

URBAN POLICY INSTITUTE LENDS AREA NONPROFITS A HAND

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RICHARDSON, Texas, May 3 -- The University of Texas at Dallas issued the following news release:

The Institute for Urban Policy Research is reaching out to a growing list of area nonprofit organizations, providing them with expert guidance for major new initiatives while offering UT Dallas students valuable real-life experience.

"We are taking every opportunity we can to expand our partnership with the community, and to help our faculty and students share their expertise with organizations involved in important work," said Dr. **Timothy Bray**, director of the institute, which is part of the School of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences.

The institute recently earned a \$50,000 grant from the Citi Foundation, which is enabling UT Dallas graduate students to work closely with several prominent civic organizations, supporting projects that could positively affect the lives of many area residents.

The Urban Institute Workshop is now wrapping up its second semester and includes nine PhD student volunteers. They are each assigned to work, salary-free, with a particular organization.

Bray said these groups are a "who's who" of programs aimed at improving life in the Metroplex: CitySquare, Parkland Health and Hospital System, Dallas-Fort Worth Hospital Council Education and Research Foundation, Inner-City Community Development Corp., SouthFair Community Development Corp., Resolana, Heart of a Champion, Legacy Center for Public Policy and The Dallas Morning News' "North-South Dallas" editorial team.

"The Urban Institute Workshop brought the material to life in a way that lectures and books never do, and I've never worked on a class project with more tangible consequences than in this class," graduate student Danny Pacheco said.

Students in the workshop said they expanded their knowledge and their career possibilities through real-life experience. "In a job market where networking means everything, Dr. Bray does a great job connecting us with the major non-profit players in the Metroplex," Rubana Ahmed said.

The institute also is heavily involved in the United Way of Metropolitan Dallas' United 2020, which sets ambitious goals for improving financial, educational and health-care opportunities for lower-income residents over the next decade. The institute was hired to provide technical assistance and conduct external evaluations throughout the 10-year effort.

The institute's students and faculty also are working on Children's Medical Center's Beyond ABC project, which looks at child health, economic security, education and safety issues across North Texas. UT Dallas completed a report on the health-care situation in five area counties and is now analyzing data to make policy recommendations for child health care in the region.

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