January 1, 2022. One example: Ujamaa “Cooperative Economics” Festival Marketplace hosted by SHAPE.
 - b. 14th Annual Ashe Holiday Market by the Community Artist Collective founded by UH graduate Michelle Barnes that included a workshop on ornament making and more.
 - c. Emancipation Avenue SIP & SHOP Holiday Market, December 11, 2021, sponsored by the EEDC and held in the UNITY bank parking lot. Fifteen vendors participated.

Elwyn Lee
Vice President for Neighborhood & Strategic Initiatives