



S.T.A.R. is Historic Preservation

The S.T.A.R. (Students Together Achieving Revitalization) project is presented by the City of San Antonio's Office of Historic Preservation (OHP). OHP relies on a strong partnership with University of Texas San Antonio (UTSA) College of Architecture (CoA) to complete the project by utilizing student volunteers enrolled in a core course in the undergraduate curriculum and relying upon members of the Historic Preservation Association (HPA) to serve as team leaders at each location. Each S.T.A.R. Project is a two-weekend event that achieves neighborhood revitalization through service learning.



The motivation for the project is to provide a proactive approach to arresting further deterioration of low-income historic districts as well as providing a hands-on learning experience for students. S.T.A.R. also acts as one of the components in the ongoing effort to engage and inform the public about the values and benefits of historic preservation.

Historic Preservation is cultural, economic and environmental sustainability all at once. It protects the places that matter and make San Antonio unique by ensuring that changes and new construction are consistent with the overall character of historic districts. It is a proven economic development tool for central city revitalization and heritage tourism. Finally, it is environmentally sustainable because it is the ultimate form of recycling those structures that are already built and the existing infrastructure surrounding them. S.T.A.R., which at its core is about historic preservation, is a tool for implementing recommendations for neighborhood revitalization and reinvestment as stated in the Dignowity Action Plan and the Eastside Initiative. It is also consistent with recommendations in the City Council-adopted Strategic Historic Preservation Plan to identify endangered historic properties and match them with appropriate tools to help arrest the deterioration of our historic central city housing stock.



The project is also intended to serve as a motivation for other homeowners to invest in their homes, spurring revitalization throughout the area. This initial response can then be built upon to create successful and long-term economic revitalization.

Reinvesting in our older and historic neighborhoods protects our heritage, promotes the kinds of neighborhoods full of character and charm that attract new people to downtown, and maintains our sense of place. Through the S.T.A.R. project we can promote the importance and value of historic preservation and protect and enhance the quality of life in historic San Antonio neighborhoods.



S.T.A.R.

STUDENTS TOGETHER ACHIEVING REVITALIZATION



S.T.A.R. is Service Learning

In addition to the benefits that each S.T.A.R. Project offers to Historic Preservation, it also relies on community service as a vehicle for learning and unique experiences not otherwise offered in the curriculum. Service learning is a teaching strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction that enriches the learning experience while teaching civic responsibility and strengthening communities.



Students are exposed to real-life situations and apply knowledge gained in the classroom through hands-on application in a community that is genuinely in need. They not only learn the practical application of their studies but they become actively contributing citizens and community members through the service that they perform. The HPA students (largely graduate students) learn to manage and motivate a diverse volunteer work force and to prioritize tasks in their roles as team leaders.

Supervised by OHP staff, CoA faculty and volunteer building professionals, the student volunteers remove and replace rotted siding and trim, prepare for and paint the exterior of homes, make historic window repair and other minor repairs. The first S.T.A.R. event in 2010 left the students, homeowners, and community motivated to do more.

Both Students and homeowners were affected in positive ways through this experience. Homeowners expressed feelings of gratitude and thankfulness that they were able to be a part of this innovative program. Several of the homeowners were actively on-site during the event, providing hands-on participation and encouragement. Students said it was a rewarding experience as a learning opportunity, but more importantly because they were able to help someone in need and contribute to the revitalization of a historic neighborhood.

Your sponsorship of this year's S.T.A.R. Program will assist in teaching students valuable hands-on techniques and assisting homeowners in revitalizing their homes.

