

**SMU
ENGAGE
DALLAS**



**END OF YEAR
REPORT**

Reflecting

ON ENGAGE DALLAS

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THINK BIG, DO GOOD



WENDELIN DONAHUE

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, SMU DEA

“In our collective efforts to ensure we’re amplifying the work of our faculty, staff, and students in the community, working with Engage Dallas has truly been one of the highlights of my role as the Director of Community Engagement in Development and External Affairs. The heart of the Engage Dallas initiative is collaboration and impact. In my time working with Engage Dallas, I’ve seen relationships with our community partners strengthened, collaboration across campus units increase, and a sense of responsibility and pride flourish in our students.”

A WORD FROM OUR INITIATIVE MANAGER

Listening, learning, and leading locally --our unofficial theme for the year has led us to all that we've accomplished. From the inaugural Engage Dallas Bus Tour to the launch of the Community Partner Council and the Engage Dallas Book Club, there's been a lot going on! In reflection, over the last year, we've launched new initiatives, innovated current traditions, supported local South and West Dallas businesses, and collaborated to better serve the local community.

Working closely with our community partners who are the champions of this work, as well as our student director team who serve as campus advocates for the program, and our Engage Dallas staff members and campus partners who form the backbone of the Engage Dallas initiative, has been a privilege. Take a moment to reflect with us on the last year. As you reflect, I challenge you to join us in reimagining and expanding what place-based community engagement can look like.

Audryanna Reed

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR FOR HIGH-IMPACT PRACTICES
RESIDENCE LIFE & STUDENT HOUSING



WHAT IS ENGAGE DALLAS?

Engage Dallas is a **place-based** initiative bringing **community engagement opportunities** to each SMU student as a part of their interaction with the Commons and the Common Curriculum.

This initiative allows SMU's Residential Commons (RC) to **address community needs** in **South and West Dallas** through a **long-term partnership** between campus, Dallas residents, and community organizations.

The Engage Dallas initiative began in the **Spring of 2019** when **Boaz Commons** was given a donation earmarked for community service. A community-based service program was developed for the following year through a partnership with the **Office of Social Change and Intercultural Engagement (SCIE)**.

The pilot program aligned with the **Residence Life and Student Housing (RLSH)** goal of RC-based sustained **service relationships as a high-impact educational practice**. Boaz Commons partnered with RLSH and SCIE to put together an Innovation Grant proposal through the **Division of Student Affairs**, and this grant was later approved.

The Engage Dallas team quickly added partners in the offices of **Engaged Learning and General Education** as the campus curriculum began to change.

In October 2020, Engage Dallas was launched campus-wide to all students and was approved as a primary pathway to fulfill the **Community Engagement Proficiency and Experience** of SMU's Common Curriculum.

In the Fall of 2021, the **Hegi Family Career Development Center** joined Engage Dallas as a campus partner facilitating the summer paid internship program.

In the Fall of 2023, an additional pathway to complete the **Civics & Individual Ethics Proficiency and Experience** through Engage Dallas was added.



A CLOSER LOOK AT THE RESIDENTIAL COMMONS



HOMELESSNESS



FOOD INSECURITY



COLLEGE ACCESS & PREPARATION



ARTS AS SOCIAL IMPACT



ENVIRONMENTAL INJUSTICE



STEM EDUCATION ACCESS



COMMUNITY WELLBEING



IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE SUPPORT



CHILD POVERTY



CHILDHOOD LITERACY



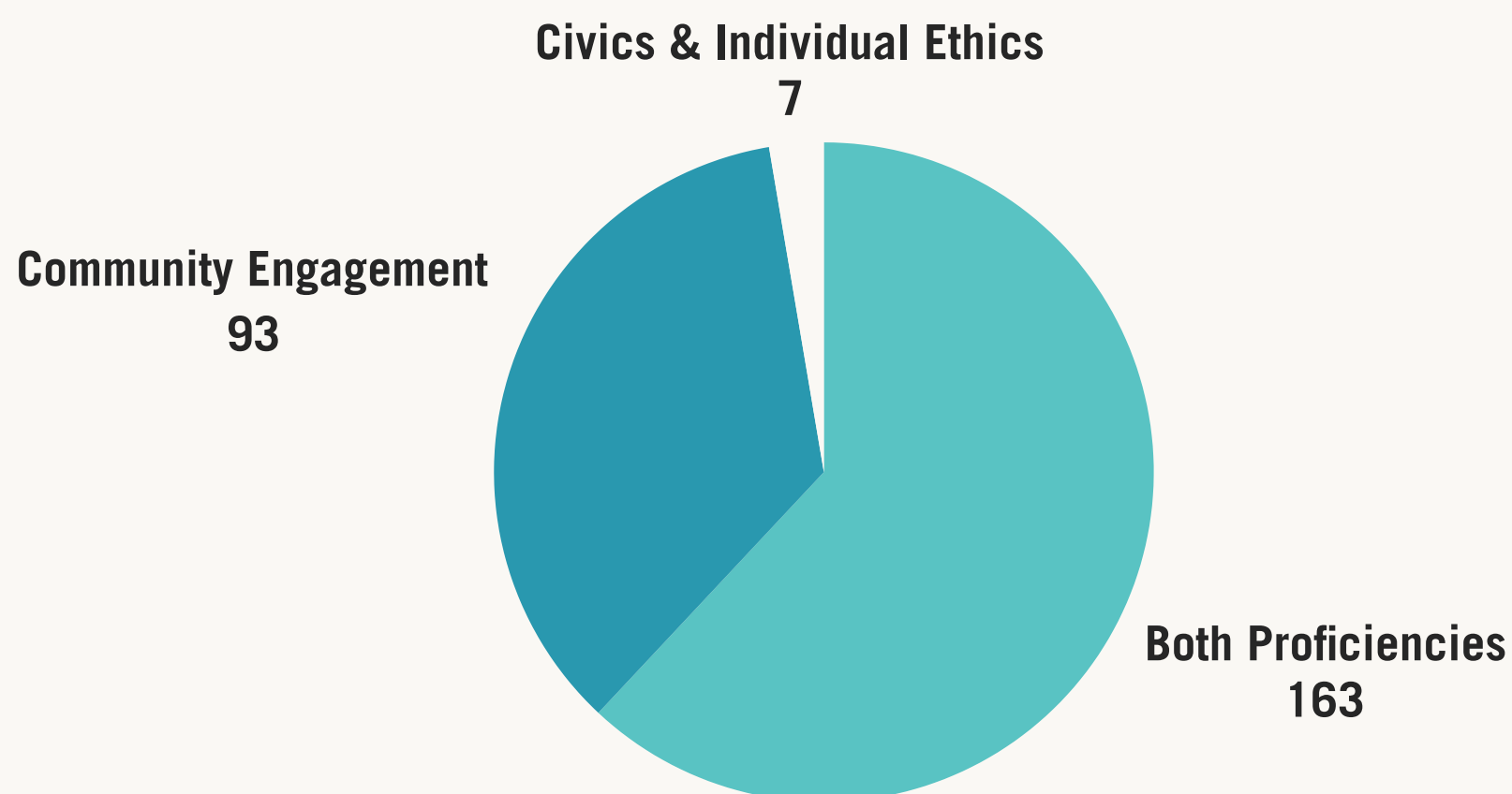
COMMUNITY REBUILDING



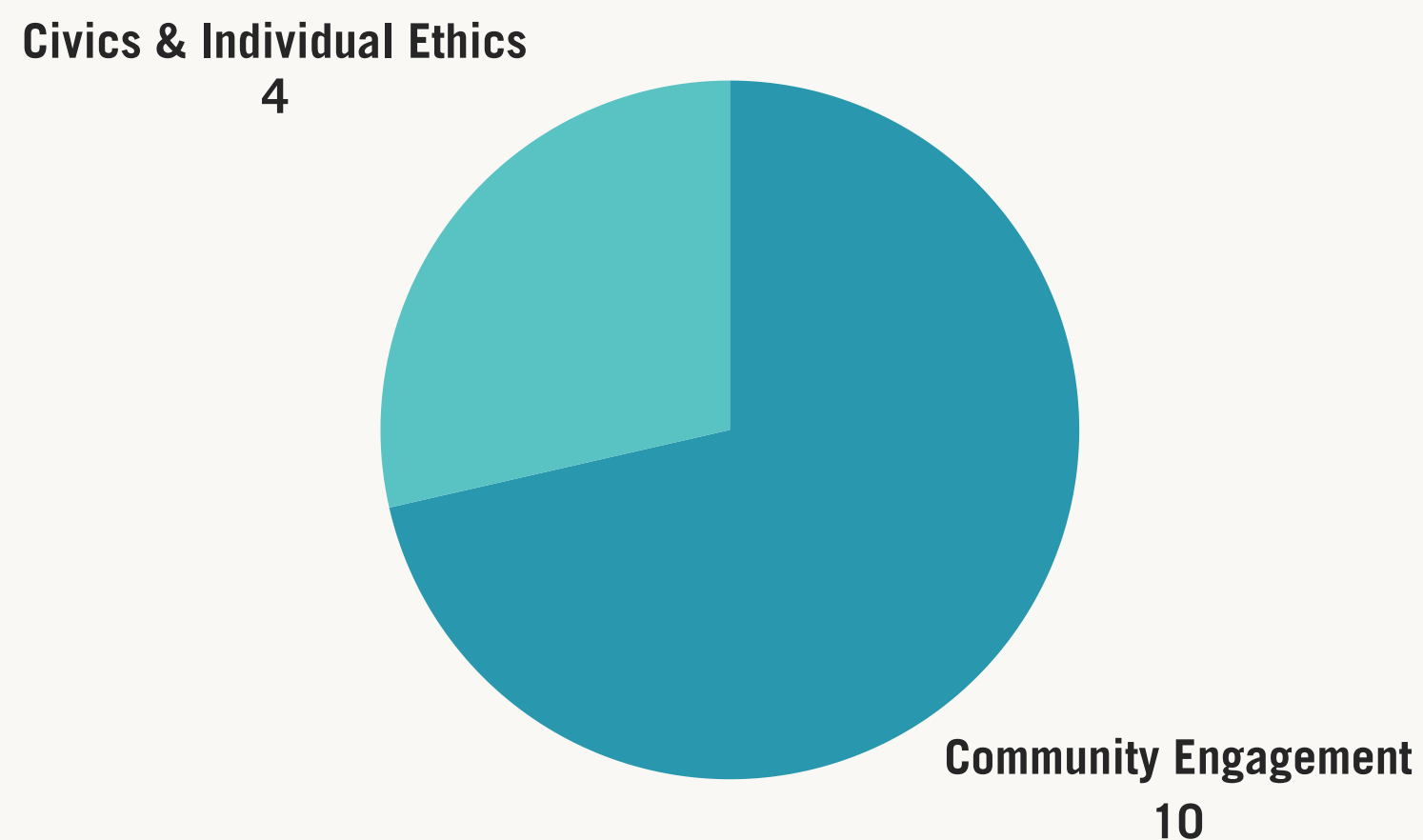
Click on the Residential Commons crest to learn more about **their community engagement focus.**

WHO'S ENGAGIN' WITH ENGAGE DALLAS?

23-24 DECLARED PROFICIENCY INTENT



23-24 PROFICIENCY COMPLETION



98

TOTAL EVENTS

2357

TOTAL HOURS SERVED

34

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

1614.5

HOURS OF DIRECT SERVICE

742.5

HOURS OF INDIRECT SERVICE

622

UNDERGRADUATE VOLUNTEERS

16

GRADUATE VOLUNTEERS

20

FACULTY/STAFF VOLUNTEERS

Start your **EngageDallas** Journey today at [smu.edu/EngageDallas!](https://smu.edu/EngageDallas)

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Hosted Inaugural Student Bus Tour
- Launched the Engage Dallas Community Partner Council
- Expanded Annual Place-Based Community Engagement Symposium into a 2-day event
- Hosted 3rd #1Day4Dallas day of service
- Launched Engage Dallas Book Club
- Hosted an Engage Dallas Alternative Break Trip to Texarkana
- Launched Phase I of the Engage Dallas Photo Project
- Reimagined One Night for Dallas amplifying more of our community partners
- Launched new Engage Dallas website with updated video marketing
- Launched the 2-in-2 pathway to dual proficiency attainment in two years



Volunteers at Readers 2 Leaders



One Night for Dallas 2024!



Brother Bill's Helping Hand Food Pantry

GOALS FOR 24-25

- Host an inaugural service day for incoming students during Stampede
- Host the 3rd Placed-Based Community Engagement Symposium
- Host two bus tours—one for community partners and one for students
- Send 150 students to serve as a part of the 4th #1Day4Dallas
- Recruit and select 20 summer interns
- Expand the experiential learning immersions through Engage Dallas

ENGAGE DALLAS AND THE COMMONS SYSTEM



Each Residential Commons partners with non-profit organizations dedicated to a specific community need. This year, we initiated the Engage Dallas Photo Project highlighting students in each commons to encourage participation, led by Engage Dallas Program Assistant Sophia Kang '27.

Assistant Provost for Undergraduate Education & Academic Success, Dr. Dustin Grabsch, Ph. D., has been a key architect of Engage Dallas' implementation and reflected on the partnership in celebration of the 10th anniversary of the RC system.

“The Residential Commons, SMU’s undergraduate housing system, is celebrating its 10th anniversary this year. Engage Dallas, now in its 4th year, has been a valuable addition to the Residential Commons program. It aligns with our broader commitment to being Dallas’ university by fostering a sense of community within SMU and the larger Dallas community.

This integrated residential experience allows students to build relationships while serving their Dallas neighbors and their peers in their Commons. Engage Dallas also enhances our academic mission by providing opportunities to fulfill Common Curriculum requirements, offering paid internships to develop transferable skills, linking courses with community partners, and exploring complex social issues from both academic and applied perspectives.”



DUSTIN GRABSCH, PH.D.

ASSISTANT PROVOST FOR UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION & ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Armstrong Commons

Austin Street Center
The Bridge
The StewPot

Boaz Commons

Sunny South Community Garden
Our Saviour Community Garden
Mission Oak Cliff
CitySquare

Cockell-McIntosh Commons

Crowned Scholars
LNEC
Girl Scouts of Northeast Texas

Crum Commons

The Senior Source (Modern Senior Living)
Bishop Arts Theatre Center

Kathy Crow Commons

Greenspace Dallas
Restorative Farms
Trinity River Audubon Center

Loyd Commons

West Dallas STEM School
Jubilee Park and Community Center
Row Dallas

MHPS Commons

Heart House
The Intensive English Program
Trusted World
Dallas Furniture Bank

McElvaney Commons

Dallas Children Advocacy Center
Legacy Counseling Center
Brother Bill's Helping Hands

Morrison McGinnis Commons

After8toEducate
Behind Every Door
Wesley-Rankin Community Center

Virginia Snider Commons

Voice of Hope
Reading Partners
Readers 2 Leaders

Ware Commons

Frazier Revitalization
Empowering the Masses
Keep Dallas Beautiful



ENGAGE DALLAS PARTNER COUNCIL

Engage Dallas strives to center the community's voice in decision-making and service planning. To further this effort, the quarterly Engage Dallas Community Partner Council meetings began. The hope for these meetings is to share continued partnership opportunities that extend beyond student service, gather feedback on changes or additions to the program, and provide community partners with meaningful learning opportunities to further develop them as non-profit leaders.

The first meeting was hosted on SMU's campus, and attendees were able to learn from Dr. Alicia Schortgen on non-profit fundraising strategies. The second meeting coincided with the 2nd Annual Place-Based Community Engagement Symposium. Austin Street Center hosted the council's third meeting and CEO, Daniel Roby, shared about the history and achievements of Austin Street Center. The final meeting took place at the SMU Meadows Museum, where community partners were given a guided tour of the museum and take-home art kits for those they serve.

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS AT SMU



THE INAUGURAL DALLAS BUS TOUR



The inaugural Engage Dallas Bus Tour took place on September 8. A total of 27 students participated and explored several historical sites around Dallas. We are so grateful to have partnered with Dallas Truth, Racial Healing, & Transformation, who led the tour. In many ways, the tour highlighted how race and race relations in Dallas have impacted the lives of many Dallas natives. The tour also added clarity to Engage Dallas' place-based approach to service.

The tour went as follows: Stop 1: John Neely Bryan Cabin, Old Red Courthouse, and Martyrs Park; Stop 2: Allen Brooks Marker; Stop 3: Pike Park and Santos Rodriguez Memorial; Stop 4: Freedman's Cemetery and Memorial; Stop 5: Booker T. Washington High School, St. Paul United Methodist Church, and Old Moreland YMCA; Stop 6: Dallas Heritage Village, Millermore Mansion, and Gano House; Stop 7: Juanita J. Craft Civil Rights House.

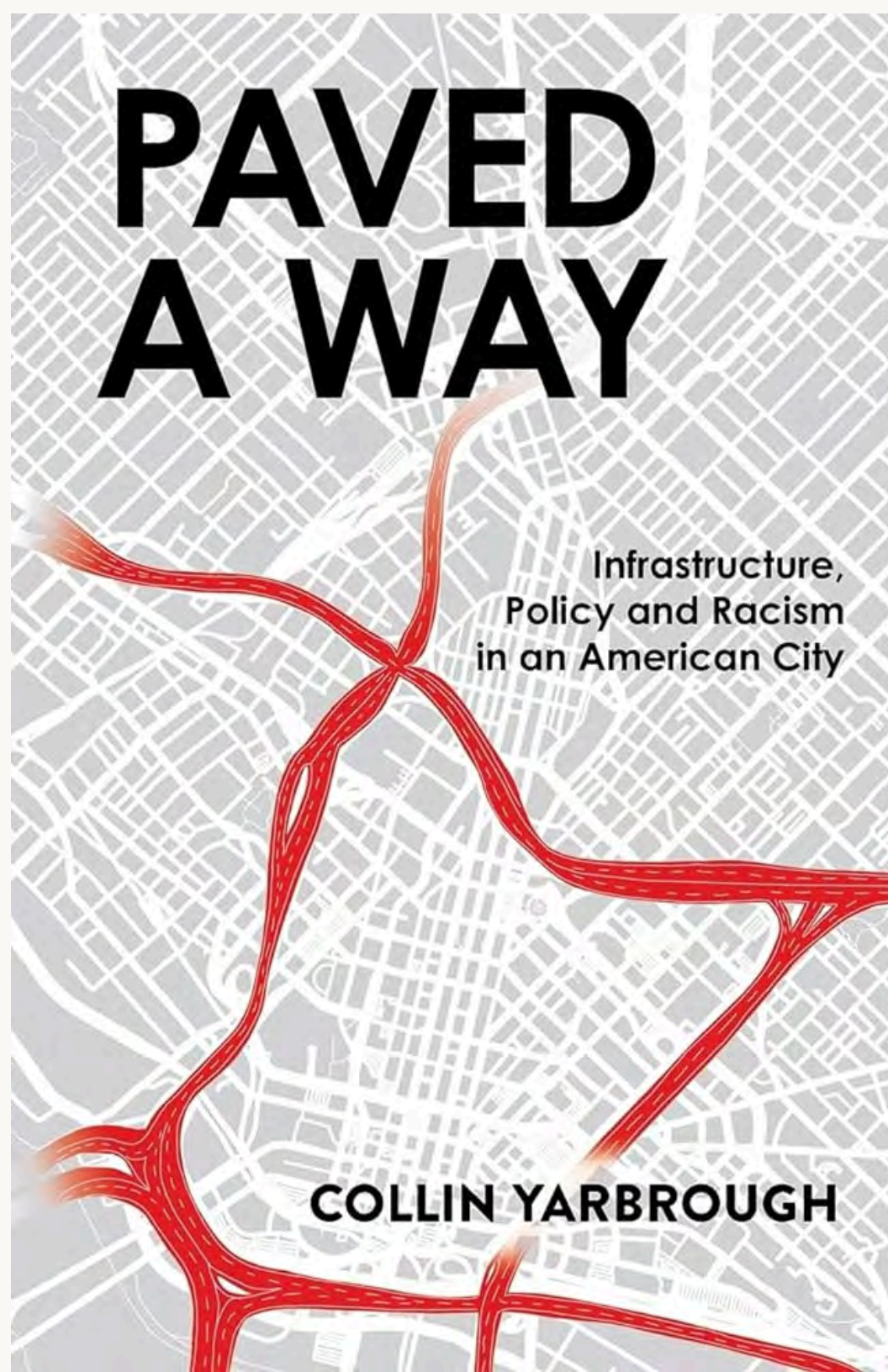
In a post-event assessment, some students shared what they learned from the tour. One student shared:

"I learned about how gentrification of towns can affect racial demographics." Another said: "I learned about important people like Juanita Craft and Santos Rodriguez."

Other students shared what they liked about the event:

"I liked how we could see some landmarks and information about important people I didn't know existed."

All students who participated earned 4.5 hours of general engagement towards their Community Engagement and Civics & Individual Ethics Proficiency. This tour will become an annual event.



ENGAGE DALLAS BOOK CLUB

11

Engage Dallas launched a book club in the Spring of 2024 in partnership with The Budd Center. This initiative was fueled by a desire to gather with others working toward community engagement efforts in the city of Dallas and to continue the conversations that began at Engage Dallas' Place-Based Community Engagement Symposium in November.

The book this Spring was *Paved A Way* by SMU Ph.D. student Collin Yarbrough, which highlights the stories of five neighborhoods in Dallas, how they were shaped by racism and economic oppression, and how this trend spanned beyond Dallas.

The book club met monthly and was attended by SMU staff, faculty, and community members.



CCPA 2375: LEARNING BEYOND THE HILLTOP

TULSI RAM LOHANI '25

Through the Meadows School of the Arts Corporate Communications and Public Affairs (CCPA) 2375 – Communication Research & Analytics class, Program Assistant Tulsi Ram Lohani '25 could connect his course work with Engage Dallas Service.

Alongside 30 classmates, Tulsi worked with Engage Dallas community partner Dallas Furniture Bank (DFB) to conduct a case manager perception study on DFB programs through a mixed-methods research study in his class with Dr. Dustin Grabsch.

Read more about his experience on our Engage Dallas Blog at [blog.smu.edu/EngageDallas!](https://blog.smu.edu/EngageDallas/)

ONE DAY FOR DALLAS

On October 21st, Engage Dallas hosted our third annual #1Day4Dallas fall day of service. 151 volunteers from all 11 Residential Commons spent their morning serving with 13 of our community partners in West and South Dallas.

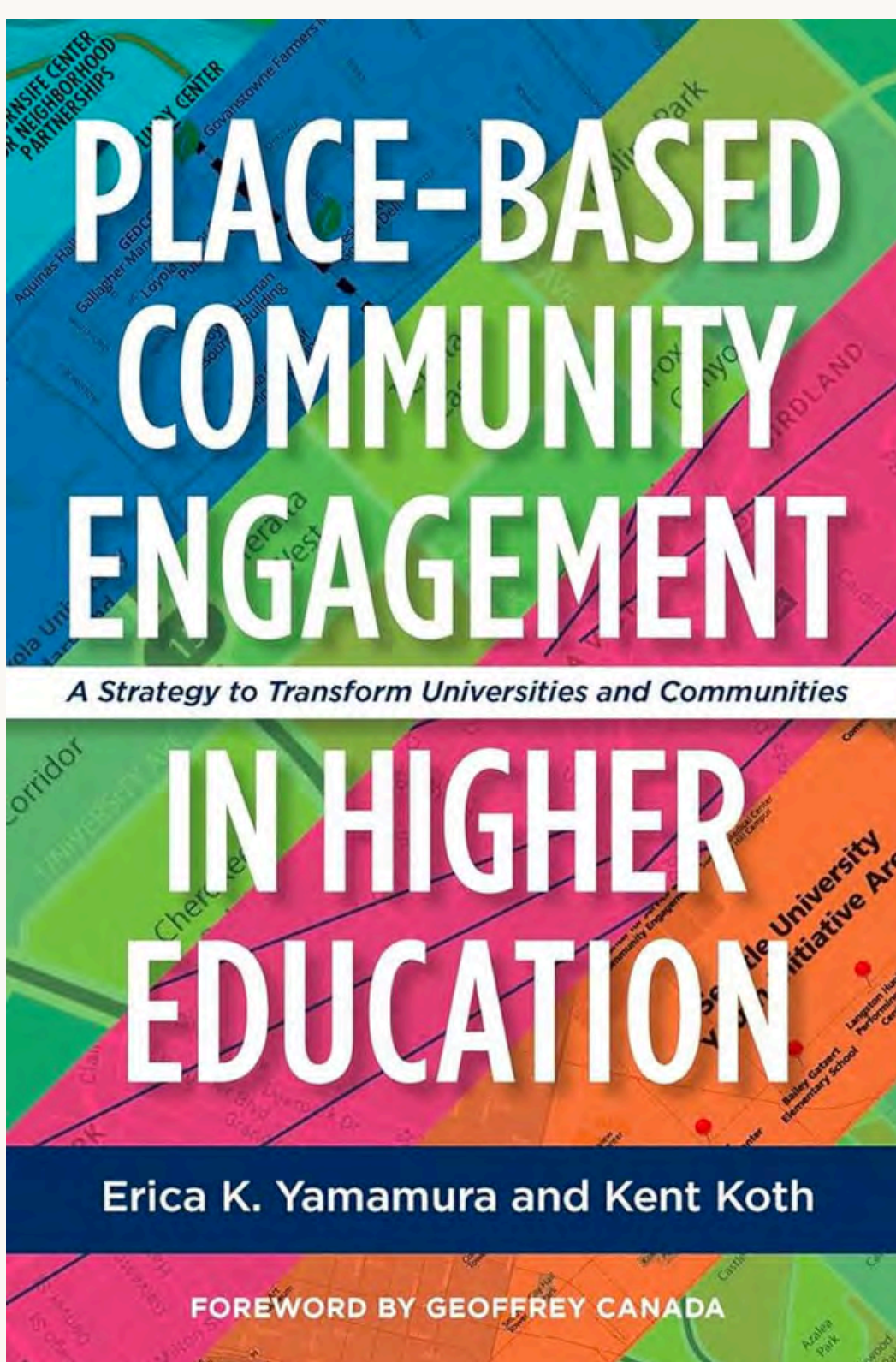
The day started with breakfast tacos from Bonton Farms, an urban farm in South Dallas. The Engage Dallas Student Directors and SMUSH volunteers helped check in the participants, who then heard some inspiring words from Audryanna Reed, SMU's Associate Director for High-Impact Practices.

Our volunteers were shuttled to our thirteen sites throughout the South and West Dallas communities. One student shared that **“seeing people from different aspects of life (SMU or community volunteers) come together to achieve a common goal was very impactful. It's nice that we can set aside our differences to work together to achieve more.”**

Staff and faculty volunteered alongside students, participating in donation sorting, window cleaning, gardening, furniture building, and many other tasks. Volunteers learned about the community partner they were working with, gaining a better understanding of the community's challenges and how these organizations support and enrich their neighborhoods.



SYMPOSIUM



The 2nd Annual Place-Based Community Engagement Symposium was hosted by Engage Dallas, in collaboration with Residence Life & Student Housing, The Budd Center, the Office of General Education, the Cary M. Maguire Center for Ethics & Public Responsibility, and the Center for Teaching Excellence.

This two-day event took place on November 2-3, 2023 at the SMU Indoor Performance Center (November 2) and the Dallas College West Dallas Center (November 3).

The theme for this year's symposium was Listening, Learning and Leading Locally: A Place-Based Approach to Promoting Public Responsibility & Community Engagement in a Covid-Impacted World.

Keynote Speakers at this symposium were Latosha Herron Bruff, Senior Vice President of Diversity, Inclusion & Community Engagement at the Dallas Regional Chamber (DRC) and Jerry Hawkins, Executive Director of Dallas Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation.



For Matt Nadler, Cary M. Maguire Center for Ethics & Public Responsibility Associate Director and symposium planning committee member, the symposium was a time to connect and reflect on the impact of service.

“Working on the PBCE symposium was a highlight of my academic year. The Symposium allowed me to work with campus partners and meet with members of the SMU and Dallas community I otherwise would not have had the opportunity to meet,” said Nadler. *“The symposium is unique as it brings together offices from across campus with like-minded missions to meet with and make a difference in the South and West Dallas community and hear from those with different lived experiences.”*

Conference registrants helped shape this year’s symposium. The planning committee had over 60 questions submitted for our opening session and panel discussion. Plus, questions were arranged as discussion topics at the networking event.

Audryanna Reed, Associate Director for High-Impact Practices, Co-initiative Manager of Engage Dallas, and Chair of the conference planning committee, shared, “Engage Dallas is grateful for the opportunity to bring together non-profit and civic leaders in Dallas as well as staff and faculty across SMU and Dallas College.

Such inspiring words, cultural contextualization, and critical challenges were posed by our keynotes Latosha Bruff and Jerry L. Hawkins, M.Ed., as well as our panelists and workshop hosts!”



KEYNOTE SPEAKER

LATOSHA HERRON BRUFF

SR. VP AT DALLAS REGIONAL CHAMBER

“Activity is great, but intention is better... that is what leads to being impactful.”

SERVICE BEYOND THE HILLTOP

ALTERNATIVE BREAKS

Alternative Breaks (AB) at SMU is an immersive week of hands-on service, leadership building, and relationship building supplemented with education and reflection. It qualifies for Community Engagement Proficiency upon completion. Each trip focuses on a particular social issue, and immersion in that issue begins long before the trip itself. Students educate themselves and each other and continue the learning through hands-on work with connected organizations.



Alternative Break in San Benito!



La Posada Providencia!

For Student Director Hannah Green '25, her March trip focused on Immigration and Refugee Support, also the Engage Dallas community-identified need for MHPS Commons. With Brandon Kitchin as the staff advisor, her group traveled to San Benito, Texas, located in the Rio Grande Valley.

“Throughout our 5 days there, we were graciously hosted by La Posada Providencia, a long-term shelter for immigrant and refugee newcomers who seek to settle in the United States.

We helped the La Posada shelter with projects around the property for two days. We shared lunch and dinner with the clients and met clients primarily from Spanish-speaking countries, but also countries such as Afghanistan and Haiti.

By taking the time to help non-profits you can really make a difference and directly or indirectly change a day in someone's life whether it be sorting clothing donations or packaging food!”

Read more about Hannah's Alternative Break in our Engage Dallas Blog at blog.smu.edu/EngageDallas!



Get Connected on Instagram @alternativebreakssmu

ONE NIGHT FOR DALLAS



One Night for Dallas is an annual celebration co-hosted by Engage Dallas and the Office of Social Change and Intercultural Engagement (SCIE), that reflects upon the collective impact that SMU students have had on the community during the academic year. Community partners and campus leaders gathered at the Moody Graduate School on April 9th, 2024 for this year's event.

Engage Dallas was proud to highlight that **622 students** collectively spent **1,615 hours** directly serving the community across **50 student-led service events** during the 2023-24 academic school year.

This year's theme was **"Dallas is Home,"** and keynote addresses were delivered by the Executive Director of the Budd Center, Dr. Toni Harrison-Kelly, and SMU Professor in Creative Advertising Willie Baronet. Baronet also serves as the Armstrong Faculty-in-Residence and creator of the We Are All Homeless Project.

To read more, check out our blog post at blog.smu.edu/EngageDallas!



OUR PARTNERS HELP MAKE ENGAGE DALLAS POSSIBLE!

David Sommers, who serves as Assistant Director of Employer Relations at SMU, helps to facilitate the recruitment and hiring of interns with Engage Dallas community partners. SMU offers a 10-week paid internship with these partners, funded through a partnership between Engage Dallas and the Hegi Family Career Development Center.

DAVID SOMMERS

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF EMPLOYER RELATIONS
HEGI FAMILY CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTER



SUMMER 2023

8 ENGAGE DALLAS
INTERNS

SUMMER 2024

16 ENGAGE DALLAS
INTERNS



“Working at Heart House [last] summer gave me the professional and leadership development skills that I needed. I was able to gain real-world marketing experience and help create a campaign for North Texas Giving Day. I will forever be grateful for the opportunities given to me through Heart House.”

JAVON BROWN

SENIOR, SUMMER 2023 ENGAGE DALLAS INTERN

OUR PARTNERS HELP MAKE ENGAGE DALLAS POSSIBLE!

BIG IDEAS CASE STUDY COMPETITION



With a partnership between the Housing Unification Board (HUB) and the Office of Engaged Learning, Engage Dallas Student Directors were given the opportunity to present a pitch to a panel of judges. With information from their partner organizations, the student directors presented how they would use funding to meet a need for their community partners.

Sabeen Baledina, the McElvaney Student Director, hosted an outdoor science lesson for Brother Bill's Helping Hands' after school program. Winning first place at the pitch competition enabled her to provide an outdoor projector, lap desks, and science related snacks and supplies so the students could enjoy learning in an outdoor environment.



1ST
Place

MCELVANEY
COMMONS

2ND
Place

BOAZ
COMMONS

3RD
Place

KATHY CROW
COMMONS

HEAR FROM CAMPUS

Students across majors, Commons, and years come together to volunteer and serve the local community. Their unique experiences and passions allow us to connect with the South and West Dallas communities in creative and distinct ways.

Faculty-in-Residence (FiRs) play a significant role in sharing the importance of community service. In Armstrong Commons, FiR Willie Baronet has been a role model for hundreds of students in active community service and using your major and career skills to do good in your community.



WILLIE BARONET

FACULTY-IN-RESIDENCE, ARMSTRONG COMMONS

“I’ve been very fortunate as the FiR of Armstrong Commons to work with Engage Dallas on a cause that is dear to my heart (and my project), homelessness. I’m proud to see SMU engaging with this issue and helping where they can. I know our friends at The Bridge and Vogel Alcove and others have been grateful for the support as well.”

MILES CHEN

SOPHOMORE, ENGAGE DALLAS STUDENT DIRECTOR

“One of my favorite parts of being an Engage Dallas Student Director has been seeing the wealth of students at SMU involved in community service. On the way back from an event at Restorative Farms, one of the participants talked about how she had just done several tasks that she never imagined she would be doing. It was very encouraging to see students gain new experiences while learning about the needs of their community.”



HEAR FROM OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS



**EMPOWERING
THE MASSES**
ONE PERSON AT A TIME

Empowering the Masses provides for basic needs, educational resources, and access to stable and lucrative careers, paving a path for sustainable success in life. Together, they help the people we serve gain self-worth and financial independence.

TAMMY JOHNSON

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & FOUNDER, EMPOWERING THE MASSES

“We're delighted to be partnering with Engage Dallas to empower our communities. Together, we've been able to make a meaningful impact, providing essential support and resources to those in need. Our collaboration exemplifies the power of community-driven initiatives in creating positive change.”



Brother Bill's Helping Hand ministers to the Dallas community by ensuring the essentials of life, empowering through learning, and enriching relationships through faith, family, fitness, and finance. They emphasize on ensuring that our neighbor's essentials needs are met with love, dignity, and respect

COURTNEY CUTHBERT

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER, BROTHER BILL'S HELPING HAND

“Partnering with Engage Dallas has been such a blessing to all of us and the families we serve at BBHH. The Engage Dallas students have a heart for our neighbors and help us positively impact the community. Volunteers have joined us at our annual events, in our Grocery Store (food pantry), and in our after-school program. Recently, a group of Engage Dallas students put on a science learning workshop for our After School kids, complete with an educational video and a fun hands-on demonstration. Our kids love having the Engage Dallas students here, and so do we!”



ENGAGE DALLAS INITIATIVE TEAM



AUDRYANNA REED
CO-INITIATIVE MANAGER



KALLIE TERRANA
PROGRAM SPECIALIST



DANIELLE PALOMO
*COORDINATOR FOR COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT, SCIE*



PRISCILLA POPE-LEVISON
CANVAS COURSE GRADER



NICOLE SOOD
GRADUATE ASSISTANT



TULSI RAM LOHANI
PROGRAM ASSISTANT



SOPHIA KANG
PROGRAM ASSISTANT

ENGAGE DALLAS STUDENT DIRECTORS

Our Engage Dallas Student Directors are the foundation of this initiative, working diligently to plan and manage monthly service events, serve as ambassadors for Engage Dallas, and bring in hundreds of volunteers a semester for our events. We are incredibly thankful!



CYDNEY CURTIS
ARMSTRONG COMMONS



REESE MELLOR
BOAZ COMMONS



MACKENZIE THIERRY
COCKRELL-McINTOSH COMMONS



MORGAN GLOVER
CRUM COMMONS



MILES CHEN
KATHY CROW COMMONS



KATE ALONZO
LOYD COMMONS



HANNAH GREEN
MHPS COMMONS



SABEEN BALEDINA
McELVANEY COMMONS



ABIGAIL NGUYEN
MORRISON-McGINNIS COMMONS



KAMILA MALIK
VIRGINIA SNIDER COMMONS



MANASVI KANNEGANTI
WARE COMMONS



LILLY CHAPMAN
AREA COORDINATOR



THINK BIG, DO GOOD

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