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Greater Heights Area Chamber of Commerce*

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**Health and Wellness Luncheon
December 7, 2016**

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- 4 Spotlight on Non-Profit
Gateway Academy
- 5 Diamond Partner Profile
Members Trust of the SW Federal Credit Union
- 7 Health & Wellness Luncheon
December 7
- 10 Congressman Ted Poe Luncheon
Recap

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Chairperson's letter



Dear Members,

Let's Get Together! Hope to see you at the lake on November 12 and while we are there having fun we can build partnerships and bridges to where we want to take the Greater Heights! What have you been dreaming about? Remember dreams are a bridge between our now and our future! "There is nothing more powerful than an idea whose time has come." (The Book of Courage). Dreams also build gratefulness to not only you but to the organization; they build energy and a productive attitude but each person must dream their own dream. Passionate dreamers make good employees which make good organizations. What drives your employees to do their best? What drives you to do your best? 85% of the people who leave a job do so because of their relationship with their supervisor or they do not feel appreciated. Money does not always fix employee morale. Appreciation is the strongest currency in the corporate culture; it transforms business!

The Greater Heights Chamber of Commerce appreciates you and will celebrate throughout the year our partnership to take businesses to greater heights! Our first celebration is our day at the lake; some celebrations will be big, some will be small in size but no matter the size remember you are appreciated. Through your active service in our Chamber whether that be in committee work, attending events or spreading the word about our great Chamber your leadership from your company/organization is felt and heard. Our work together builds team unity and confidence that our chamber will continue to accomplish great things as we inspire others to take action.

There is no limit to the enthusiasm you can harness or the things you can achieve. Dreams can come true for each of us, for our business and for our Chamber! In the business world tapping into the empowering of employees lowers turnover, increases punctuality, has less sick time used and accountability goes up! For management up to 24% of top and middle management will be lost if building dreams (connecting the personal with the professional) is not done. The Chamber offers great places to have employees connect and demonstrate their leadership, take on roles that can build their assets and your company! We are grateful for each chamber member. Our ability to serve the businesses ability to grow comes from your leadership and your service. We work together to take us to "greater heights!"

Cindy Reibenstein
Chair

Crawfish Festival

Education Committee Chair and current Chamber Chairwoman **Cindy Reibenstein** first approached me about getting a parade together to kick off the Crawfish Festival back in the fall of 2015. The goal was to highlight the amazing and diverse talents of our community: schools, businesses, non-profit groups, elected officials, etc. With support from the Chamber staff and numerous volunteers, this year's inaugural Crawfish Festival Parade was a huge success with thirty-two participating organizations including eleven local schools. A big thank you to all who helped make this awesome event happen!



The 2017 Greater Heights Chamber of Commerce Crawfish Festival Parade will be even bigger and better with a longer route to accommodate more spectators and participants. This year's parade committee includes **Austin McCafferty** of Houston Highway Credit Union, **Jennifer Vickers** of Vickers Properties/Keller Williams Metropolitan, **Tony Allman** of PrimeWay Federal Credit Union, and new Chamber member **Raquel Meyer** of Refinery Brands. The parade will take place on Saturday March 4th at 10:30 AM directly before the opening of the Crawfish Festival. We'd love to have your school, business, or organization participate or sponsor this awesome event. We'll be disseminating more information to Chamber members as soon as the committee finalizes the 2017 plans.

– April Petronella, Chair, Crawfish Festival Parade

Business—you have a market to explore! Schools have so many avenues to partner with and opportunities for you to get your company in front of parents and teachers. Education needs our support, our committee had Children at Risk Executive Director talk at our meeting—We as the Chamber are on the right track! Did you know Texas ranks last in our young people going to college, only 22%! Our work begins in Pre-K and earlier, even with Parent Classes; 90% of Houston first time parents said they would take a class in parenting! How can you help? Partner with education initiatives on all levels, our future work force is here! To improve the economy we must improve our educational results! Schools want to link and partner with us in many ways.

Waltrip has 800 students to place for a day of "Give Back" on Dec. 16 and if your business or organization would like volunteers for the day let me know. Heights High and Northside will be having theirs in the spring. Garden Oaks Montessori has their Fun Run Nov. 10- sponsors needed, Nov. 12- American Legion will host a Veteran Day event Chili Cook off to help with education! Way to go vets! Have some wrapping paper you can donate, give it to Garden Oaks as this will help with cost of the DC trip. Waltrip is having Parent University! Topics currently include cyber safety, sex-trafficking, and LGBTQ. HCC Northeast campus has a Center of Excellence so check them out! Fit Armadillo has free training sessions for teachers—give them a call! From the Chamber breakfast strongly consider having a free workshop for your company, your school to become mentally prepared for "Active Shooters." Hartz Chicken, with baked as well as fried chicken has some great fundraising food, Call Naro Mak. Memorial Hermann is having their Community Event Nov. 12 to celebrate 50 years and their new entrance! Kumon has internship opportunities and T-Shirt Works and Third Coast Impressions are ready to print for you! See you in November!

– Cindy Reibenstein, Education Chair

Spotlight on Non-Profit

Gateway Academy is a private school created for middle and high school teens that experience academic, social, executive functioning, and additional learning deficits.

The school provides a smaller learning environment and direct instruction for students who have specific challenges but have the capabilities to complete academic course work, such as biology and algebra. Gateway students also participate in an internship program during high school preparing them with job skills. After graduation, most students attend college or enter into the workforce.



Gateway's model targets academic, social, and fitness goals. The classrooms are designed to accommodate the learning styles of all students. Inside, you can find standing desks, lap desks, balance ball chairs, couches, and stationary bikes. Social breaks also occur throughout the day to encourage peer engagement. Each morning, students exercise in various fitness classes. Their original *Fit Club* model is a research based program designed to prepare the brain for learning, decrease anxiety, regulate moods, and improve stamina. The result of this one-of-a-kind program is students' ability to understand how to maintain a healthy, physically fit lifestyle throughout adulthood.

This hidden gem is seeking businesses interested in becoming involved with their Internship Program. There are many ways you can help! You can come to Gateway to give students mock interviews, allow students to visit and tour your business, provide internship experiences, or hire a student as a part-time employee.

Gateway is future focused on producing adults who have the ability to function independently. Social opportunities are aimed to help those who need guidance in their natural environments. If you know of a teenager who is struggling in their current school and needs an opportunity where challenges are met with solutions, consider Gateway Academy. www.thegatewayacademy.org.

Diamond Partner profile

Members Trust of the SW Federal Credit Union

Members Trust serves and provides credit union financial services to a number of employee groups as well as the Greater Heights area in Houston. They are proud they got their start in the Greater Heights area and have been around for 80 years, although they did not have that name originally. Houston Milk Producers Federal Credit Union was chartered in 1936 to serve dairy farmers in Harris County, Texas. The area served (otherwise known as the "milk shed") grew to include the Far East Texas, to the west to LaGrange and Brenham, and to other northern cities. At that time, the milk marketing cooperative was called the South Texas Milk Producers Association.



Other milk marketing cooperatives were formed in San Antonio, Austin, and Waco and these cooperatives joined together to form Milk Producers, Inc. and several years later these cooperatives formed the Associated Milk Producers, Inc., which reached through the Midwest from the Gulf of Mexico to the Canadian border. Texas was in the Southern Region, with Houston located in the Southern Division. Associated Milk Producers merged with several other milk marketing co-ops and ultimately formed the Dairy Farmers of America in 1998. Throughout the 80's and 90's, Houston Milk Producers Federal Credit Union grew and merged with several other Credit Unions.

In 2000, Houston Milk Producers Federal Credit Union changed the institution's name to Members Trust of the Southwest Federal Credit Union (MTFCU), to more accurately reflect their diversified and growing membership. In March of 2000, Members Trust

Federal Credit Union moved into a new Stephenville, Texas office so they could better serve members in central Texas. Another milestone happened in July of 2016 when they moved into a new Houston building at 2315 Mangum with additional building and land capabilities. Work remains in progress on the drive and parking area where the old building was demolished. They anticipate the work to be completed by mid-November.

This valued member of the Chamber is represented by former Chair **Brian Gilbert**, President. Who proudly cites the institution's mission: "Members Trust Federal Credit Union is dedicated to the philosophy of "members helping members" in a professional environment, by providing all member-owners with quality financial services based on sound business practices and by delivering these in an efficient and friendly manner." Learn more at www.mtfcu.coop.

Ted Poe Luncheon Recap



“Texas is a state of mind. Texas is an obsession. Above all, Texas is a nation in every sense of the word.”
 – John Steinbeck



On October 14, U.S. Congressman Ted Poe addressed a luncheon crowd at the Sheraton Houston Brookhollow Hotel. He began by stating that everything is not lost as some would have you believe! The Congressman addressed several issues in his talk including the recently passed bi-partisan Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act that addressed human trafficking. In addition, he spoke about the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance

Act (FISA), and believes that it is being abused by the National Security Agency (NSA). Other legislative areas where he is active involve: border security and immigration, energy, the Federal Budget, health-care, and the economy, especially as it relates to Texas. He is further working effectively in a bi-partisan manner to eliminate stalemates or roadblocks regarding legislation plus serving on the House Committee on the Judiciary and the House

Committee on Foreign Affairs. Confirming his desire to serve his Texas constituents, his website, www.poe.house.gov reflects about Texas by such influential people as Sam Houston, Davy Crockett and William Barrett Travis. A favorite is from John Steinbeck: “Texas is a state of mind. Texas is an obsession. Above all, Texas is a nation in every sense of the word.” Sounds to us like something Congressman Poe would have said.

The Chamber recognizes these valuable table sponsors:

Adams Insurance Service
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 Allegiance Bank

Chase Bank
 Houston Highway Credit Union
 Memorial Hermann Greater Heights

Power Women Network
 PrimeWay Federal Credit Union
 Sheraton Houston Brookhollow Hotel





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height lights



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1. **Liz Carreno** of Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses hosted the September Orientation session and posed with **John Frels**, the Buy Local First Committee Chair. Thanks Liz.

2. The Power Women's group paid a visit to the Smithville, Texas Chamber of Commerce

3. At the Gala, **Jill Johnston** and **Teresa Briggs** stand guard over the live auction wagon filled with spirits.

4. **Lois Nelson** of Cy Fair Funeral Home, **Ginger Potthast** of Snaps Marketing LLC and Board Member **Nadia Troutenko** of Troutenko Insurance Services.

5. **William Hedrick** of Rowland & Scott HR Solutions, **Jill Johnston** of the Chamber and **Jack Van Pelt** of JVP Jewelry

6. **Stephen Daniel** Senior Community Liaison with HPD briefed the audience on "How to Survive an Active Shooter" at the October Breakfast Connection.

7. **O'Brian Woods** of The Dorian Fund and Ambassador **Bonnie Sheeren** of Houston Health Advocacy.

8. **Alda Pool** and **Cathy Stringer** of AC The Book Scene hosted a display table showing examples of the wonderful books on sale at their neighborhood store.

9. **Glenda Clerc** and **Anthony Ormsbee** of the Village of the Heights were the sponsors for the October Breakfast Connection. Thanks Village of the Heights.

10. Board Member **Dee Farino** of Third Coast Impressions and **George Pallotta** of ½ Price Boxes.

11. **Ricardo Barcelo**, **Perla Saldivar** and **Jose Martinez** of Barcelo & Associates displayed their extensive insurance capabilities at the Breakfast Connection.

12. **Steve Machann** of Westside Lexus, **Jack Vaughn** of PrimeLending and **Hernan Alvarado** of Kress Employment Screening.

13. **Thomas Steed** of Goosehead Insurance, Board Member **Lindsey Pollock** of Garden Oaks Montessori School and **Cesar Martinez** of Blue Roof Realtors.

14. **Raquel Meyer** of Refinery Brands and **Marianna Meyer** with the Office of **Mike Sullivan**.

15. **Austin McCafferty** and **Josh Alberto** of Houston Highway Credit Union posed with **Cindy Reibenstein** of Reibenstein & Associates.

16. **Gabriel Turner** of Propel Janitorial Solutions and **Cesar Martinez** show off their door prizes won at the Breakfast Connection.

17. **Atresia Amolochitis** and Ambassador **Glenda Clerc** of the Village of the Heights and **Thomas Steed** of Goosehead Insurance.

18. **Ed Schultheis** of Embark Tree & Landscape Services and Board Member **Brian Gilbert** of Members Trust of the SW Federal Credit Union.

height lights



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1. Chamber members, aka the air guitar band, rocked out at the Gipsy Girls ribbon cutting

2. Texas American Title hosted the October Business After Hours. Showing off an early Halloween networking event were **Hayley Tekell, Jesse Sewell** and **Jessica Lake**.

3. **Jessica Lake** of Texas American Title, Chamber intern **Erica Guidry, Vicki Martin** of T Shirt Works and **Natalie Coyle** of Shooting Star Promotions.

4. On behalf of the hospital, **Ivee Sauls** of Memorial Hermann Greater Heights Hospital accepted the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitation Services (DARS) 2016 Business of the Year Award.

new members

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plaque presentations



Amanda Bonilla and **Ernesto Cabrera** of La Hacienda Mexican Restaurant accepted a new member plaque from Ambassador **Glenda Clerc** of the Village of the Heights.



Ambassador **Willie Diefenbach-Jones** of Send Out Cards delivered a new member plaque to **Kayleigh Colombero** of Building Excellent Schools.



Ambassador **Natalie Coyle** of Shooting Star Promotions posed with **John Frels** of It's a Small World Travel as he received his new member plaque.



Dr. Ana Torres and her staff accepted their new member plaque from Ambassador **Glenda Clerc** of the Village of the Heights.



Ambassador **Bonnie Sheeren** of Houston Health Advocacy presented a new member plaque to representatives of **Experimac - the Heights**.



Bonnie Reay holds her new member plaque for **Emerson Rose** located on 19th Street.

Familiar Faces

Well, prepare to be astonished at the life, so far, of our featured member, **MaryBeth Wegner**. She grew up in Beaver Dam, Wisconsin, which is the birthplace for actor, Fred McMurray. She proudly says that she has met Jerry Mathers, he of Leave it to Beaver fame, one year at Beaverfest. After swirling soft serve cones in an ice cream shop and inspecting canned beans at Green Giant she began her impressive academic career. Did we say impressive? How about a B.S. in Geology from the University of Notre Dame, a B.S. in Geology at Brigham Young University, a M.S. in Geology from the University of Wisconsin and began work on her Ph. D.

She began work in Houston with Vastar Resources as an interpretation geologist in Deepwater Exploration. The following years she enhanced her technical experience serving in other oil and gas companies. Among her continuing responsibilities she excelled in technical sales, demonstrating software to clients and if that were not enough, she also worked in modeling and seismic interpretation with some "petrophysical" and "seismic inversion." (Don't ask us!)

The oil and gas downturn saw her reinvent herself by becoming an Independent Agent representing Family Heritage Life products, being a distributor with Send Out Cards and consulting for Ambit Energy. Her Chamber goals were to create connections through networking, make friends and grow her

business. All of these goals are being accomplished through her Chamber participation and she says: "I knew this was going to be a great Chamber to join."

Staying abreast of her former endeavors, MaryBeth holds memberships in many of the national and international Geological societies and associations. How about her spare time? Glad you asked. She enjoys hosting potlucks, social events, wine/beer/Scotch tasting, card games, Legos, music and movies. The Chamber is fortunate to have MaryBeth Wegner, a staunch Green Bay Packers fan, as a valued participating member. After all, who can excel at untying knots, tie a cherry stem into a knot with her tongue and played the trumpet in the Notre Dame band?



ribbon cuttings



Ronnie Molina of TransGlobal Payment Systems hosted a ribbon cutting for members and guests at Michelangelo's to celebrate being a new member. TransGlobal is a full-service credit card processing company. Learn more at www.tgpayment.com.



Allette Paterson and **Nikki King** of Jefferson Heights hosted a glorious ribbon cutting at their impressive Jefferson Heights apartment home complex on the edge of downtown. What an impressive skyline view! See much more at www.liveatjeffersonheights.com.



Beth Liebling, owner of Darling Way greeted members and guests for her ribbon cutting at the business located at 3423 White Oak Avenue. Among other things, her store offers exquisite lingerie for women and sumptuous loungewear for men. See it all at www.darlingway.com



Michele Bauman Joseph, staff and students welcomed members and guests for a ribbon cutting at Gateway Academy. This progressive school serves students with social and academic challenges with innovative approaches to learning. Find out more at www.thegatewayacademy.org.



Victoria Grable, Principal of New Heights Christian Academy located at 1700 West 43rd Street, greeted attendees for a ribbon cutting celebration. The school challenges students to develop academic, emotional and spiritual excellence to the glory of God. For complete information go to www.newheightschristianacademy.org.



Alda Pool and **Cathy Stringer** of AC The Book Scene, located at 1820 West 43rd Street had a terrific ribbon cutting. This friendly store offers books in every genre and on beyond. A conference room is available for public use. Stop in and say hello and browse their impressive store. See it all at www.thebookscene.xyz.



Ricardo Barcelo an Exclusive Agent and Personal Finance Representative for Allstate held a ribbon cutting at their offices located at 2180 North Loop West, Suite 160. They specialize in Houston auto, Houston home and Houston Life Insurance. Click on www.allstateagencies.com/BARCELO to see all their services.



Isabel Sigala and staff welcomed members to Gypsy Girls, a place where young girls can party, get hair-do's, and nails done in a mini-salon. This festive perfect place stages parties and offers karaoke, shopping and a more. Parents of tweens' and teens' will enjoy their dedication to making parties special. See more at www.gogipsy.com.



Jack Vaughn of PrimeLending, a Plains Capital Company, represents the firm that offers "Home Loans Made Simple." Their philosophy is that buying or refinancing a home should be an exciting beginning. Discover all their capabilities at www.jackvaughn.com.



Dr. Luisa Arnal and **Dr. Kathryn Espana** of Concierge Pediatrics of Houston celebrated their membership. "Concierge Medicine" entails limiting the practice to smaller patient bases so patients receive a far greater level of care. In addition, this practice philosophy enables them to focus on wellness and disease prevention. Learn more at www.pedicconcierge.com.



Deborah Sharp, **April Cohen**, **Jim Ruzicka** and **Brittany Sharp** (right) have a unique business offering landscaping and antiques. Members heard about the organization's capabilities and they provided great hospitality for the business located at 5117 North Main Street. See everything at New Roots Landscaping & Antiques. www.newrootslandscapinghouston.com.

happy anniversary



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Greater Heights Area Chamber of Commerce
2017 Membership Directory

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Chamber Membership Directory in the Wings

The Chamber's Annual Membership Directory will debut in January. The directory includes information that enables member names and member businesses to be quickly found. The colorful directory offers advertising opportunities to keep business and service providers highly visible to members and other readers. In addition, the directory includes information about the Chamber and its activities, membership benefits, events, activities and an application form. "The new directory will be a nother value provided to Chamber members as well as a valuable resource for Greater Heights-area residents," said Chamber President **Jacob Millwee**. The directory's online version will be available 24/7 on the Chamber website, www.heightschamber.org. to help people shop for services and products locally and to support the community's economy.