

# Houston EWI Connect

*Working Together is  
when the Magic Happens!*



## From Our President

Hello EWI of Houston!

With the passing of our dear friend and mentor Marji Zamora, the beginning of this 2024-2025 year has had its unique challenges. After deep reflection and asking, "How would Marji want us to move forward?" I am very excited about this coming year. With your help, I know we can all make Marji proud by being the Chapter she knew we could be! Marji worked hard to bring LCAM to Houston next September, and we are already planning big things for that, as well as working towards great experiences for our Houston membership. Having Houston in the national spotlight is a win for us all. Trust me when I say I believe in Houston; I believe in YOU!

Several of the committees have met, and there is so much excitement for this year! It really does take all of us to make the magic happen. It's not a thing; it is a feeling of something bigger than yourself. Being in the room with some of the most creative, intelligent people I know is just exhilarating. You can feel the excitement and magic in the room when the ideas freely flow!

This January, we are going to have a Town Hall meeting with an open discussion of upcoming events, challenges, ideas, and any concerns the membership may have. Nothing is off-limits; we are here to listen and help and/or explain in any way we can. I am deeply honored to be your President and am fully aware that I am representing each and every one of you in everything I do. Please reach out to me directly with any questions or concerns you may have: [cindyb@blackhawgroup.com](mailto:cindyb@blackhawgroup.com) or 713-303-1529 (cell).

Your Board has already been hard at work, and I can't thank them enough for their dedication and participation. Executive Night sponsorship letters will be mailed soon, so please let us know if your company does not receive theirs by the end of December. I am happy to say that we have had a great start to our fundraising, but there is so much more to do. It really will take all of us to make the magic happen! Every little bit helps us achieve our goal.

May your holiday season be filled with family, friends, laughter, and love. Here's to a bright New Year and a fond farewell to the old; to the things that are yet to come, and the memories we hold dear.

*"Blessed is the season which engages the whole world in a conspiracy of love."* —Author unknown

*Cindy Baker*

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**Program Director**

**Barbara Stokes**

*Amegy Bank*

# Save The Date!

**Thursday, Dec. 12**

Chapter Monthly Meeting – The Ballroom at Tanglewood

**Tuesday, Dec. 17**

Members-only Social – Barbara Stokes' home in Sugar Land  
(registration details on [www.ewihouston.com](http://www.ewihouston.com))

**Thursday, Jan. 9**

Chapter Monthly Meeting – Federal Grill (Katy Frwy)



Scan For  
Event Calendar



The logo for Houston ewiConnect, with "Houston" in a small orange font, "ewi" in a light blue font, and "Connect" in a large, dark blue, cursive font.

Houston  
ewiConnect

# Celebrate!

## Representative Birthdays

Dec. 3: Melissa Ford

Dec. 3: Marty Moore

Dec. 7: Georgia Graugnard

Dec. 9: Cindy Baker

Dec. 10: Rusti Banagas

Dec. 11: Patti Strawther

Dec. 24: Annalisa Minnitti

Dec. 24: Betty Stolarski

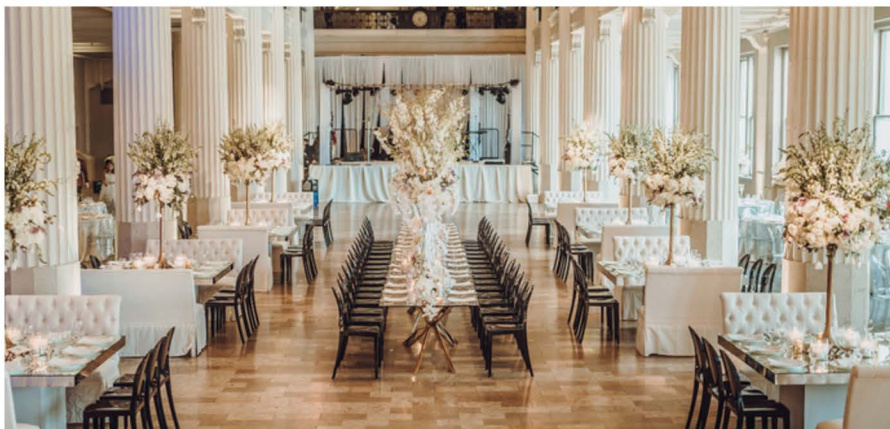
## Member Firm Anniversaries

2 years: Martha Turner

Sotheby's International Realty

# Membership

## Welcome to Our Newest Member Firm!



CORINTHIAN  
— HOUSTON —

Rosalind Moore, Representative  
Boyd Bryan, Executive

### Current Membership:

37 Member Firms  
40 Representatives  
12 Sustaining Members  
3 Honorary Members  
as of Nov. 21, 2024



# Membership

## Member Firm News

### Astros' stadium renamed Daikin Park through 2039

Congratulations to Daikin Comfort Technologies North America, Inc., a valued member firm, on the incredible achievement of securing the naming rights for the Houston Astros' stadium, which will officially become Daikin Park starting January 1, 2025! This 15-year partnership reflects Daikin's innovation and leadership in the air conditioning industry, as well as its commitment to the Houston community. We celebrate this milestone with Daikin and look forward to seeing the Astros play at Daikin Park for years to come!



### Welcome to the World, Miles Leon Bednorz!

Congratulations to Debra Jaime, representing The Rose, on the joyous arrival of her new grandson, Miles Leon Bednorz! Born on October 26, 2024, Miles entered the world at an impressive 9 pounds and 22 inches long. This precious bundle of joy is sure to bring love, laughter, and endless blessings to Debra and her family. We celebrate with you and wish little Miles a lifetime of health, happiness, and wonderful adventures!

To share your firm's news, contact Lisa Diaz, Communications Director, at [lisa@sirenlis.com](mailto:lisa@sirenlis.com).

# Meeting Recap

## October 2024

On October 10, 2024, EWI of Houston gathered at The Forest Club to install the 2024-2025 Leadership Team. The evening featured a networking session, a formal installation ceremony, and inspiring remarks from the new leaders, who shared their vision for advancing EWI's mission of connection, careers, and community impact.

With its elegant ambiance, The Forest Club provided the perfect backdrop for this special occasion. Members enjoyed a delightful dinner and celebrated a milestone event, setting a positive tone for the year ahead.



Back Row (l-r) Lisa Diaz, Shari Schiffman, Kristen Skille, Barbara Stokes, Carole Pitts  
Front Row (l-r) Courtney Castellanos, Cindy Baker, Lily Portales, Cristina Barron, Anna Bryant

To volunteer to write the next meeting recap, contact Lisa Diaz, Communications Director, at [lisa@sirenlis.com](mailto:lisa@sirenlis.com).



Mikaylie and Beau Baker; Cindy Baker;  
Barbara and Bill Stokes; and Cody Baker



LaTonya, Emma, Ana Grace, and Javier Perez



Lily Portales



Myron Blalock



Cindy Baker and LaTonya Perez



Sam and Lily Portales



# Meeting Recap

## November 2024

### **EWI of Houston's November Monthly Meeting Supporting Blue Santa**

On November 14, 2024, the Executive Women International (EWI) of Houston gathered at the Omni Houston Hotel for the November Monthly Meeting, proudly supporting the Houston Police Department's Blue Santa Program. The event was a meaningful blend of networking, delicious dining, and community service. The funds and gifts donated will bring joy to many children this holiday season.

### **Highlights of the Event:**

- **Funds Raised:** Approximately \$1,300 was donated to support Blue Santa.
- **Gift Contributions:** Attendees donated unwrapped toys with a total estimated value of over \$600.

### **Call to Action:**

- **EWI Volunteer Day:** We're exploring a coordinated volunteer day and tour to further support Blue Santa. If you're interested in participating, please reach out to Elisa Garcia, Houston First Corporation:
  - ✉ [elisa.garcia@houstonfirst.com](mailto:elisa.garcia@houstonfirst.com)
- **Blue Santa Contact Information:** For those interested in volunteering independently, please contact Officer Reyes:
  - ☎ 713-247-8730
  - ✉ [hpdbluesanta@gmail.com](mailto:hpdbluesanta@gmail.com)
  - 🔗 [www.houstonbluesanta.org](http://www.houstonbluesanta.org)

EWI of Houston extends its heartfelt gratitude to all members and guests who contributed to making this event a success. Together, we are helping to make the holiday season brighter for children in need!

To volunteer to write the next meeting recap, contact Lisa Diaz, Communications Director, at [lisa@sirenlis.com](mailto:lisa@sirenlis.com).



Laura and Emilio Reyes; Cindy Baker; and Blue Santa



Donations benefitting Blue Santa Program



Michelle Votano; Cindy Baker; and Isabel McKinney



LaTonya Perez, Mary Margaret Carroll,  
Blue Santa, Kay Bart, and Lisa Anheiser



Cristina Barron and Wendy Gonzalez



Priscilla Hardy, Blue Santa, and Linda Petticrew

# Fundraising

## Support Executives' Night, 2025

### Purses with a Purpose:

Turn stylish accessories into fundraising magic! Donate new or gently loved designer bags to add flair and fun to this year's event.

**Contact:** Cindy Baker (Black Haw Group)  
(713) 965-2909 or [cindyb@blackhawgroup.com](mailto:cindyb@blackhawgroup.com)



### Liquor Wagon:

Help stock the ultimate party starter! Contribute bottles of liquor, mixers, or chic bar accessories for our sought-after Liquor Wagon raffle.

**Contact:** Shari Schiffman (Douglas Elliman Real Estate)  
(832) 320-2057 or [shari.schiffman@elliman.com](mailto:shari.schiffman@elliman.com)

### Wine Pull

Help us top last year's success, where we raised over \$2,000 with 60+ bottles donated! Contribute wine valued at \$50+ (minimum \$25), or make a tax-deductible cash donation to help purchase premium bottles.

**Contact:** Patti Strawther (James J. Postl Interests)  
(832) 444-1113 or [patti.strawther@shell.com](mailto:patti.strawther@shell.com)



# Fundraising

## RaiseRight:

## Fundraising Made Simple and Impactful!

The holiday season is upon us, and there's no better time to embrace the convenience of RaiseRight for your shopping needs. By purchasing gift cards and shopping online through RaiseRight, you can contribute effortlessly to EWI of Houston's scholarship fund while taking care of your holiday preparations!

### How RaiseRight Works:

1. Purchase Gift Cards: Buy eGift cards for your favorite brands through RaiseRight.
2. Shop or Gift: Use the cards for your own shopping or as thoughtful gifts for family and friends.
3. Earn Automatically: A percentage of every purchase goes directly to our scholarship fund, with no extra cost to you.

### A Member's Experience:

"I use RaiseRight multiple times a month to reload my Starbucks gift card, shop at my favorite stores like Total Wine & More and PetSmart, or purchase gift cards for presents from places like Bath & Body Works, Ulta, Dick's Sporting Goods, and Target. With over 500 brands to choose from, it's so easy to support our mission while shopping!"

### RaiseRight for EWI Events:

Don't forget to use RaiseRight for your Door Prize commitments or Executive Night auction items. Every purchase you make supports EWI Houston's mission of connection, careers, and community.

Ready to make an impact while you shop? Visit [RaiseRight.com](https://www.RaiseRight.com) or contact us for more information on how to get started. Together, let's make this holiday season one of giving and growth!

### Start Today—Support Tomorrow!

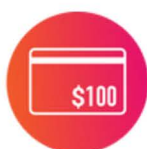
# Fundraising

Effortless fundraising, endless earnings

Join the 50,000+ organizations that trust RaiseRight as their #1 fundraising platform.

## How it works

RaiseRight is the easiest fundraising program you can run to benefit your members, families, and communities.



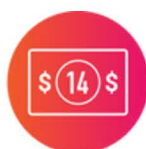
### BUY A GIFT CARD

Buy a \$100 GAP eGift card from RaiseRight with 14% earnings. Pay with your bank account, debit card, or credit card.



### USE IT

Your \$100 eGift card is delivered to your online RaiseRight Wallet instantly.



### EARN AUTOMATICALLY

With a 14% rebate, you automatically earn \$14 for your fundraising account. Way to go!



### THANKS, GAP!

Your earnings come from the brand, so no extra money comes out of your pocket.



## Fundraise faster, with multiple ways to earn

Fundraise faster with multiple ways to earn—using gift cards and online shopping through RaiseRight.

Click through to your favorite brands' websites, go shopping, and earn by completing a purchase. Plus, you can earn extra by using a gift card from RaiseRight as payment! No extra fees, just extra earnings.

*Pro-Tip!* Install the *RaiseRight Earnings Browser Extension* and never miss an opportunity to earn while shopping online.

## Hundreds of brands, hundreds of ways to earn



With something for everyone, there's no limit to how much your organization can earn.

### Ready to get started? We're here to help

Toll Free: 800.727.4715 Option 3 | [Support@RaiseRight.com](mailto:Support@RaiseRight.com)



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# Professional Development

## 3-2-1: The power of one minute, how to discover something useful, and clinging to old truths

3 IDEAS FROM ME

I.

"Compete externally and you compare. Compete internally and you improve."

II.

"Two is twice as good as one, but one is infinitely better than zero.

- One minute of making sales calls is infinitely better than zero minutes.
- One minute of meditation is infinitely better than zero minutes.
- One minute of writing is infinitely better than zero minutes.

Sure, it might be ideal to spend an hour doing these things, but one minute gets you in the game. Now you're learning. Now you're improving. Now results are possible. One doesn't seem like much, but it's something real. At zero, you're still dreaming."

III.

"The secret is to do a few things for a long time.

The challenge is...

(1) You need to experiment and explore quite a bit to find the thing that is worth doubling down on. It may take a few years (or a decade) to find the project or relationship or cause that you want to commit to for a long time.

(2) New things are always coming up. Once you find something you want to do for a long time, you need the courage and discipline to say no to the shiny, new opportunities. After years of exploring and experimenting, it can be hard to flip the switch and remain focused.

You have to be willing to explore widely enough to find your thing, then willing to focus narrowly enough to make it something great."

By James Clear

Atomic Habits, the #1 best-selling book

Atoms, the official Atomic Habits app

3-2-1 newsletter with 3 million subscribers

# Communications

Connect with EWI Houston!



<https://www.facebook.com/EWIHouston>



<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/12076399/>

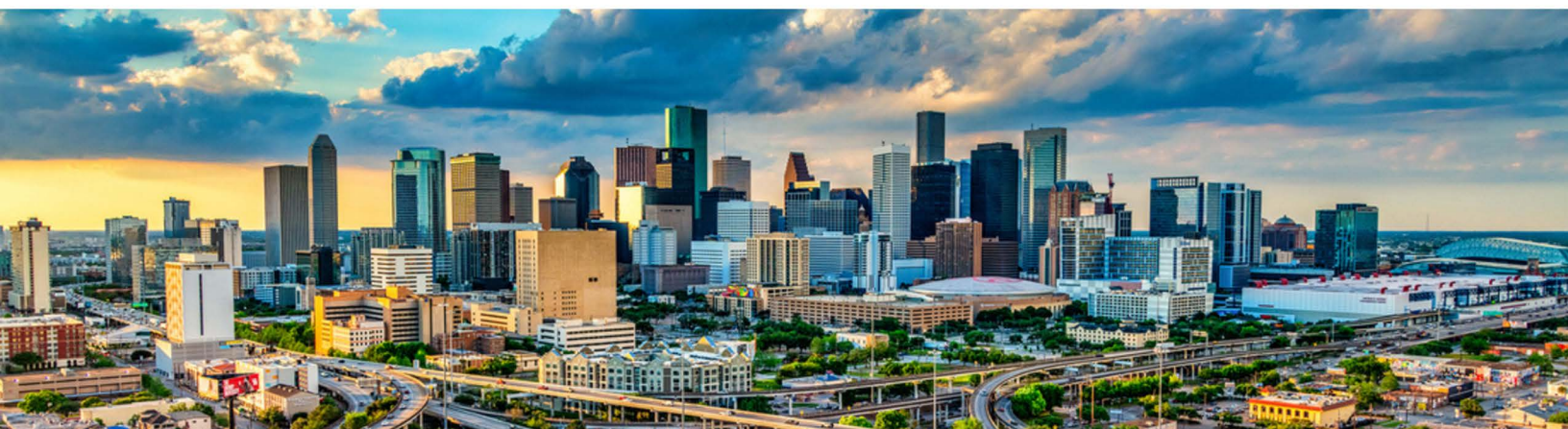


<https://www.instagram.com/ewihouston/>



<https://ewihouston.org/index.php>

To volunteer to help the communications team with EWI Connect, social media, and PR outreach, contact Lisa Diaz, Communications Director, at [lisa@sirenlis.com](mailto:lisa@sirenlis.com).





## **EWI of Houston Mission Statement**

EWI of Houston aspires to be the premier business organization of choice for member firms and their key individuals. Recognized by the Houston community as an avenue to achieve personal and professional excellence, every activity of the Houston Chapter will fulfill at least one of the objectives of the EWI Mission Statement.



## **Our Strategic Goals**

- To strengthen, expand, and broaden membership.
- To provide member firms with meaningful benefits.
- To actively promote education for all representatives.
- To achieve a high level of community visibility through service.



## **Our Mission**

EWI brings together key individuals from diverse businesses for the purpose of promoting member firms, enhancing personal and professional development, and encouraging community involvement.



## **Our Vision**

To enhance professional growth and development within a diverse group of women while empowering them to make a difference as they inspire others.



## **Corporate Office**

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Oconomowoc, WI 53066

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ewi@ewiconnect.com  
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# Leadership

## Board of Directors



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Black Haw Group LLC  
cindyb@blackhawgroup.com



President Elect  
Lily Portales  
Hilcorp  
lily.portales@hilcorp.com



Secretary  
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Newnam, Inc.  
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Treasurer  
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Estate  
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Sergeant at Arms  
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Martha Turner Sotheby's  
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Advisor  
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Jackson and Company  
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# Leadership

## Committee Chairs



Asist Committee Chair  
Debra Jaime  
The Rose  
djjaime@therose.org



Bylaws Committee Chair  
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@centerpointenergy  
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Courtesy Committee  
Chair  
Lily Portales  
Hilcorp  
lily.portales  
@hilcorp.com



EWISP Committee Chair  
Linda Petticrew  
Shell Energy Resources  
Company  
linda.petticrew@shell  
.com



Hospitality Committee  
Chair  
Cristina Barron  
Martha Turner Sotheby's  
International Realty  
cristina.barron  
@sothebys.realty



Member/ Retention  
Committee Chair Lily  
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Hilcorp  
lily.portales  
@hilcorp.com



Nominating Committee  
Chair  
LaTonya Perez  
The Rose  
lperez@therose.org



Philanthropy Committee  
Chair  
Elisa Garcia  
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Professional  
Development  
Committee Chair  
Barbara Stokes Amegy  
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Public Relations/ Social  
Media Committee Chair  
Lisa Diaz  
Metromarketing  
Services, Inc.  
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Strategic Planning  
Committee Chair  
Kay Bart  
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Web Committee Chair  
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D. Jones Photography  
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