

March 7, 2019 Update

EDUCATION



1. HISD State of Schools-Public Education Matters

On March 5th the HISD held a State of HISD fundraising banquet at the Hilton Americas grand ballroom. HISD students served as mistress of ceremonies, and provided the entertainment. The program included a sit down panel discussion with the HISD Interim Superintendent, the founder of the Harlem Children's Zone, and the head of Teach for America (TFA). UH serves as one of a handful of summer TFA orientation and training sites for TFA members who go on to serve children

and schools in underprivileged areas. UH representatives present included Dr. Johnathan Schwartz from the College of Education and Dr. Elwyn Lee, Vice President for Neighborhood & Strategic Initiatives.

2. BOV Task Force on Third Ward Schools



A. Planning for STEM at Cullen-When the Task Force met with the Hartsfield elementary school principal on Feb. 8th the members were told that HISD had no nearby middle school with a robotics program that his graduates could attend. With that in mind the Task Force and COE representatives had a lengthy conference call with Principal Thompson of Cullen middle school to discuss whether Cullen wanted a robotics program and how together we might establish one. Amegy Bank has shown some interest in supporting this initiative and C-STEM, a non-profit specializing in STEM education, is interested if adequate resources can be found.

B. Mural Painting a Cullen Middle School – Task Force members and UH representatives have been invited to join Cullen in painting murals at the school on Saturday, March 9th.

3. Elementary Students to Visit UH – At the request of Blackshear elementary school, NSI will host 40 students on March 13th in the hope that dreams of college will be kindled. On April 24th students from Foster elementary school will be visiting the campus.

4. Yates High School

A. Admissions Presentation- Yates male alumni organization, Men of Valor, has requested that UH join them in sharing UH admissions criteria, process and scholarship opportunities during the week of March 28th. Yates juniors will be in attendance.

B. Ascending to Men (ATM) program-Though launched 6 months ago, this HISD mentoring initiative still needs men to sign up as mentors. Yates high school and Cullen middle school have a desperate need for these mentors. At the request of Dr. Kenneth Davis, Asst. Superintendent for Diversity and Equity, NSI is intensifying its efforts to recruit. Contact has been made with the Regional Director of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. who has responded positively. The UH Urban Experience Program (UEP) has money for mentoring and is encouraging students to participate as well.

HEALTH

1. Third Ward Health Summit



On February 23rd at the Third Ward Multi-Service Center stakeholders involved in Third Ward health came together for four hours to network, define challenges, identify resources, and strategize for the future. Among the UH representatives were Dr. David Buck and Dr. Kendra Smith from the College of Medicine, and Dr. Luis Torres from the Graduate College of Social Work. The summit was organized by the *Families, Children, and Seniors* subcommittee of the Northern Third Ward Project. The NTW project is funded by a \$750,000 five year grant from the Wells Fargo Foundation.

2. Dental Fair Planning -The planning for the scheduled May 16-18th Dental Fair that will provide dental services to hundreds of residents is continuing. UH representatives from the College of Medicine, the Honors College and NSI have met twice with leaders of this project. Another meeting is scheduled for March 8th. The greatest needs are more volunteers, assistance with parking, and help recruiting patients.

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 proposal for \$24,641 to the UH CITE program that will be voted on March 7, 2019.

4. Safety and Cullen Boulevard – The Community Meeting to discuss the details of the proposed Harris County reconstruction of Cleburne street (from Scott to Ennis) and Cullen Blvd. (from N. MacGregor to I-45) took place on February 21st at the Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church. The room was full and Harris County project leaders shared details and responded to questions for two hours. NSI has sent additional materials to attendees who signed in. NSI also has connected the county with the leadership of the Riverside United Methodist Church on Cullen so that a detailed discussion with that stakeholder can take place. UH administrators will meet on March 20th to discuss how best to share information about the proposed project with the campus community.

5. Third Ward Clean Up Scheduled – Another Third Ward Clean Up is scheduled for April 13, 2019. UH is a valued collaborator in these important events. Dr. Jerry Evans of the College of Technology is taking the lead on recruiting UH students to participate in this event as he usually does.

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT



1. The SURE Program

A. Dr. Saleha Khumawala (SURE Program Director & Founder), has submitted grant proposals to two large foundations in the hope of obtaining critical funding to sustain and possibly expand the program. These funds over the next three years will cover staff, printed materials for participants, conference travel and scholarships for SURE mentors. New financial support from the office of the Provost shows strong institutional support, something foundations look for in evaluating grant applications.

B. Service Learning Workshop. SURE is cosponsoring a workshop on service learning scheduled for April 5, 2019. Faculty attending will learn about resources and opportunities available to those interested in incorporating service learning in coursework and co-curricular programs. Dr. Jonathan Schwartz of the College of Education will also be a speaker.

C. Grameen America Comes to Houston - About a year ago Grameen America visited UH and the SURE program to explore the feasibility of it expanding to Houston. The hope was that it could partner with SURE and receive loan applications from SURE graduates. Grameen is a well-known micro lending entity that provides small loans to women trying to launch their businesses. It was announced this week that Grameen America is now in Houston with offices at

6260 Westpark in southwest Houston.

ART and CULTURE

1. KGMCA – PRH Fellowship—Each summer the fellows mentor college students for six weeks in partnership with Project Row Houses. Recently the UH CITE grant program approved funds to support this work during the summer of 2019. Another proposal for funds has been submitted and will be voted on by the CITE Advisory Committee March 7th.
2. Public Art—A grant proposal has been submitted to the UH CITE program to fund Professor Rick Lowe's proposed Cultural Loop that will involve installing art activations at 8 Third Ward sites. The CITE Advisory Committee will vote on that proposal March 7th.
3. Holman Street Reconstruction-TIRZ #7 has plans to reconstruct "Historic Holman Street." An update of that project will be discussed March 7th at the TIRZ Board meeting scheduled for noon. A reconstructed Holman is essential to the aspiration to establish an Arts Mile along Holman Street between UH and Project Row Houses.

MISCELLANEOUS

1. Proposed Texas Highway 35 Construction---NSI has reached out to the leadership of the OST/Community Partnership that is comprised of several civic clubs that might be affected by the proposed construction of Texas Highway 35. The Texas Department of Transportation representatives recently attended an OST/Community Partnership meeting on February 25th to share details of the project and answer questions. Phase I of the project will extend from I-45 to Bellfort. The attendees had concerns about the potential for noise and the possible acquisition of homes to make way for the highway. Much of the land for Phase I has already been acquired. Dr. Ted McDavid, who leads the group, appreciates the economic benefit of bringing commuters along Texas Highway 35, and asserted her wholehearted support for UH projects like the UH College of Medicine and projects that contribute to their success.

Elwyn Lee, Vice President for Neighborhood & Strategic Initiatives