

## **Introduction**

The Race and Reconciliation Initiative's "Good Neighbor?" Committee was charged with researching TCU's relationship with the greater Fort Worth communities. The research was conducted over a period of five months--September 2020 through February 2021. Researchers participated in an IRB training as well as a training on best practices when interviewing individuals about histories of racism. A database of the research is now stored in TCU Box, an online cloudbase repository.

Upon being charged by the Race and Reconciliation Initiative (RRI), the committee co-chairs (Professor Adam W. McKinney and Dr. Trung Nguyen) hoped to create a four-six member committee. McKinney and Nguyen reached out to eight potential committee members. Three accepted participation (one TCU alumna, one TCU student, and one TCU staff member). In December 2020, one committee member (TCU student because of curse load) rescinded participation.

Prior to the formation of the committee, RRI leadership provided co-chairs with a list of research questions. Co-chairs then provided committee members with research questions to guide the research process.

Below are the questions the committee reviewed to determine the research's focus areas:

1. What could/should community engagement look like?
2. What is the history of the TCU Community Scholars program?
3. How has admissions changed its local outreach footprint over time?
4. How many local Black businesses does TCU support? How many are approved vendors?
5. To what degree is TCU "open to the public"? Policing? Police reports?
6. When did nearby Colonial Country Club integrate?

7. What is TCU's relationship with Fort Worth?
8. What is TCU's relationship with Como?
9. What is TCU's relationship with Stop 6?
10. Aside from football, how do locals know of what Black TCU students accomplish/achieve?
11. What is the Fred Rouse Project?
12. What are the racial implications of the "Rose Bowl" (& Fiesta Bowl) effect?

To develop a foundational understanding and a baseline of knowledge, the committee identified the following questions to focus the research:

1. What could/should community engagement look like?
2. What is the history of the TCU Community Scholars program?
3. Aside from football, how do locals know of what Black TCU students accomplish/achieve?
4. What is TCU's relationship with Fort Worth?
5. What is TCU's relationship with Como?
6. What is TCU's relationship with Stop 6?
7. When did nearby Colonial Country Club integrate?
8. How many local Black businesses does TCU support and/or as approved vendors?
9. What is the Fred Rouse Project?

After much deliberation, the committee also included the following questions:

- What is TCU's relationship with current students?
- What is TCU's relationship with Tangelwood?

- How does TCU respond to national disasters in regards to anti-Black racial violence and the impacts on students and their families?

These questions were added to further develop the fundamental understanding and foundation for this research.

### **Methodology**

Researchers used personal interviews, internet searches, and existing databases to conduct the research. IRB approval was requested and approved for the interviews conducted. Each member who conducted interviews also completed the CITI Program Human Subjects Research and the Human Subject Research (social-behavioral-educational) Basic Course training module. Committee members identified individuals on campus whose roles have a direct connection to the questions. Committee members sent e-mail communications to invite individuals to be interviewed. Once participants agreed to said interviews, researchers provided participants waivers and consent forms. The committee provided participants an option of a \$25 gift card for their participation in the research process. All interviews and documentations have been stored in a shared TCU Box cloud account accessible only to the researchers.

Below is a list of people interviewed to inform the research questions.

- Anonymous Fort Worth community member;
- Lee Virden Geurkink, Editor & Contributing Writer for Madeworthy Magazine (has children who are Tanglewood Elementary alumni)
- Quinton Phillips, FWISD Board of Education Trustee & TCU Adjunct Professor
- Tracy Syler-Jones, TCU Vice Chancellor of Marketing & Communications
- Walter “Bill” West, Community Leader & TCU Associate

- Mike Russel, TCU Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Dean of Campus Life
- Victoria Wise, Founder of Tanglewood Moms Social Media Community; Publisher, Madeworthy Magazine (has children who are Tanglewood Elementary alumni and has lived in the Tanglewood neighborhood for many years)
- Eric Wood, TCU Director of Counseling & Mental Health

Committee members used the Internet to answer the research questions and, more specifically, identify publications related to the desegregation of the Colonial Golf Course. Additionally, researchers contacted TCU accounts payable office to request a list of the institution's approved vendors. Committee members researched the companies to identify the race/ethnicity of the CEO/business owners. The committee created a database to identify BIPOC-owned businesses. Some of the CEOs/business owners of TCU's approved vendors were more difficult to locate and, therefore, the information related to race/ethnicity is unknown.

## **Findings**

### **Qualitative Data**

One committee member conducted four individual interviews with:

- Anonymous Fort Worth community member;
- Quniton Phillips, Fort Worth Independent School District Board Trustee member;
- Dr. Mike Russel, TCU Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs;
- Walter "Bill" West, TCU Class of '71 & '74 and a community leader;
- Dr. Eric Wood, Director of the TCU's Counseling and Mental Health Center.

The goals of the interviews were to better understand the manner in which TCU communicates and supports students of color during continued incidents of racial violence and the manner in which TCU is viewed by various members of the Fort Worth community.

In Dr. Russel's interview, the researcher found that guidelines for outreach, that is the inclusion of contact information for mental health support, are included in all all-campus e-mails when distressing events occur. Information in the communications includes available on-campus mental health resources. These distressing events have included natural disasters (for those affected in their respective home communities), and unexpected deaths of TCU community members. While Campus Life has focused on adopting more of a trauma-informed practice of late in response to traumatic events, TCU has yet to adopt a racially trauma-informed practice. This type of outreach is not currently offered for racial tragedies. Reasonings offered include the difficulty to identify students based on demographic information (especially as it pertains to race/ethnicity when students choose not to identify their racial/ethnic heritages), the worry that students may feel that this type of communication might be too personal/an unwelcome intrusion, and the idea that it might be more useful to generate a blanket statement to the entire University rather than communicate with individual students of color. To Dr. Russel's point on becoming a culturally-based, trauma-informed, responsive campus, Dr. Wood shared:

“That's going to take years. The Cabinet's done it, Provost's council, administration council, student affairs has done it. The main thing we really want is the faculty to agree to do it. If we can get all the faculty to do a training like that, I think that would address a lot of concerns from students on how faculty interact.”

Dr. Russel shared additional support and resources for students of color can be found in departments, such as Campus Life, Counseling and Mental Health Center, Religious and Spiritual Life, and Inclusiveness and Intercultural Services. Specifically, Campus Life assists students in communicating with professors when absences are related to health and safety concerns. The Counseling and Mental Health Center has created more student affinity and support groups. Furthermore, Dr Wood stated:

“We are adopting a trauma-informed practice. We are continuing to identify and refine what a trauma-informed practice looks like making sure that faculty, staff, and administration understands what a trauma-informed practice is.”

In fall 2021, Inclusiveness and Intercultural Services will move into the Brown-Lupton University Union as part of the new Intercultural Center. This new center will serve as a resource, gathering place, and support for marginalized student populations. The center will include a warming kitchen, media room, and many informal spaces for students to gather for meetings, studying, and conversations. Dr. Russel believes students learn about campus resources through Frog Buzz weekly e-mails, websites, other e-mail communications, and student leadership trainings. However, both Dr. Wood and Dr. Russel stated that more can be done to support students of color on campus. Dr. Wood described numerous conversations he has had with students of color choosing online vs. in-person courses in fall 2020. He believes that their decisions are fear-based. He stated that he and his staff have heard from students of color that they were afraid to participate in in-person education because they did not know what faculty members would say about Black Lives Matter. Students feared retaliation and tokenism. Dr. Wood further shared his belief in the essential nature of faculty buy-in to ensure that students of color feel supported on campus. From his experience, he stated that some departments

participate in outreach efforts, while others are mostly unreceptive. He also believes that Diversity, Equity & Inclusion trainings should be required in order to maximize impact.

Another committee member conducted two individual interviews with:

- Victoria Wise; and
- Lee Virden Geurkink.

Both are members and leaders in the Tanglewood neighborhood. (The Tanglewood neighborhood sits adjacent to TCU.)

Victoria described Tanglewood:

“It is an upper middle-class area, which, for a great variety of factors, precludes a lot of diversity.”

A recent incident highlighted the neighborhood’s challenges with diversity. In a Tanglewood Neighborhood meeting discussing the expansion of Tanglewood Elementary School, a strategic attempt was made to re-zone the neighborhood to segregate BIPOC people from White people. Lee remembered:

“A few years ago when they presented this idea. The school was bursting at the seams. It is one of the only exemplary elementary schools in Fort Worth. There were 800-plus students for a school built for 450. Something had to be done. I think, in the end, we got what they always had planned. Splitting between two major streets--Hulen and Bellaire.”

Victoria added:

“There was a lot of chatter that if the lines were not drawn correctly, for a lack of a better term, property value of those of us who go to the new school would drop.”

The committee member also attempted to investigate the relationship between TCU and the Colonial Country Club. The Colonial Country Club made a decision to integrate its membership in 1991 only because of concerns about possibly losing the opportunity to host a PGA tournament because its membership was white-only.<sup>1</sup> In further researching the relationship between TCU and the Colonial Country Club and surrounding neighborhood, it was difficult to identify an individual willing to be interviewed and recorded. It was also difficult to locate an individual that would have been beneficial to answer the committee’s research questions. The committee member found that the Colonial Country Club has a long history of segregation, and integration occurred only due to pressures from the PGA. TCU partners with the Colonial Country Club on various events throughout the year including fundraisers and tournaments from which TCU makes monetary gain.

Questions the researcher offered include:

1. Does TCU want to be affiliated with an organization that does not have intentions of being more diverse, nor integrated?; and
2. How does TCU, as an institution, feel about being connected to an organization that has a history of exclusionary practices as they pertain to race as recent as the early 1990’s?

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.upi.com/Archives/1991/04/27/Prestigious-country-club-admits-first-black-members/6456672724800/>



Bill West, Quinton Phillips, and an anonymous Fort Worth community member shared their thoughts and perspectives on TCU's level of community engagement and outreach. One common theme among all of those interviewed was the need for community outreach and engagement to be more institutionalized and less reliant on the work, research, and personal connections of TCU staff and faculty. The anonymous community member, Mr. West, and Mr. Phillips shared that TCU individuals are creating connections with Fort Worth Black communities and communities of color, not the University as an institution. Mr. West, specifically, mentioned his own personal connections in terms of partnerships with and offering services to community members in Stop 6 and Como. He mentioned that none of the partnerships, nor services, are institutionalized. Mr. Phillips echoed a similar sentiment. He shared that TCU's relationship with Stop 6 grew more out of individual relationships with TCU faculty and staff than that of a formal relationship or partnership with TCU. Mr. West further explained his standpoint on perceived versus actualized improvements on campus. He found that, after returning to TCU in 2017 after 35 years, he had surmised that there would have been more improvements on campus as it pertained to the representation of and access to resources for faculty, staff, and students of color.

Mr. Phillips commented that local pride for TCU is very evident, though described the pride as "elitist." Mr. Phillips encouraged TCU to partner with FWISD to recruit more from local high schools thereby demonstrating what TCU can provide FWISD alumni of color. In reference to programs that have increased community engagement, Mr. Phillips referred to TCU's Community Scholars program. He stated:

"That skyrocketed engagement, created the possibility of truly attending TCU with a full ride. I think that brought the radar way up."

## Quantitative Data

Researchers used the Internet and phone to identify the CEOs/business owners of the businesses on TCU's approved vendor list. As of November 2020, TCU had a list of 8,609 approved vendors. As of this report, the researchers contacted the majority of the CEOs/business owners of the approved vendors. Chart 1 in this document shows the breakdown of the confirmed CEOs/business owners and their race/ethnicity. The difference between the companies owned or operated by white business people compared to BIPOC-owned is significant. Fort Worth is a community that is predominantly BIPOC. In the 2017 census, white people made up 39.4% of the population of Fort Worth.<sup>2</sup> The difference between the percentages of white owned business with which TCU does business and the percentage of white people in Fort Worth might be an indication of the systemic racism that people of color face in Fort Worth in terms of starting a new business or being promoted within an organization.

## Fred Rouse Memorial Project

As we continue to identify answers to the research questions, it is important to understand Fort Worth's history of both white supremacy and racial terror violence as it relates to TCU. Fort Worth, Texas had one of the largest Ku Klux Klan memberships in the United States in the 1920s. Therefore, it is very likely yjay yjose very much affiliated with the Ku Klux Klan were also very much affiliated with the Texas Christian University. (Professor McKinney is currently carrying out this research.) It is understood that members of the Ku Klux Klan were responsible

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.fortworthtexas.gov/about/population>

in the murder of Mr. Fred Rouse, a Black, non-union butcher for Swift & Company in the Niles City Stockyards (now Fort Worth).

Mr. Fred Rouse was a strikebreaker and, in so being, crossed both union and racial lines. When he left work in the evening of December 6, 1921, he was accosted, attacked, and stabbed repeatedly by strikers. In the brawl, two shots were fired, hitting two brothers. A white mob bludgeoned Mr. Rouse with a streetcar guardrail. He was left for dead near 600 E. Exchange Avenue. Niles City police officers asked the mob to relinquish his body. The police placed Mr. Rouse in a police car. On the way to the mortuary, officers discovered that Mr. Rouse was still alive. They drove him south to the City & County Hospital Negro basement ward (330 E. 4th St.).

Five days later, on Sunday, December 11, 1921, a mob of white men barged into the hospital, threatened the staff, and abducted Mr. Rouse from the Negro ward. They drove north to what had become known as the “Death Tree” at the corner of NE 12th Street and Samuels Avenue. They hanged Mr. Fred Rouse and riddled his body with bullets. Fort Worth residents drove to the site to watch Mr. Rouse hang from the “Death Tree.” He was buried on Monday, December 12, 1921, in New Trinity Cemetery, Haltom City, Texas.

Five days later on Saturday, December 17, 1921, the property owner of the site of the racial terror lynching cut down the “Death Tree” and was reported in the Fort Worth Star-Telegram as saying that she did so in hopes that Fort Worth would “have a merry Christmas.” Convictions were brought against five members of the mob, but, despite the overwhelming evidence, no one was ever found guilty in the murder of Mr. Fred Rouse.

Based on oral histories offered by TCU alumni, it was shared that members of the TCU community participated in the lynching of Mr. Fred Rouse, though text-based evidence has yet to be located to justify this claim. Research into TCU's involvement in the Ku Klux Klan Klavern No. 101 continues within communities in Fort Worth, TX, including the work of Professor McKinney and DNAWORKS (the organization for which he serves as co-director) and Tarrant County Coalition for Peace and Justice (TCCPJ, the organization for which he serves as President). The continued research entails community programs to bring awareness to Fort Worth's association with racial terror violence. This programming includes:

- TCCPJ's Community Remembrance Soil Collection Ceremony in which community members extracted soil from the site of the lynching of Mr. Fred Rouse as an act of truth and reconciliation;
- *Fort Worth Lynching Tour: Honoring the Memory of Mr. Fred Rouse*, a group bike and car memorial activism tour to the five sites associated with the lynching of Mr. Fred Rouse (complete with a new, augmented reality app created specifically for the program);
- Fred Rouse Historical Markers that will be installed in the site of the lynching of Mr. Fred Rouse (funded by the Equal Justice Initiative, Montgomery, AL); and
- Fred Rouse Memorial Park, TCCPJ's latest project to transform the site of the lynching of Mr. Fred Rouse into a new memorial park in his name.

## **Recommendations**

Recommendations that the committee would like to offer include:

1. The possibility of having time to perform more research; Being more intentional about ensuring that Black voices are central to the answering of research questions. (Is there an unwillingness/disinterest in participating? Suggestions for further inquiry: Dr. Darron Turner, Dr. Cornell Thomas); and encourage TCU to be more intentional in using vendors from historically marginalized populations, especially BIPOC-owned businesses (This would increase the financial support TCU could provide business owners of color and be part of the reconciling the system of racism that has historically prevented people of color from owning businesses/being promoted to senior-level administrative roles, such as CEOs.).
2. The committee would like to offer that the University instate a four-year, full-ride scholarship specifically for Mr. Fred Rouse's family, many of whom live in Fort Worth, TX. This act of equitably sharing resources could move TCU in the direction of reconciling our local history associated with racial terror violence.
3. Future interview considerations:
  - Editor of the TCU Magazine (TCU Marketing topic)
  - Chauncey Franks (Tanglewood topic)
  - Examining relationship with the Fort Worth Club
  - Carol Brown, former Como Community Center director

## **Artifacts**

The committee has included artifacts in TCU Box, including qualitative and quantitative data.

## **Chart: Approved Vendors**

Chart 1. List of approved vendors at TCU

Race/Ethnicity of CEOs/business owners	Number of CEOs/business owners
BIPOC-owned	847 (18%)
White-owned	3736 (82%)

## **Timeline**

2011 – TCU wins Rose Bowl

2016 – First list of student demands<sup>3</sup>

2017 – CRES founded<sup>4</sup>

2017 – Trump Inaugurated – March @ TCU<sup>5</sup>

2017 – DEI Award @ TCU

2018 – Dr. Whitnee Boyd appointed Coordinator of Special Projects

2018 – Aisha Torrey Sawyer appointed Director appointed Office of Diversity and Inclusion

2018 – Dr. Darron Turner appointed Chief Diversity Officer

2018 – Student NAACP group reinstated at TCU

2018 – LEAD ON Strategic plan instated

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.tcu360.com/2016/10/the-organizers-of-the-protests-release-list-of-demands/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.tcu360.com/2018/01/more-than-a-major-a-movement/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.star-telegram.com/news/local/fort-worth/article130342689.html>

2020 – Second list of student demands<sup>6</sup>

Summer 2020 – George Floyd Protest at TCU

2020 – Dr. Darron Turner retired

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<sup>6</sup> <https://cujenow.weebly.com/demands.html>