



## HOUSTON ACTION RESEARCH TEAM



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### *Agape Shaved Ice, Youth Empowerment – Fall 2016*

This HART, comprised of undergraduate students majoring in Mathematical Economics, Policy Studies, Political Science and Archaeology, was centered around making Agape's shaved-ice business more sustainable. Agape Shaved Ice provides teens in the OST South Union neighborhood experience in management, budgets, work ethic and teamwork as well as valuable employment opportunities, while reducing negative stigmas surrounding teens in the area. In considering business sustainability, the team focused on ensuring empowerment of the teens through ownership of the business processes. The team conducted on-site focus groups and monitored business operations, in addition to reviewing available literature, visiting other shaved ice businesses, and talking to experts, allowing them to build a strong rapport with both the teens and Agape staff. The team created a business manual geared towards the teens as a means by which to provide them ownership of the operations as well as a way to evaluate future changes to the business. The team also made suggestions for the current business operations including changes to the sales locations and improvements in marketing.

