



**HART Program**  
**Houston Action Research Team**  
Engaged Research Opportunity  
**Fall 2021**

## **Fifth Ward Grassroots Capacity-Building Assessment for Social Determinants of Health**

This project will support work by the Center for Urban Transformation (CUT) to improve social determinants of health in Houston's Fifth Ward neighborhood. CUT is a collaborative, nonprofit umbrella organization that includes Pleasant Hill Ministries, Fifth Ward Community Redevelopment Corporation, Houston Habitat for Humanity, Legacy Community Health, and the Berg & Androphy law firm. CUT's mission is to create opportunities for Fifth Ward families to overcome the adverse effects of racism, poverty and other inequities by implementing programs that encourage growing prospects for survival and success.

During spring/summer 2021 CUT is facilitating a six-month process to collect and analyze data and collaboratively develop a strategic plan to improve social determinants of health (SDOH) in the neighborhood. "Social determinants" are factors like income, housing, education, transportation, and other systematic or societal impacts that can impact physical and emotional wellbeing. This Houston Action Research Team (HART) will, first, conduct an evaluation of that process, particularly from the perspective of stakeholder and resident participants, and catalogue the model used in that process. The team will, as part of that evaluation, help build the foundation for CUT's work in the second year of this process by developing an instrument to assess capacity of grassroots partners to conduct pilot projects identified in the strategic plan to improve SDOH in the community.

In the fall semester of 2021, this HART will complete some or all of the following:

- Map out the assessment model followed by CUT in conducting this six-month research, analysis, and strategic planning process, identifying role(s) of diverse community participants
- Design interviews and/or surveys to elicit feedback on that process and assess partners' capacity to implement priority projects from the strategic plan
- Conduct interviews and/or surveys with participating partner organizations and residents from the SDOH and healthcare industries as well as at the grassroots community level
- Analyze partner capacity level and make recommendations for how CUT or future funding tied to this work might strengthen those partners' capacities
- Identify ways the CUT and affiliate organizations have already impacted health in 5th Ward

- Produce a report that summarizes the model used in this process and opportunities for learning, both for CUT, as well as other initiatives or communities that may want to replicate it, especially in terms of engagement choices

**This engaged research opportunity is available to Rice undergraduate students for Fall of 2021.** An interdisciplinary team of four students, each of whom will bring different, but equally important, skills, knowledge, and experiences, will undertake this project. Team members will each work approximately 10 hours per week on this project between August 23rd and December 3rd under the guidance of CUT and CCL staff and will receive \$10/hour for their project work. Work time will be flexible, although team members must attend weekly meetings and must coordinate time to work with other team members on the project as needed. Undergraduate students from **all fields of study** with interests and/or skills in at least some of the following areas are encouraged to apply:

Public/ community health, social determinants of health, social equity, racial justice, stakeholder interviewing, survey design, data analysis, professional writing, public presentations, teamwork, community engagement

**APPLICATIONS ARE DUE: Sunday June 6, 2021 at 11:59pm cst**  
**To inquire or apply contact Dr. Jessica Khalaf, [jkhalaf@rice.edu](mailto:jkhalaf@rice.edu)**  
**For more about Rice's HART Program, visit: <http://ccl.rice.edu/hart>**