

## INSTITUTE RELEASES ANNUAL DALLAS WHOLENESS INDEX

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DALLAS, Oct. 22 -- The University of Texas at Dallas issued the following news release:

The UT Dallas Institute for Urban Policy Research released the 2008 Dallas Wholeness Index, Oct. 16, at its annual conference. Dallas scored a 67.41, a slight improvement over the 2007 score of 66.79. The Wholeness Index measures disparities in quality of life across the city's many neighborhoods.

The higher score reflects the fact that wholeness in Dallas is steadily increasing, thanks to changes in the southern sector of the city. The quality of life in South Dallas is improving, while the quality of life in North Dallas has remained stable.

At the conference, Dallas Mayor Tom Leppert addressed the importance of understanding the city's wholeness and "interconnectedness."

"I'm standing here because I want to see the wholeness score accelerated," Leppert said.

He emphasized the importance of taking steps now to advance the wholeness of the city tomorrow and outlined several measures the city is taking to improve neighborhoods than may have been left behind in the past.

The Wholeness Index was developed by the institute and as a result, Dallas is the first city to have this type of quality-of-life measurement, rather than a simple average. It uses 12 quality-of-life indicators to highlight areas of the city that are improving or declining. According to Institute Director **Timothy Bray**, wholeness within a city is achieved when "every resident has a chance to enjoy an equally productive and satisfying life, regardless of where he or she lives."

The Wholeness Score is not a percentage. It is best interpreted as a number along a spectrum, where zero represents a city where all neighborhoods are different, and 100 represents a city where all neighborhoods offer an identical quality of life. The score is intended to offer a valuable benchmark and point to specific areas of disparity.

Although the Institute for Urban Policy Research is committed to producing community-based research on disparities in quality of life, Bray is quick to point out that research must go hand in hand with neighborhood stories. "We can't let paralysis by analysis happen," he said. The institute's growing team is out in the community, gathering anecdotes and talking to residents who want to improve their neighborhoods. "The institute is committed to any neighborhood that wants help to know what to do," Bray said.

The UT Dallas Institute for Urban Policy Research, formerly the Williams Institute, is housed in the School of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences. The institute's move to the University was made possible by a generous gift from Trammel Crow Chairman Emeritus Don Williams.

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