



Texas Campus Outreach Initiative Report

June 2026



TEXAS
HISTORICAL
COMMISSION 
REAL PLACES TELLING REAL STORIES

At the direction of the 89th Texas Legislature, the Texas Holocaust, Genocide, and Antisemitism Advisory Commission (THGAAC) developed a new **Campus Outreach Initiative** during the 2026-27 biennium. The educational programming, built on prior THGAAC efforts at Texas colleges and universities, is designed to support students, educators, and surrounding communities and is focused on antisemitism awareness, Holocaust education, dialogue, and cross-cultural engagement.

At a moment of heightened antisemitism and widespread tensions at US colleges, this initiative reflects THGAAC's broader mission to combat hatred, prejudice, and indifference through education and public engagement. Across Texas, programming combined immersive exhibits, dialogue-based engagement, public lectures, and community partnerships. It encouraged critical reflection, while also nurturing historical understanding and fostering constructive conversations that might not otherwise happen.



During the pilot phase of the initiative in Spring 2026, THGAAC partnered with universities, nonprofit organizations, educators, and community stakeholders to bring programming to nine campuses across Texas, including in Richardson, Denton, Fort Worth, Austin, San Antonio, Houston, Laredo, Brownsville, and Edinburg.

This report details this work across several programs and areas:

- **Holocaust Cattle Car Exhibit — Hate Ends Now**
- **Sharaka**
- **Other Campus Engagements**
- **Moving Forward**

This initiative will be expanded during the Fall 2026 and Spring 2027 semesters to reach additional students on more campuses.

HOLOCAUST CATTLE CAR EXHIBIT — HATE ENDS NOW

THGAAC partnered with the national educational group **Hate Ends Now** to bring an immersive Holocaust cattle car exhibit to campus, accompanied by historical Nazi-era archives. The exhibit provided students and community members with an experiential educational opportunity centered on Holocaust history, survivor testimony, and the consequences of hatred and indifference.

State leadership response

Three members of the Texas Senate and one member of the Texas Historical Commission visited the exhibit on four separate campuses and offered these responses:

“I’m here to learn more about this tour and to tell you how proud I am to support it, and that I will continue to do it.”

— Senate Dean Judith Zaffirini, at TAMU

“We can never forget and must fight anything that looks like it could lead to such an atrocity again.”

— Sen. Brent Hagenbuch, at UNT

“If we don’t understand what happened, we risk repeating the same mistakes.”

— Sen. Juan “Chuy” Hinojosa, at UTRGV-Edinburg

“This exhibit reflects our mission to remember. But more than just remember, to learn, feel, and be educated so that those things of the past are not repeated.”

— Commissioner Lilia Garcia, THC member and UTRGV faculty member

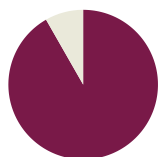
Campuses served

- The University of Texas at Dallas (Richardson)
- University of North Texas (Denton)
- Texas Wesleyan University (Fort Worth)
- Texas A&M International University (Laredo)
- University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (Brownsville and Edinburg)

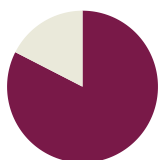


Participant findings and feedback

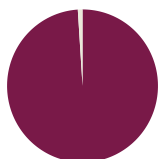
Across the six campuses, the Hate Ends Now immersive cattle car exhibit and historical archives reached more than 1200 students, educators, administrators, and community members through campus and public engagements focused on Holocaust education, historical awareness, and confronting antisemitism and hatred through experiential learning. A total of 97 participants completed post-event surveys.



91.8%
reported learning something new

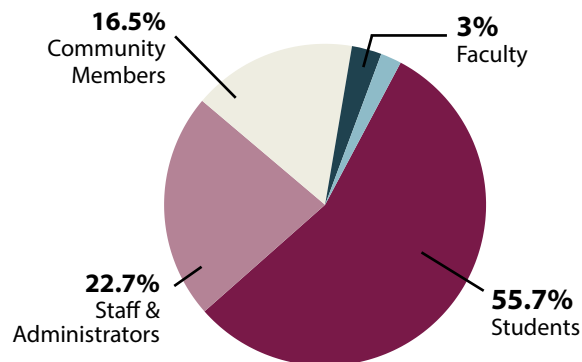


82.5%
said the program introduced
perspectives they had not
previously considered



99%
described the program as valuable
to attend

Participant demographics included:



Qualitative responses consistently emphasized the importance of Holocaust education, the responsibility to confront hate and prejudice, and the emotional impact of immersive learning experiences. Many participants described the exhibit as making Holocaust history feel immediate and personal rather than distant or abstract.

Campus leadership response

The engagements were actively organized and facilitated by academic deans, directors, and campus leadership across participating universities, many of whom emphasized the importance of creating educational spaces centered on dialogue, historical awareness, and cross-cultural engagement.

“Hate Ends Now created an opportunity for our campus and community to come together around a shared commitment to humanizing history and recognizing the human consequences of hatred and intolerance.”

— Dean James O’Meara, Office of Global and Community Engagement, Texas A&M International University

“Our Sharaka and Hate Ends Now experiences found fertile ground for reflection that will undoubtedly lead to action.”

— Dean Luis Torres-Hostos, School of Social Work, UT Rio Grande Valley

SHARAKA

THGAAC partnered with the international educational group **Sharaka** to host a cross-cultural dialogue featuring firsthand perspectives from Middle Eastern participants and speakers, and tying conversations to social media literacy and contemporary antisemitism.

Campus leadership response

The Sharaka Dialogue Series brought together students, educators, civic leaders, faith communities, and cultural organizations from across the region for conversations focused on understanding, cooperation, and shared learning, while creating opportunities to address misconceptions, strengthen relationships, and identify common ground across differences.

“The Sharaka engagements created opportunities for communities on both sides of the river to address misconceptions, strengthen understanding, and explore collaborative approaches to confronting antisemitism and prejudice.”

— Dean James O’Meara, Office of Global and Community Engagement, Texas A&M International University

“The Rio Grande Valley has been spared severe incidents of antisemitism. This creates an opportunity to start from the ground up, educating our communities about hate, genocide, and the Holocaust with factual information, combating stereotypes and misinformation, and equipping them with the knowledge, skills, and attitude to combat antisemitism and hatred in all its forms.”

— Dean Luis Torres-Hostos, School of Social Work, UT Rio Grande Valley

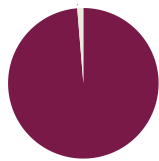
Campuses served

- Texas A&M International University (Laredo)
- University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (Brownsville and Edinburg)
- Trinity University (San Antonio)

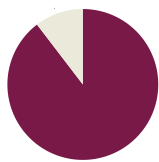


Participant findings and feedback

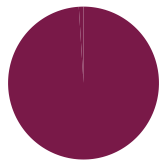
Sharaka programming reached approximately 300–400 participants (as well as several hundred high school students) through campus and community engagements. A total of 77 participants completed post-event surveys.



98.7%
reported learning something new

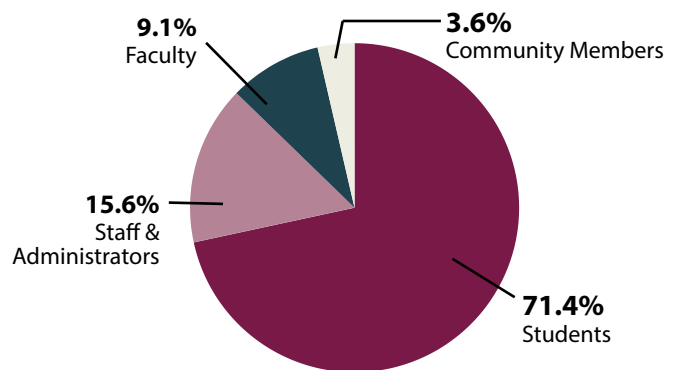


89.6%
said the program introduced perspectives they had not previously considered



100%
described the program as valuable to attend

Participant demographics included:



Participant feedback consistently emphasized the importance of engaging with multiple perspectives, hearing directly from individuals with lived experience, and seeking information beyond simplified narratives shaped by social media. Many respondents noted that programming challenged assumptions, encouraged reflection, and created opportunities for open and constructive dialogue.

OTHER CAMPUS ENGAGEMENTS

Bondi Beach Survivor STORY

THGAAC hosted survivor **Leibel Lazaroff**, who shared testimony connected to the Bondi Beach Hannukah attack and discussed the importance of confronting antisemitism and violence through education and public awareness. The engagement with the College Station native created opportunities for students to engage directly with lived experience and contemporary perspectives on antisemitism.

Campus served

- University of Texas at Austin
- University of Texas at Dallas
(Partnered in student outreach and event promotion through campus Chabad engagement, with student participation from Texas Torah Institute.)

BAMAH

THGAAC partnered with the non-profit **BAMAH** and Ethiopian Israeli artist Ephraim Wasse to host a campus lecture and introductory engagement with students ahead of a planned future semester-long academic partnership. More than 20 students attended the event, which explored themes of identity, migration, culture, and artistic expression through dialogue and personal storytelling.

Campus served

- Texas Southern University (Houston)

MOVING FORWARD

Issues for awareness

As the pilot phase of the Campus Outreach Initiative expanded across multiple campuses, several operational and institutional lessons emerged that may help strengthen future programming. Campus partners consistently emphasized the importance of extended preparation timelines, early coordination with university leadership, and clearly defined planning frameworks that outline logistical expectations, communications needs, and campus responsibilities in advance of programming.

The initiative also highlighted that campus environments vary significantly in their level of readiness and comfort surrounding discussions related to antisemitism, Israel, and cross-cultural dialogue. While most engagements were met with strong curiosity, openness, and institutional support, some campus community members demonstrated caution about participating in certain discussions due to broader political sensitivities. These experiences reinforced the importance of continued relationship-building, thoughtful framing, and flexible programming models tailored to individual campus environments.

Conclusion

The pilot phase of the Campus Outreach Initiative has demonstrated the value of educational programming that combines historical awareness, experiential learning, dialogue, and community engagement. Across campuses and program formats, participants consistently reported increased understanding, exposure to new perspectives, and a stronger awareness of the importance of confronting antisemitism and hatred in all forms. The initiative also highlighted the important role universities and community partnerships can play in fostering informed conversations, civic engagement, and educational environments grounded in historical understanding and mutual respect.



*The commissioners would like to thank **BandOne** for its vital role in researching, writing, and developing this Texas Campus Outreach Initiative Report.*