

January 31, 2019 Update

EDUCATION

1. UH Partnership Center

The construction of the UH Partnership Center has been delayed for budgetary reasons. To use the land efficiently and maximize the space the College of Education desires a two story building. Toward that end additional money was raised; however, it is still not enough to construct and finish a two story building. The early January opening will have to be pushed back until more money is raised or the design is modified.

2. Program Space in the Third Ward Multi-Service Center

While budgetary issues with the UH Partnership Center are being resolved, the College of Education has acquired approximately 2000 square feet in the Third Ward Multi-Service Center through an agreement with the City of Houston Health and Human Services Department. The space will be the location of after school tutoring, training, and workshops sponsored by the Advancing Community Engagement & Services Institute (ACES). Other UH initiatives involving Third Ward may operate out of that space as well. The Department of Communications Disorders already provides service there several times a week.

3. Board of Visitors (BOV) Task Force on Third Ward Schools

Task Force representatives have already visited with the principals of Yates High School, Cullen Middle School and Blackshear Elementary. As a result the College of Education has offered to (1) assist each school organize and structure a parents organization, (2) provide staff professional development training, and (3) provide additional tutoring and mentoring support. The Task Force still plans to visit with the principals of Hartsfield, Thompson, and Foster elementary schools.

4. Ascending to Men (ATM) Mentoring Program

ATM is HISD's mentoring program that targets minority males. Three hundred students are involved, but due to the shortage of mentors, group mentoring is the norm rather than one on one. Only 75 mentors participate regularly. UH students are part of this group and Dr. Elwyn Lee serves on the ATM Advisory Committee. This December 90 students participated in a banquet gala to experience using the etiquette skills they learned through the program.

HEALTH

1. Dental Fair to Serve Hundreds of Residents May 17th and 18th

The UH Neighborhood & Strategic Initiatives (NSI) office is helping to plan and organize a DENTAL FAIR designed to provide free dental services for up to 1000 residents in Third Ward and adjacent neighborhoods. Forty (40) volunteer dentists from the Texas Dental Association will serve preregistered patients at the Emancipation Park on May 17th and 18th. The effort is led by the Faith in Action committee of the EEDC. UH students at all levels will be part of the 800 needed volunteers. On January 15th community stakeholders gathered at a reception to help raise \$60,000 in required matching funds. Dr. Elwyn Lee and three other UH administrators and faculty attended the event. Subsequently, Dr. Buck, Associate Dean, UH College of Medicine, secured a commitment to prescreen 320 residents from San Jose Clinic in Houston. NSI is working with the Third Ward organizations to secure volunteers, marketing, bus transportation, parking, lodging, catering, and child care.

2. Community Health Worker (CHW) Initiative

Led by Dr. Dan Price of the Honors College, this initiative involves trained residents working side by side with trained UH students on preventive health while embedded in the community. The residents come from the Cuney Homes housing project.

Beginning this January the CHW initiative will establish a new partnership with Riverside Methodist Church located at the corner of Cullen and North MacGregor.

This relationship will provide a model for deeper penetration into Third Ward and beyond (e. g. Fifth Ward) where the diabetes prevention, HIV prevention, asthma prevention and vision screening will continue. Additionally, the list of UH partners is growing to include the Nursing, Optometry, UH STEM, the College of Medicine and the Data Science Institute.



3. Sight for Success – This collaboration between the College of Nursing, the College of Optometry and the Honors College operated in fall of 2018 to improve the vision screening process in several schools. The project team hopes to expand that program and has submitted a preproposal for \$24,641 to the UH Community Initiative to Engage (CITE) grant funding program.

4. Enhanced Safety Coming to Cullen Blvd. and Cleburne Street – With \$15 million made available by Harris County Commissioner Rodney Ellis, Cullen Boulevard will be completely reconstructed from I-45 to North MacGregor. The work should begin this summer. When finished the community will enjoy the following benefits: (1) flood control enhancements (2) redesigned intersections that enhance safety (3) wide pedestrians/bike pathways on the east and west side of Cullen (4) redesigned street indentions that facilitate the safe pick up of passengers by METRO and campus shuttles, and (5) lane reductions from Holman to North MacGregor that will encourage compliance with speed limits. An additional \$15 million will be used to reconstruct Cleburne street from Scott to Ennis near Texas Southern University. NSI is taking the lead in planning the outreach to the community. A joint UH/TSU community forum is scheduled for February 21st at Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church at which county engineers will describe the projects and their benefits.

5. Colon Cancer Screening

Hope Through Grace (HTG) is a non-profit founded by Dr. Grace Butler, UH Emeritus faculty member and former UH Associate Provost. HTG provides colon cancer screenings and is exploring the feasibility of providing services in Third Ward in partnership with Harris County Health and/or the UH College of Medicine. According to Dr. Butler, studies show that the highest incidences of colon cancer are in Third Ward, Fifth Ward and Acres Homes.

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

1. The SURE Program



a. The spring SURE Entrepreneur Academy has begun. Currently there are:

- 97 aspiring entrepreneurs participating.
- Eighteen (18) live in Third Ward.
- An additional 33 have previously lived in Third Ward and consider themselves economically and/or socially connected to Third Ward.

b. Dr. Saleha Khumawala (SURE Program Director & Founder), the Friends of SURE, and the SURE Advisory Committee are aggressively seeking critical funding to sustain the program. With a couple of seed funders ending their commitments, it is essential that new sources of revenue be identified to cover staff, printed materials for participants, conference travel and scholarships for SURE mentors. Two large foundations have expressed serious interest.

2. Houston Anchor Collaborative (HAC)

Staff changes has delayed progress on this initiative. The head of UH Human Resources left for another position. That critical unit is headed by an Interim Director but a search is underway. Similarly, the key community partner, the Emancipation Economic Development Council (EEDC), has been restructuring. It is now a non-profit with a board, new offices, and new Executive Director, Mr. Cary Yates, a well-known former bank executive. However, shortly after his appointment, surgery and subsequent recovery delayed his coming to work. The EEDC is attempting to re-engage The Democracy Collaborative (TDC), the national leader in anchor collaborations, so that expert leadership can guide the discussions.

3. EEDC Trying to Launch Businesses

a. The Emancipation Economic Development Council (EEDC) has launched a cooperative construction company. Two members of the company are auditing UH online construction management courses this spring; they audited two course this past fall.

b. The EEDC is exploring the idea of starting a coffee roasting worker-owned business in Third Ward. It has asked NSI to identify UH faculty and graduate students in Industrial Engineering who could meet to discuss how best to develop blueprints for such facility.

ART and CULTURE

1. KGMCA – PRH Fellowships



a. New Fellows-Over 60 individuals applied for the 2019 Fellowships. Half of the applications are from out-of-state with three international applications. Sixto Wagan (UH CASE) and Ryan Dennis of Project Row Houses (PRH) have selected the two new fellows:

(1) **Libby Bland**, graduate of University of Pennsylvania with master degrees in architecture and planning, was raised in Southeastern Virginia and has a background in oral history and community design.



(2) **Sara Rafael Garcia**, a writer, traveler and arts educator was born in Brownsville, Texas and raised in California. The Fellows will be presenting their prior work to the public in late February.

b. CITE support for Fellows Mentoring Undergraduates – The CITE Advisory Committee voted to approve the request for financial support of the Fellows’ mentorship of undergraduate students through the PRH Summer Studios Program. Up to three (3) students will receive six weeks of studio space, additional stipend and exhibition opportunity at Project Row Houses.

2. CITE and Potential Cultural Loop – Professor Lowe and his students are exploring the possibilities of activating the area between Holman and Elgin streets from Emancipation Avenue to Scott Street with public and creative activity. A draft pamphlet was prepared in the fall, and through an independent study class taught by Rick Lowe, this cultural loop will be further investigated. A proposal will be submitted to CITE by February 22nd asking for funds to support an undergraduate fellowship similar to the KGMCA-PRH Fellowship. The funds would support scholarships, mentorships and project engagement in Third Ward.

3. RELATED: Rick Lowe, Bloomberg Philanthropies, and Tulsa

Bloomberg Philanthropies recently announced Professor Rick Lowe and the Greenwood Cultural Center in Tulsa as one of five winners in the nationwide 2018 Bloomberg Philanthropies Public Art Challenge. The Greenwood Art Project will receive a \$1 million award to fund projects and programs to commemorate the 1921 Tulsa race massacre that destroyed the Greenwood District, including Black Wall Street.

UH MLK CELEBRATION



This year’s series of events were collectively one of the best UH commemorations of Dr. Martin Luther King and his principles. The 13 person committee established and accomplished the following goals for 2019:

1. **Educate/stimulate learning about values and issues espoused by Dr. King**
 - Speech by Poet and activist Nikki Giovanni to a packed theatre

- Remarks by Provost Short
- 2. Find creative ways to entertain others**
 - Poetry Slam
 - 3. Inspire others to move forward to let their voices be heard.**
 - Tabling event - *The Power of Words; your voice matters*-which allowed individuals to write or records their thoughts.
 - 4. Connect with students/student organizations to engage in celebration and inspire participation**
 - Student leaders took responsibility for program segments.
 - Participation in the city's downtown parade.
 - Participation in the day of service at six sites was the largest in three years.
 - 5. Inspire others to get out of their comfort zone.**
 - The movie *The Hate you Give* that was viewed by a packed theatre
 - Remarks by poet Nikki Giovanni

Elwyn Lee, Vice President for Neighborhood & Strategic Initiatives