

# Houston ewiConnect

*Working Together is  
when the Magic Happens!*



## From Our President

The three C's of EWI are Career, Connections, and Community. My mission this year was to have the Houston Chapter build our connections through socials and community service. March is always a busy month for so many members due to Rodeo season, but for the members that were able to attend the Houston Food Bank service project, I think they would all agree that we definitely connected! What an enjoyable time we had doing good for our community! As we connect with each other, we come to know what each other's careers entails and how we can support our fellow members. I believe it is the personal relationship that feeds the soul on a personal and professional level.

I encourage you to seek out someone at the next meeting that you may not know as well and get to know them. Find out what their company does; you may find that doing business with them is a win/win for you both!

In March we were able to honor our Sustaining members who bring so much value to our chapter. They are our Mentors, supporters; they walked before us and cheer us on now. Our Sustaining members are still very involved, which makes our chapter better!

*Cindy Baker*

### 2024-2025 Officers & Directors

**President**  
**Cindy Baker**

*Black Haw Group*

**President-Elect**  
**Lily Portales**

*Hilcorp Energy Company*

**Secretary**  
**Courtney Castellanos**  
*Lockwood, Andrews &  
Newnam, Inc.*

**Director-at-Large B/C/DP**  
**Anna Bryant**  
*HEB*

**Treasurer**  
**Shari Schiffman**  
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Estate*

**Membership Director**  
**Kristin Skille**  
*Experience Houston*

**Sergeant-at-Arms**  
**Cristina Barron**  
*Martha Turner Sotheby's  
International Realty*

**Communications Director**  
**Lisa Diaz**  
*Metromarketing Services,  
Inc.*

**Fundraising Director**  
**Carole Pitts**  
*Martha Turner Sotheby's  
International Realty*

**Program Director**  
**Barbara Stokes**  
*Amegy Bank*

# Save The Date!

**Thursday, May 8th**

Karen McCullough Speaker - Cadillac Bar

**Thursday, June 12th**

Honoring Past Presidents & Business Meeting - The Petroleum Club

**Saturday, June 14th**

EWI Pillowcase Project Benefiting Child Advocates

**Saturday, June 21st**

The Rose Shrimp Boil

**Thursday, July 10th**

Scholarship Night - Amegy Tower

**July 11th - 12th**

Texoma in Tulsa, OK

**September 17th - 20th**

LCAM in Houston



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Event Calendar



# Save The Date!

*Save the Date*  
AGENDA & HOTEL INFO TO FOLLOW

**TEXOMA 2025**

TULSA, OKLAHOMA  
**JULY 11 -12**  
\$250 EARLY BIRD  
( \$300 AFTER JUNE 01 )  
REGISTRATION WILL OPEN SOON

**\*\*OPTIONAL PLEASE JOIN US!\*\***

**EWI TULSA BUSINESS MEETING**  
DINNER WILL BE SERVED

**JULY 10**  
\$45 SEPARATE FEE



Scan For  
Event Calendar



The logo for Houston ewiConnect, with "Houston" in a smaller, orange, sans-serif font above "ewiConnect" in a larger, blue, cursive font.

Houston  
ewiConnect

# Celebrate!

## Representative Birthdays

### April

- 14 – Shannon McNair
- 17 – Bernice Lanclos (Past President)
- 18 – Martha Ceballos
- 21 – Ellen Ramsey
- 23 – Marilyn DeSimone
- 25 – Sanela Hasagic

## Member Firm Anniversaries

### April

- Metro Star Vanpool, 1 year
- The Ballroom at Bayou Place, 7 years

# Membership

## Current Membership:

37 Member Firms  
39 Representatives  
12 Sustaining Members  
3 Honorary Members  
2 Rep Pending, 1 Transitional Rep  
as of April 30, 2025

Membership in EWI offers unique professional and personal opportunities and networking opportunities and networking benefits for members through:

- Leadership and professional training
- Local-to-global business, community and philanthropic growth and involvement through chapter and corporate activities
- Access to corporate and chapter websites geared to business connections
- Increased networking ability through an international directory that lists major businesses, and decision-makers
- Focused personal and professional development through our quarterly magazine, the Pulse

EWI membership is by invitation only and consists of a variety of companies within the business community. The firm holds the membership and appoints a key individual as a representative. If you would like more information about the Houston Chapter membership process, please visit: <https://ewihouston.org/join>



# Firm Spotlight

## Martha Turner Sotheby's International Realty

Through a strategic vision, leadership, and unwavering commitment to agents, Robin and Paul have built a talented leadership team at Martha Turner Sotheby's International Realty that both upholds the standards set by Martha Turner and Tom Anderson while embracing innovation to keep the company at the forefront of the industry," the company said in a news release.

Prior to his promotion, Kilian served as senior vice president for Martha Turner Sotheby's. Since joining Martha Turner Sotheby's from within the brand in 2014, Kilian has helped shape the company's culture, strengthen its operations and encourage the success of the Houston team.

As co-president, Paul will take on an even greater role in guiding the brokerage forward. His focus will remain fostering agent success, enhancing client service and driving strategic growth.

Additionally, Conner has been promoted to regional executive vice president of Sotheby's International Realty Inc.

In Conner's expanded role, she will maintain co-leadership of Houston while supporting the leadership team in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

While Houston will remain Conner's primary focus, her new responsibilities will include leading other leaders, the company said.



Paul Kilian (left) and Robin Conner (right)  
are co-presidents of Martha Turner Sotheby's International Realty.

# Meeting Recap

March 2025

## Sustaining Members Luncheon

On March 13, 2025, EWI of Houston gathered at *Ciro's Italian Grill* to honor our beloved Sustaining Members with a celebration full of warmth, laughter, and tradition. Like a true Italian family gathering, stories were shared, glasses were raised, and even the waitstaff joined in the spirit—making our honored guests feel like treasured stars of the afternoon. Over plates of homemade pasta, fresh salads, and sweet gelato, we celebrated the legacy, leadership, and lasting connections that continue to shape EWI Houston.

# Houston EWIConnect



Carolyn Noack, Delynn Walker, Carolyn Toriggino, Sustaining Members; Cindy Baker, Black Haw Group; Bari Ross, Priscilla Hardy, Sustaining Members



Bari Ross, Sustaining Member; Lisa Diaz, Metromarketing Services, Delynn Walker, Sustaining Member



Anna Bryant, HEB; Shari Schiffman, Douglas Elliman Real Estate



Elisa Garcia, Houston First Corporation; Cristina Barron, Martha Turner Sotheby's International Realty



April Ragdale, Royal Sonesta; Courtney Castellanos, Lockwood, Andrews & Newnam, Inc.; Sanela Hasagic, Lockwood, Andrews & Newnam, Inc.; Wendy Gonzales, The Plaza Group; Shannon McNair, The Rose; Jessica Sebesta, Velas Resorts; Lily Portales, Hilcorp Energy Company, Meredith Muir, Guest; Lana O'Neil

# Meeting Recap

## Volunteering at Houston Food Bank

# houston foodbank

### Houston Food Bank

#### How A Food Bank Works



Food comes in to Houston Food Bank from various sources and is inspected, sorted, and stored in our warehouse.

Food is then distributed to our community partners. These partners include pantries, soup kitchens, schools, multi-service centers, and other hunger relief agencies.

Our partners then give out the food directly to those who need it in the community.

*Our mission: food for better lives. Our vision: A world that doesn't need food banks.*

#### Last Year In Review:\*

<b>18 Counties</b> served by Houston Food Bank	<b>92,835 households</b> per week provided with food assistance on average	<b>1,500 Partners</b> such as food pantries, soup kitchens, meal sites, and shelters.	<b>159 Million Meals</b> of nutritious food made possible
			

# Houston ewiConnect



Lily Portales, Hilcorp Energy Company; Cindy Baker, Black Haw Group; Elisa Garcia, Houston First Corporation; LaTonya Perez, The Rose



Elisa Garcia, Houston First Corporation; Cindy Baker, Black Haw Group



Patti Strawther, James J. Postl Interests; Lily Portales, Hilcorp Energy Company; Cindy Baker, Black Haw Group



Cindy Baker, Black Haw Group; Lily Portales, Hilcorp Energy Company



Cindy Baker, Black Haw Group; Staff member at Houston Food Bank



Patti Strawther, James J. Postl Interests; Elisa Garcia, Houston First Corporation, LaTonya Perez, The Rose; Lily Portales, Hilcorp Energy Company

# Meeting Recap

## New Member Mixer at The Corinthian Vault

A BIG thank you to Bryan Boyd, Executive and Rosalind "Roz" Moore, representative of Corinthian Houston for allowing us to use their beautiful facility and providing "cocktails" for our member mixer! Also, to Jackson and Company, Rebekah Wesley, representative, for providing delicious lite bites and tantalizing desserts! There was a lot of laughter, networking, reconnecting with members and getting to know new "potential" members!



# Houston ewiConnect



Rosalind Moore, Corinthian Houston



Sheles Wallace, Billionaire Thoughts; Lisa Diaz, Metromarketing Services; Laura Ehrlich



Kay Bart, Skerl & Associates; Laura Ehrlich



LaTonya Perez, The Rose; Amy Herod & Victoria Maldonado, Harvest Midstream



Cindy Joutraw, CenterPoint Energy, Inc.; Elisa Garcia, Houston First Corporation

# Houston ewiConnect



LaTonya Perez, The Rose; Cindy Baker, Black Haw Group; Ashley Robinett; Shannon McNair, The Rose; Cristina Barron, Martha Turner Sotheby's International Realty



Lily Portales, Hilcorp Energy Company; Victoria Maldonado, Harvest Midstream; Linda Petticrew, Shell Energy Resources Company; Ashley Robinett



Rebekah Wesley, Jackson & Company; Diane Bart, HFFK



Executive Women International, Houston TX  
and Guests



Shannon McNair, The Rose; Cindy Baker, Black Haw Group;  
Christina Hutchinson, Mark Kamin & Associates

# Professional Development

## New Resource: EWI Growth Zone

Good news, EWI leaders!

We're thrilled to see more and more of you exploring **GrowthZone**, our new professional development platform powered by BizLibrary. With **hundreds of on-demand courses** across a wide range of topics, there's something for everyone—whether you're looking to level up your leadership skills, sharpen your Excel expertise, or dive into the latest in workplace culture.

### ★ Here's what you'll find inside:

- **Leadership & Management** – Build your confidence as a team leader
- **Technology Skills** – Excel, Outlook, Power BI & more
- **Communication & Professionalism** – Master the soft skills that make a big impact
- **Notable New Releases** – Fresh, timely content added regularly!
- 

GrowthZone is accessible 24/7 and completely **free to EWI members**. Whether you're squeezing in a quick learning session over lunch or diving deep on the weekend, this is your opportunity to invest in YOU.

### 🔑 Ready to log in and learn?

Access GrowthZone by contacting Lori Heerlyn at [Lori.Heerlyn@tdwilliamson.com](mailto:Lori.Heerlyn@tdwilliamson.com) and start exploring today!

We'll be sharing more tips and highlights in upcoming calls and communications—but why wait? Dive in now and discover how GrowthZone can help you grow personally and professionally.



# 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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## 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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# Leadership

## Board of Directors



President  
Cindy Baker  
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cindyb@blackhawgroup.com



President Elect  
Lily Portales  
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lily.portales@hilcorp.com



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Advisor  
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Advisor  
Rebekah Wesley  
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# Leadership Committee Chairs



Asist Committee Chair  
Debra Jaime  
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Bylaws Committee Chair  
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Courtesy Committee  
Chair  
Lily Portales  
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EWISP Committee Chair  
Linda Petticrew  
Shell Energy Resources  
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Hospitality Committee  
Chair  
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Martha Turner Sotheby's  
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Member/ Retention  
Committee Chair  
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Nominating Committee  
Chair  
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The Rose  
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Philanthropy Committee  
Chair  
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Professional  
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Public Relations/ Social  
Media Committee Chair  
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Strategic Planning  
Committee Chair  
Kay Bart  
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Web Committee Chair  
David Jones  
D. Jones Photography  
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# 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).

