

The University of Texas at Austin **Organizational Structures**

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In 2006, President William Powers created the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement as part of his commitment to diversity at the University of Texas at Austin by aligning those initiatives across the university that had diversity and community engagement at their core. After years of progress building relationships on and off campus and addressing systemic issues of social justice, the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement's programs worked to create a strategic plan that would serve as a blueprint for the division's work. One result of the process—completed in September 2011—was the identification of four strategic goals. Two of these goals relate to community engagement: a specific community engagement goal to cultivate mutually beneficial community-university partnerships, and a research goal to increase the production and dissemination of scholarship about community engagement. Since the identification of these overarching goals, committees assigned to each goal have begun the process of implementing the measurable objectives tied to these goals. These goals create an intersection that highlights the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement's engaged scholarship efforts.

Integral to the division's strategic goal to enhance community engagement is the Community Engagement Center. Located in historically marginalized East Austin, Texas, the Community Engagement Center provides a home base for many community activities and partnerships by promoting and coordinating services, learning opportunities, and research. Working collaboratively with the Community Engagement Center is Eric Tang, Division of Diversity and Community Engagement faculty fellow and director of the Social Justice Institute, an initiative that connects faculty, staff, and students with partners in the Austin community and incubates and supports projects, programs, and organizations that advance social change. The first incubator project sponsored by the Community Engagement Center was the African American Men and Boys Harvest Foundation, which holds monthly conferences in four school districts and hosts workshops that help youth with career development needs and character-building skills. The work of the Community Engagement Center and Tang supports the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement's

commitment to identify the priorities of the community and provide the intellectual resources needed to meet those priorities.

The Division of Diversity and Community Engagement's other nationally recognized faculty fellows are also empowered to focus on projects that present solutions for problems in the university's immediate communities and on critical national educational challenges, including, for instance, minority mentorship. Victor Saenz is the director of Project MALES (Mentoring to Achieve Latino Educational Success), which highlights the role of mentoring in the generation of social capital for Latino males and also seeks to sponsor a student organization that encourages persistence among this group. Rick Cherwitz's Intellectual Entrepreneurship provides undergraduates with graduate student mentors with whom they work to solve complex problems in the community. In March 2012, Leonard Moore held a conference addressing mentoring for Black males. Additionally, Craig Watkins' project, The Young and the Digital, seeks to close the digital divide. Tang's programs, through the Social Justice Institute, provided training for community groups already tackling complex issues. His Abriendo Brecha activist conference was hosted at the University of Texas in February 2012.

Engaged scholarship is one key to achieving the multiple goals set by the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement's strategic plan. Within Austin and in collaboration with outstanding faculty members from other institutions, the Community Engagement Center and the Faculty Fellows program work to produce the highest caliber research with roots in the community.

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