

bigBANG!

sparking social innovation



Contact: Sarah Jane Semrad
sarahjanesemrad@gmail.com
(469) 951-7323

Seven Nonprofits Named 2010 North Texas “Social Innovators”

DALLAS (March 22, 2010)—Seven innovative nonprofit organizations in North Texas have been selected as the 2010 “Social Innovators” by the Texas Social Innovation Initiative for demonstrating promising solutions to North Texas’ pressing social problems.

The selection, announced at the recent Governor’s Leadership Conference entitles each organization to \$25,000 in cash and services, including strategy consulting, business planning, executive coaching, and introductions to potential philanthropic investors to help them gain visibility and acquire the resources they need to expand their work.

More than 60 nonprofits in North Texas applied for selection as a 2010 Social Innovator in the first year of this statewide initiative. Up-and-coming nonprofits had to demonstrate efficiency, effectiveness and innovation in tackling a specific social problem.

The 2010 Social Innovators are:

- [Big Brothers Big Sisters of North Texas](#) provides one-on-one mentoring to children. They have developed strong and innovative statewide partnerships with government as well as faith-based organizations through their proven model that relates to mentoring children of prisoners through the Amachi Texas initiative. They also recognize the importance of outcome measures, utilizing randomized controlled trials funded by the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Their methods are so successful that they recently received national recovery funds to do consulting and help replicate their model across the country.
- [Central Dallas Ministries](#) collaborates to achieve more success in every one of their 16 programs, including a groundbreaking collaboration with PepsiCo to expand their food distribution exponentially. They are also renowned for their ability to **engage those they serve in volunteering** at their organization. As the **largest multi-service provider in the Dallas area**, they see the people they serve not as “clients,” but as neighbors with **immense social and human capital**.

- [Dallas Concilio of Hispanic Service Organizations](#) has developed an outstanding partnership with their school district by understanding the **social and cultural barriers** to parental involvement in their community. By using program graduates as their teachers, they have built up **strong community involvement** in schools while maintaining a high level of trust from the people they serve. They have **clear data** that points to both changes in parents' behavior and improvement in children's grades. In addition, their **light and scalable model** can easily be shared with others.
- [The H.I.S. BridgeBuilders Education and Employment Training program](#) gives career-developing employment training, free health care and more to the people it serves. The program's mentor component pairs students with mentors, often giving students their first experience with someone believing in them and investing in their lives. The program maintains strong partnerships with the local community college, the Dallas Housing Authority and additional organizations. In addition, the program serves as a placement service, assisting its graduates in obtaining meaningful employment either by direct hire or on a temp-to-hire basis.
- [Rainbow Days' program Family Connection](#) is deeply committed to **learning from their data** and continuing to improve. They utilize **randomized controlled trials** and are in the national registry for **evidence-based programs**. By working with 22 different organizations, they provide a **centralized menu of services with a decentralized delivery system**. Their curriculum for their transient population includes ongoing, onsite behavioral health services, and is able to **impact children** who come to only one session as well as those in sessions for years. Their program can also be **replicated** anywhere.
- [The Shared Housing Center](#) serves thousands of people a year through housing and follow-up support on a very limited budget. Their "Building Blocks for Success" initiative was created to **evaluate their program and measure its success**. Using **strong partnerships** for their mental health and childcare initiatives, including a mental health component on-site delivered by Parkland Hospital HOMES, they help their families **focus on root causes** for becoming homeless, enabling them to break destructive patterns. They have a very strong ability to **keep track of their program's participants** over time, and they have **integral volunteer involvement**.
- [Vision Regeneration, Inc.](#) is changing the cultural environment of at-risk youth in order to eliminate violent and destructive behaviors, helping them turn instead to

lives that are productive, rewarding and spiritually enriched. Working in the highest crime neighborhoods of Dallas, Vision Regeneration offers school-based intervention programs, after school and summer prevention programs, and juvenile offender programs. They created the nation's first Youth PROMISE Council, based on the federal Youth PROMISE Act, in order to replicate proven programs in five target areas of Dallas. Recognizing and leveraging the powerful role cultural influences play in the lives of youth, Vision Regeneration also launched a social network and broadcasts a TV show to engage youth in a positive way.

The Social Innovators' strategy and business support will culminate June 10th with participation in the Social Innovation Showcase event (www.bigBANGtx.org), presented by Dallas Social Venture Partners and The Dallas Foundation. The event is modeled after venture capital forums in which early-stage organizations present their ideas directly to investors. During the showcase, each nonprofit will present their most compelling case for support to more than 200 potential philanthropic investors.

Dallas Social Venture Partners is a partnership of professionals, social entrepreneurs, and foundations committed to strengthening our community through the collective application of their dollars and business expertise.

###