

PAUL QUINN

URBAN RESEARCH INITIATIVE

RESEARCH. ADVOCACY. JUSTICE.



MISSION

MISSION

THE URBAN RESEARCH INITIATIVE AT PAUL QUINN COLLEGE CONNECTS RESEARCHERS GENERATING DATA AND ANALYSIS ON THE MOST DIFFICULT URBAN PROBLEMS WITH STUDENTS, GRASSROOTS GROUPS, ELECTED OFFICIALS, AND OTHERS IN NEED OF TRUSTWORTHY DATA AND ANALYSIS. TO THIS END, THE INITIATIVE ELICITS COURSE PROPOSALS AND CREATES RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS WITH INTERDISCIPLINARY EXPERTS WORKING ON THE KEY COMPONENTS OF URBAN RESILIENCE: PUBLIC HEALTH, ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY, POLITICAL AND CULTURAL SELF-DETERMINATION, AND EQUITABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH.

We welcome requests for project teams and institutional partners across the state and country. Additional proposals for collaborative research projects from urban centers in Texas and beyond in the component areas are also welcome.



Inaugural Urban Research Fellow, Evelyn Mayo, in front of the former Shingle Mountain illegal dump site with Dr. Chris Dowdy and President Michael Sorrell. Source: Dallas Morning News.

THE ORIGINS: A JUSTICE RESEARCH AGENDA

2011 WE ARE NOT TRASH

The City of Dallas proposed to route all the municipal waste in the City to McCommas Bluff Landfill. This landfill is less than a mile from campus. With this change, McCommas would have become one of the largest landfills in the State.

Because of the student body's response to this proposal, the community was mobilized, students spoke at council meetings and launched the successful "We Are Not Trash" campaign to prevent this expansion.

We were successful and the community has benefited greatly since.

The Dallas Morning News

OPINION

Paul Quinn students: Why do we march? Because we are not trash

We are the students of Paul Quinn College and the organizers of "We Are Not Trash: A March for the Future of Dallas." Given the amount of discussion our actions have generated, we thought it would be a good idea to explain why we have decided to stand up — not only for ourselves, our school and our community, but for all of the people in Dallas who have given up because they believe no one is listening to them.

For the past six months, we have had a front-row seat in what could serve as a blueprint for an advanced seminar called "Politics and Policy-Making in Dallas." Our syllabus has given us the assignment of watching people we once looked up to make decisions we do not understand or agree with. We have hosted meetings and have listened to city officials who attended those sessions offer answers to the same question in two completely different ways. We have sat in meetings where our school president, Michael Sorrell, has been pressured to make us stop protesting. We have stood in City Council meetings and watched leaders ignore a simple request to study an issue before voting on it.

In short, for the past six months we have had our faith challenged and our idealism destroyed.

All we want is a neighborhood we can be proud of. We want a quality grocery store. We want a pharmacy. We want to be listened to by the people we elect. We want simple things that most other citizens of Dallas take for granted.



OUR WORK TODAY: ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

2020 POISONED BY ZIPCODE

The Dallas Morning News

Amid the worst environmental racism still heaped on vulnerable Dallas residents, Paul Quinn College joins the fight

How its new Urban Research Initiative is helping neighbors and advocates trying to rid Floral Farms of a legacy of Shingle Mountain and other industrial hazards.

[Paul Quinn's Urban Research Initiative](#) continues to provide data to bolster the on-the-ground experiences of the Floral Farms residents. Sorrell said that's a real-life example of the initiative's mission: To serve as a research resource for people across southern Dallas and beyond "who don't have the time, the wherewithal or the body of data to be convincing on all fronts."

College students, meanwhile, learn research and data-analysis skills while providing ways to alleviate the suffering of others. "It's a way to marry their career pathway with social impact," Dowdy said.

The initiative isn't the research arm for any particular group, Dowdy said, but rather seeks to share information to help anyone trying to make a good decision.

"We don't expect every City Council member to be a particulate pollution expert, but someone needs to be," Dowdy said. "Somebody needs to be making that case clear to people who are making decisions."



Shingle Mountain, a 150,000 illegal dump that appeared over the course of just 1 year next door to Marsha Jackson's home, garnered national media attention highlighting the City of Dallas' racist neglect at its worst.

Our students joined the fight by producing a report that calculated using publicly available data, the cumulative air pollution burden by zip code throughout the City of Dallas.

The results were predictable - Communities of Color bear the brunt of pollution. This was drafted at the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic and was a reminder of the intersectionality of disease, death, and discrimination.

This report has been widely circulated, referenced and used as a baseline for local environmental justice policy since.

POISONED BY ZIP CODE:

An Assessment of Dallas' Air Pollution Burden by Neighborhood



Evelyn Mayo, Adjunct Instructor
Student Contributors from
"Organizing for Public Health"
Bryonna McAfee
Precious Whitley
Jose Estrada
Noe Estrada
Quan Evans
Brennan Givens
Danaja Hardrick
Ka'elra Hatley
Destinee Madlock
Kahla Nelum

Executive Summary

This research seeks to comprehensively estimate the air pollution distribution by zip code and City Council District for Dallas. Using aggregated air pollution permits from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), estimates for mobile sources of pollution such as warehouses distribution centers, rail switchyards and highways, we seek to comprehensively document sources of air pollution at the zip code level in Dallas.

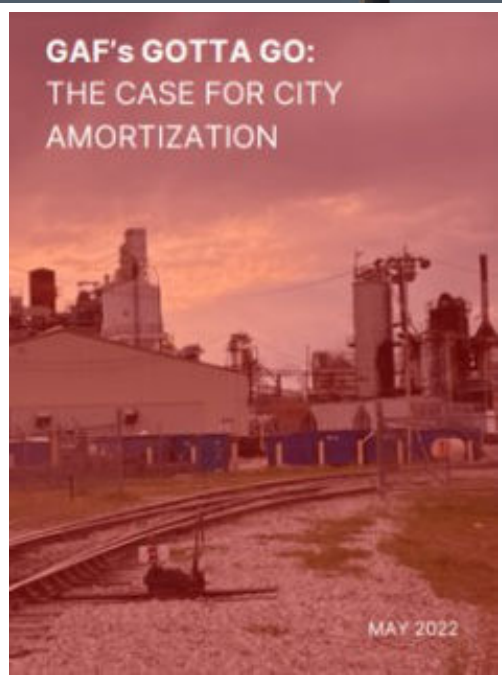
In the City of Dallas, there is a 15-year difference in life expectancy depending on the zip code that you live in.

There is a disproportionate amount of air pollution emitted in the Southern Sector of the City, south of I-30 or the Trinity River. In the context of the global COVID-19 pandemic, this continues to be an alarming reality that must be addressed for Dallas to consider itself an equitable City.

SPRING 2020



2022 THE CASE FOR AMORTIZATION OF GAF



Bloomberg

CityLab | Environment

In Dallas, the Toxic Legacy of Zoning Lingers

Loose regulations and a gung-ho development culture brought polluting industries to low-income Dallas neighborhoods. Can a new wave of zoning reform drive them out?



Shortly after Shingle Mountain was removed in Spring 2021, another environmental crisis and opportunity for intervention arose, this time in West Dallas.

Residents living next door to one of the largest sources of air pollution in the City of Dallas, GAF Roof Shingle Factory, fought back against their permit renewal with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.

Ongoing neighborhood organizing and planning efforts led to the creation of Singleton United/Unidos and the launch of the GAFs Gotta Go/GAF Vete Ya campaign.

The URI provided critical technical assistance and analysis in drafting the report that led to negotiations between the company, city and residents..

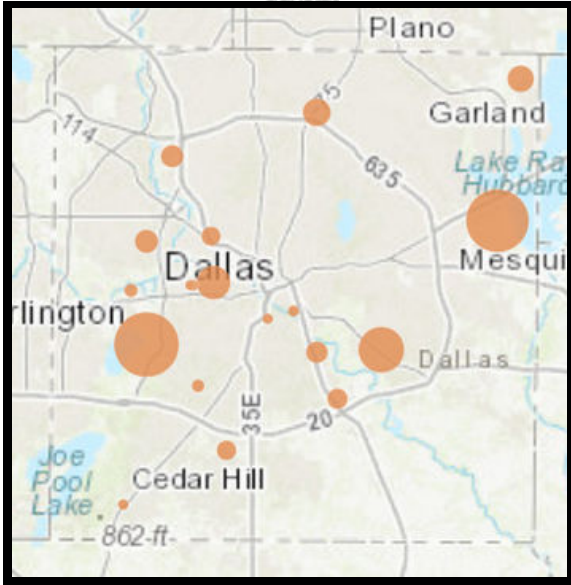
ANNUAL EMISSIONS INVENTORY REPORT



These Are the Biggest Polluters in Dallas-Fort Worth

JACOB VAUGHN | APRIL 3, 2021 | 4:00AM

EVERY YEAR, THE TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY RELEASES DATA FOR ANNUAL EMISSIONS BY SOURCE OF POLLUTION BY COUNTY. THIS DATA IS NOT WIDELY DISTRIBUTED, MAPPED, OR OTHERWISE MADE ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC. THIS REPORT SEEKS TO MAKE THAT DATA USABLE FOR THE PUBLIC TO BETTER UNDERSTAND WHERE POLLUTERS ARE, WHAT THEY ARE EMITTING AND HOW THAT POLLUTION IMPACTS THEM.



The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality releases the 'self-reported' emissions information by registered polluters annually.

The information is difficult to access, confusion and therefore inaccessible to the general public.

Our interactive mapping tool makes reviewing emissions data accessible and transparent for the public. This report is produced annually and trainings are provided to interested individuals or groups.

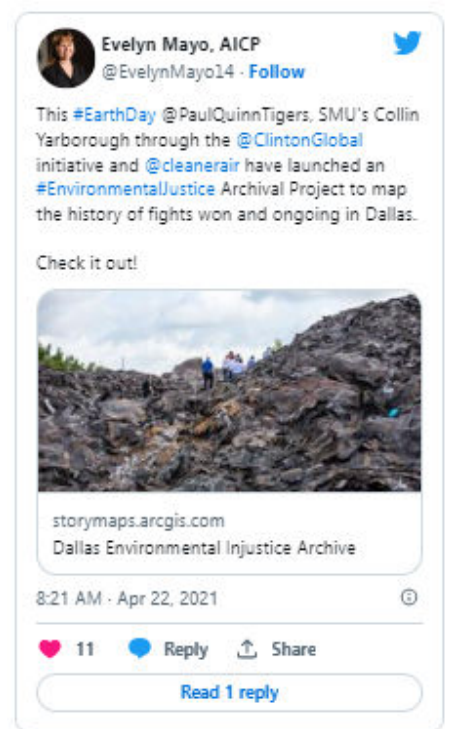


'Increasing Visibility Is A Must': New Digital Archive Shows Dallas' History Of Environmental Racism

KERA | By [Alejandra Martinez](#)
Published April 27, 2021 at 7:00 AM CDT

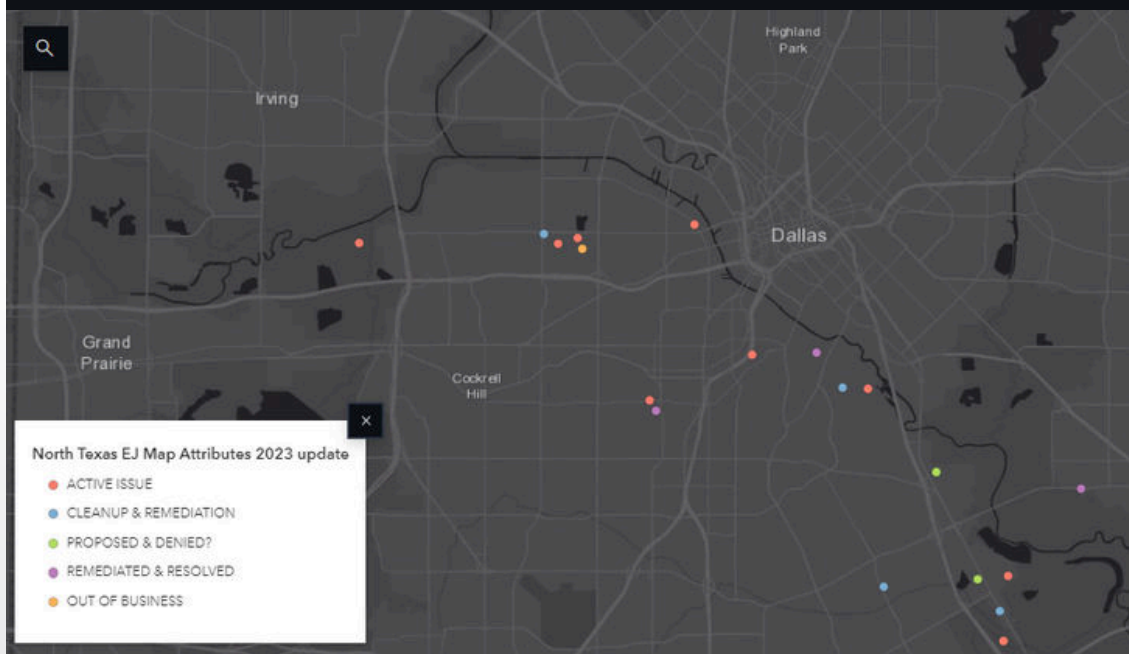


To commemorate Earth Day 2022, this mapping and storytelling tool was created to celebrate the environmental justice wins in Dallas. We believe that the persistence and commitment that each fight takes to win is worth commemorating and celebrating as part of our Dallas heritage.

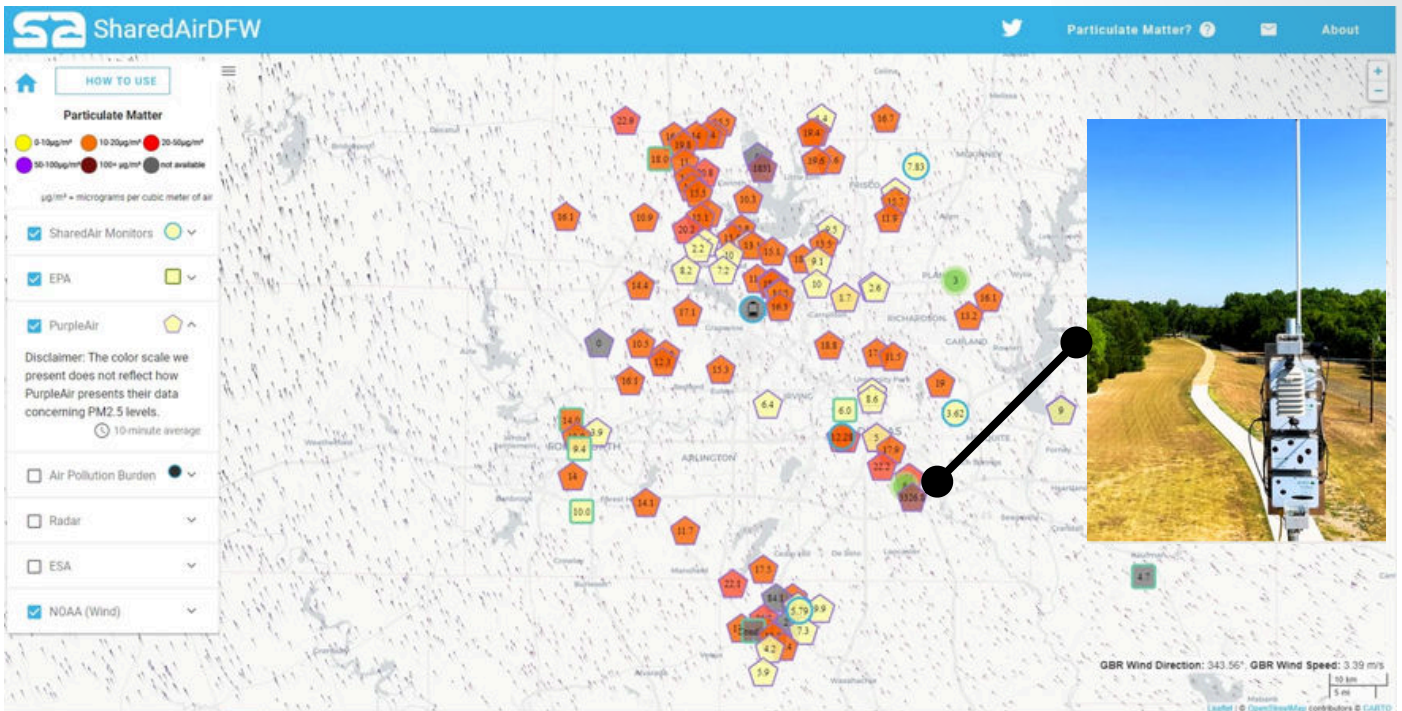


Dallas County's landscape of unmarked or untold environmental justice fights past and present.

A Downwinders at Risk, Clinton Global Initiative U, SMU MASD & Paul Quinn College URI Initiative
January 31, 2023



SHARED AIR DFW



We are a part of the SharedAirDFW air monitoring network. This network was launched by local environmental justice non-profit, Downwinders at Risk, in partnership with Dallas County, Dallas College, City of Plano, and the University of Texas Dallas.

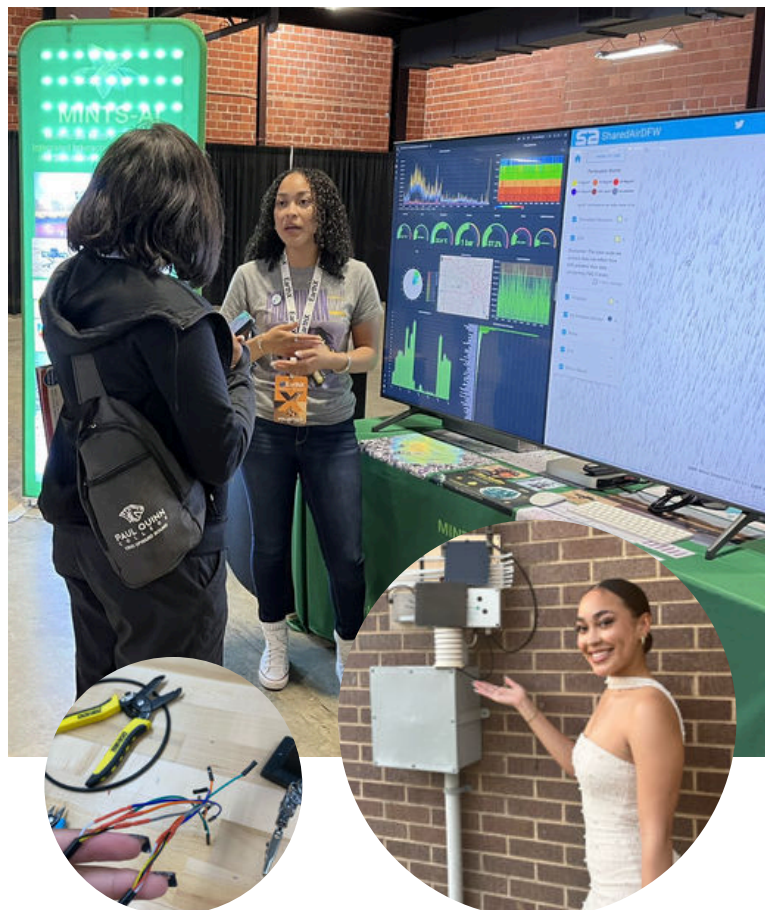
The monitors are built by a lab at UTD by local students and are deployed throughout the DFW metroplex. We have 11 monitors that we are deploying throughout Highland Hills, providing real-time air quality data to residents along with pollution education.

URI student fellows have collaborated with Faculty to identify homes to place the monitors and worked with residents to understand what they are and how they are beneficial for public health and safety. Mariya Roncyk (right) was the first undergraduate PQC student to help build the monitors at the lab.

Dallas under pressure to share air sensor data that can reveal health risks as quickly as possible



KERA | By Bret Jaspers
Published April 19, 2023 at 5:00 AM CDT



CREATING SYSTEMS OF CHANGE: EVENTS & PROGRAMMING

ANNUAL ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE SYMPOSIUM

The URI convenes an annual Environmental Justice Symposium in coordination with Earthx during Earth Day weekend. The symposium brings together policy makers, frontline residents, academics and scientists to engage the most pressing environmental justice concerns in our City. Learn more about the themes, topics and speakers at the 2022 and 2023 conferences.

2022 ForwardDallas! and Environmental Justice



Is the City of Dallas Actually Getting Serious About Environmental Justice?

Environmental activists have spent years raising questions about how industry has been allowed to exist near homes in southern and West Dallas. One recent Saturday, they got to ask top city officials a question: How are you going to fix it?

By Matt Goodman | May 16, 2022 | 3:01 pm



The City of Dallas launched the ForwardDallas comprehensive land use plan updated in Fall 2021. This plan will guide future growth, development, zoning changes and investments throughout the city for years to come. We hosted two tracks of panels throughout the day-long conference, Land Use and Environmental Justice, and featured speakers from across Dallas' neighborhoods and experts in both fields. The day culminated in a panel featuring City Manager T.C. Broadnax, the Department Head for Planning and Urban Design and the Office of Environmental Quality, two front-line community leaders, and our URI Fellow. This panel set the stage for environmental justice policy and expectations for the land use plan update.



2023 Highway Robbery: Money, Miles, Minutes

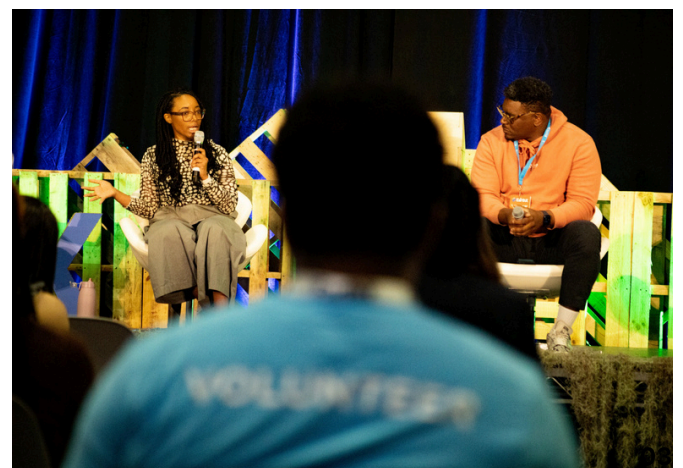
The fate of Highway I-345 that cuts through Downtown Dallas and Deep Ellum has been debated for a decade. The Texas Department of Transportation has been advocating for the highway to be maintained, expanded, and now 'trenched' below grade. Advocates and urbanists have been pushing against these options, seeking the city to conduct a separate analysis that promotes a less car-dependent future and promotes development downtown. We joined the discussion, steering the debate towards considering true community input from those most impacted by this decision: residents in South Dallas. This year's symposium presented an exhibit on the history of the neighborhoods harmed by the construction of I-345 (all Freedmen communities), an interactive diorama to solicit resident feedback on what they would like to see downtown, and several panels exploring the impacts of each option.



The City Council Is Set to Vote on I-345's Future This Month

The City Council will vote on whether to support a plan to trench the presently elevated highway by the end of this month. The proceedings begin on Monday with a public panel.

By Matt Goodman | May 8, 2023 | 9:55 am



MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH U.S. EPA

EPA ANNOUNCES PARTNERSHIP WITH PAUL QUINN COLLEGE THROUGH MOU SIGNING

DALLAS, TEXAS (August 31, 2023) – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Paul Quinn College (PQC) located in Dallas, Texas, have agreed to enter a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to share environmental knowledge, provide quality Science Technology Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) knowledge and provide mentoring and recruiting opportunities.

“Paul Quinn College is a leader in environmental justice and is making great strides in communities across Dallas,” said Regional Administrator Dr. Earthea Nance. “With this MOU signing, EPA hopes to deepen our work with Paul Quinn students and faculty on environmental research and to raise awareness about local and national environmental issues.”

Paul Quinn College was founded in 1872 and has re-defined itself several times throughout its lifetime. Originally stationed in the city of Austin and then Waco, PQC decided to relocate the college to Dallas in 1990. It has grown to receive nationwide recognition and is one of the first urban colleges which requires students to work to obtain real world experience and then incorporate that experience into its learning curriculum. Under direction from the current President Dr. Michael J. Sorrell, PQC has prioritized environmental goals in the local communities and pushed for utilizing its local research center to its full capacity. PQC has even established its own environmental group called, the Paul Quinn College Green Team which has an objective to find solutions to long-standing local environmental health issues.

The MOU outlines several ways to establish cooperation between EPA and PQC, such as EPA attending career fairs at the campus and offering mentorship opportunities for PQC students. Both organizations have demonstrated and expressed an interest in advancing environmental justice in communities.

EPA will provide opportunities for PQC’s participation in public activities where EPA is actively engaged with communities to address potential environmental impacts.

The MOU was signed by Regional Administrator Dr. Earthea Nance and Paul Quinn College President Dr. Michael J. Sorrell on the college campus on August 31st.



Examples of Activities Facilitated by PQC-EPA MOU



Earth Day 2023 “Field Day” at PQC with Regional Administrator Dr. Earthea Nance and Senior EPA Region 6 Staff.



Demonstration by various EPA staff about microplastics and their impact on marine life and ecosystems in April 2024.



November 2023 “FedTalk” career development presentation with Dr. McDonald with the U.S. EPA.



Water sampling and biodiversity investigation of Five Mile Creek on campus featuring the U.S. EPA Water Division staff in April 2024.

URBAN HACK SMU COLLABORATION

The URI partners with the Southern Methodist University Sustainable Development Program (SDP) in the classroom and outside the classroom with the annual 'Urban Hack' event sponsored by a grant from Venturewell. The Urban Hack brings together students, community members and experts from both institutions and the greater DFW area to participate in a day-long intensive program to develop creative solutions to planning or development problems.



2022: Climate Change & Neighborhoods

Paul Quinn College Environmental Justice Symposium
SMU SDP Collaboration

We're hosting a **hands-on intercollegiate accelerator** event, focused on **innovations in design** for urban sustainability. 3 teams will be challenged to collaborate in a four-hour 'urban hack' to imagine **sustainable solutions** for specific urban challenges in **Dallas's underserved neighborhoods**.

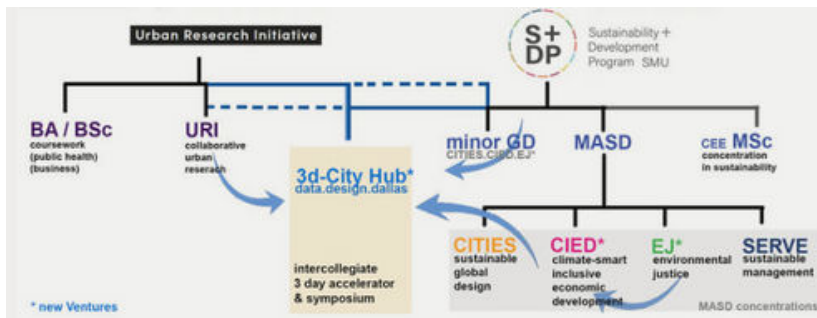
Register: <https://tinyurl.com/PQC5MU>

This program is supported by Venturewell, VENTUREWELL, PAUL QUINN COLLEGE, and SMU.

Dr. Jessie Zarazaga - Associate Professor, Civil, Marine, and Environmental Engineering, Texas Institute for Engineering & Technology (TIET)

Professor Evelyn Mayo - Professor & Director of Environmental Justice and Land Use Planning

The focus of the inaugural Urban Hack was on how neighborhoods in Dallas can best prepare for and mitigate the impacts of climate change.



2023: Highways & Reinvesting in Community Connectivity

Sunday, April 23, 2023
 11:00 AM - 4:00 PM

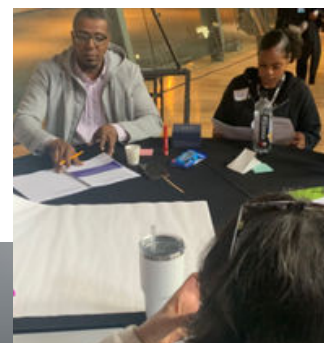
SMU x PQC URBAN HACK

EarthX2023

Environmental Justice Conference

The Women's Museum
 3800 Parry Ave, Dallas, TX 75226

The second Hack focused on how communities impacted by highway construction and potential highway removal can reclaim space for connectivity.



PATHWAYS TO POLICY MAKING: COURSES & STUDENT RESEARCH

HBCU CLIMATE CHANGE CONSORTIUM

Texas Southern University and the Deep South Center for Environmental Justice co-host the annual HBCU Climate Change Consortium. Paul Quinn through the URI is a member of the consortium and participated in the 8th annual conference in New Orleans in April 2022. Students met with living legends like Dr. Robert Bullard, Dr. Beverly Wright in addition to elected officials, frontline community members and their peers at other HBCUs also doing climate change work.

"I PRAY THAT THIS IS OPEN TO THE ENTIRE SCHOOL SO THAT YOUNG ADULTS CAN FIND THEIR PASSION. I LEARNED THAT WE ALL NEED TO DO OUR PART IN THIS WORLD. THIS IS A CHANCE FOR STUDENTS TO NETWORK AND FIND THEIR PASSION. I WAS ABLE TO MEET CONGRESSMAN TROY A. CARTER OF NEW ORLEANS. AS FAR AS THE SCHOOL GOES THESE PROGRAMS THAT ARE IN PLACE TO HELP STUDENTS SEE IF THIS IS REALLY WHAT THEY WANT TO DO IN LIFE. THANK YOU FOR THIS INCREDIBLE OPPORTUNITY."
-TARTISHA HILL, PQC '22



URI COURSE OFFERINGS



Students in the Environmental Drivers of Health class Spring 2023 competing in a national policy challenge in D.C.



The URI piloted 5 Special Topics courses since 2020:

- Organizing for Public Health
- Environmental Drivers of Health
- Climate Change and Urban Environments
- Environmental Justice
- Research Methods in Public Policy

The three-course program that will likely be integrated as part of the Honors College program include:

- Environmental Drivers of Health
- Environmental Justice
- Research Methods for Public Policy

A potential Environmental Justice certificate program is also being explored as an opportunity for members of the public and other institutions to pursue through the URI at Paul Quinn College.

All the courses are project based, involve engaging with real world issues in collaboration with community based groups or individuals, and are linked to a public policy issue in the realm of climate change, sustainability or environmental justice.

PATHWAYS TO POLICY MAKING: COALITION & ORGANIZING WORK

Land Use Policy Change: Separating People From Polluters

- Integration of the Floral Farms Neighborhood-Led Plan recommendations into ForwardDallas Comprehensive Land Use plan update and informing zoning changes in Floral Farms resulting in the deindustrialization of the neighborhood.
- Creation and integration of the Singleton Corridor Neighborhood-Led Plan recommendations into ForwardDallas Comprehensive Land Use Plan update and likely to inform upcoming zoning changes in West Dallas resulting in deindustrialization of the neighborhood.
- Restoration and modification of the Neighborhood Planning policy run by PUD
- Ongoing amendments to the rezoning process to account for racial equity and environmental justice considerations to expedite zoning changes
- Collaborating with the PUD Department at the City of Dallas for the creation of environmental justice overlay districts to proactively separate industrialized areas from residential areas instead of continuing to concentrate polluters in Communities of Color.
- Drafted model batch plant ordinance to PUD as part of the code amendments presented to ZOAC, CPC and Council to better regulate batch plants. Successfully included SUP requirement for all zoning districts adopted into policy in May 2022 and continuing advocacy for Phase II updates.

Local News

Floral Farms, Once Home to Shingle Mountain, Finally Gets a Chance to Remove Industry

The City Plan Commission approved revisiting the zoning in this southern Dallas neighborhood in 2019. Three years later, the city held a community meeting—the first step in addressing industrial polluters operating next to homes.

By Bethany Erickson | September 15, 2022 | 11:42 am



A major West Dallas polluter is leaving — but not fast enough for neighbors

By [Sona Chaudhary](#), Environmental Justice Freelance Reporter
| environmental justice



December 23, 2022
WEST DALLAS

| CITY HALL |

Communities in Dallas Formed a Coalition for Neighborhood Self-Determination

JACOB VAUGHN | JUNE 28, 2021 | 4:00AM



News

Dallas lets polluters build in Black and Latino neighborhoods, complaint alleges

KERA | By [Alejandra Martinez](#)
Published August 23, 2022 at 9:43 AM CDT



| CITY HALL |

Setting Up a Concrete Batch Plant in Dallas Just Got a Little Harder

JACOB VAUGHN | MAY 16, 2022 | 4:00AM



INVEST IN OUR FUTURE

\$115,000 ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET

\$25,000
1 YEAR
1 STUDENT
400 HOURS

This includes:

- Payment for 1 year for 1 student to participate as a Corporate Work Program intern with the URI for Spring, Summer and Fall.
- Partial funding for Faculty Mentor's to support the intern's research.



\$15,000
1 SYMPOSIUM
3 DAY EVENT

This includes:

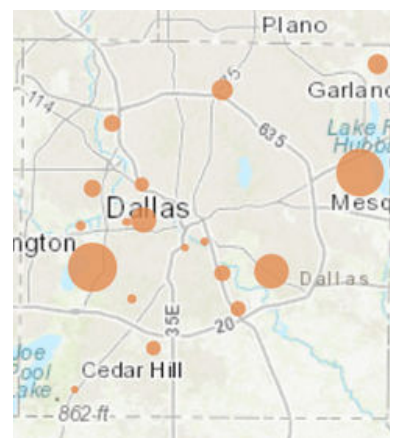
- costs for supplies, speaker honorariums, printing and other logistics for the Earthx Environmental Justice Symposium
- Continued collaboration on the SMU Urban Hack



\$15,000
ORIGINAL
RESEARCH
CREATION

This includes:

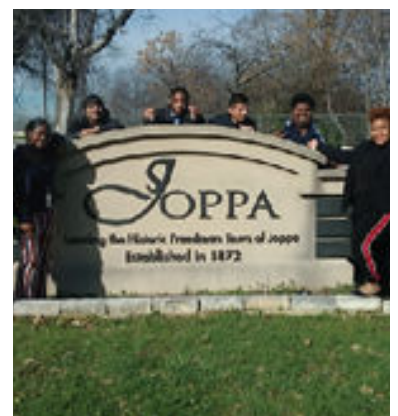
- Annual Emissions Inventory Report
- Updates to the EJ Archive Project
- Participation in HBCU Climate Change Consortium
- Participating in Resilience Studies consortium



\$60,000
URI &
HONORS
COLLEGE
COURSES

This includes:

- Developing Honors College curriculum for research and policy track
- Continuing to expand and develop Environmental Justice certificate program for public enrollment



PAUL QUINN

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RESEARCH. ADVOCACY. JUSTICE.

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