



Houston ewiConnect



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

LILY PORTALES | HILCORP ENERGY COMPANY

DECEMBER 2025

Dear EWI Houston Members,

As we close out the year and enter the heart of the holiday season, I'm filled with gratitude for the connection, generosity, and spirit that define our EWI Houston community.

December beautifully reflected who we are as a chapter. Our December Monthly Meeting, benefitting the HPD Blue Santa Program, showcased the giving heart of EWI Houston. Thank you to everyone who donated and supported this meaningful initiative. I'm also excited to share that our EWISP and ASIST Scholarship applications open January 5, continuing our commitment to education and community impact.

The season was also filled with connection, from our Holiday Social at my home to pop-up socials throughout the month, including happy hour and a lunch at member firms, The Chifley Hotel and Amegy Tower, respectively, and time together at the Sugar Land Sip and Stroll. These moments of fellowship strengthen the bonds that make our chapter so special.

We also celebrated joyful milestones with the arrival of two new grandchildren within our EWI family. And in a truly meaningful moment, we witnessed a Christmas miracle with the successful double lung transplant of Bill Stokes, husband of member Barbara Stokes and brother of Past President Cindy Baker. The outpouring of prayers and support was a powerful reminder of the compassion and unity within our chapter. We continue to hold them close as Bill moves through recovery.

As we look ahead, I want to extend my sincere thanks to our Board of Directors and Committee Chairs for their dedication, time, and leadership throughout this busy season. Their hard work behind the scenes is what keeps our chapter moving forward with purpose and momentum.

As we turn the calendar to a new year, we do so with gratitude and anticipation. In January, Executive Night sponsorship letters will be going out, and we look forward to engaging our community partners in support of this important event that supports our scholarships. I'm also excited to share that we've launched a new Instagram account, creating another way to stay connected, celebrate our members, and share our impact.

Thank you for being part of this incredible community. Wishing you and your loved ones a joyful holiday season and a new year filled with health, happiness, and peace. Thank you for being such an important part of EWI Houston.

Lily Portales

2025-2026 Officers & Directors

President

Lily Portales

Hilcorp Energy Company

President-Elect

Elisa Garcia

Houston First Corp

Secretary/Treasurer

Linda Petticrew

Shell Energy Resources

Membership Director

Barbara Stokes

Amegy Bank

Director-at-Large B/C/DP

Cristina Barron

Martha Tuner Sotheby's International Realty

Sergeant-at-Arms

Anna Bryant

H-E-B

Communications Director

Victoria Maldonado

Harvest Midstream Company

Program Director

Isabel McKinney

Hilcorp Energy Company

Advisor & Parliamentarian

Cindy Baker

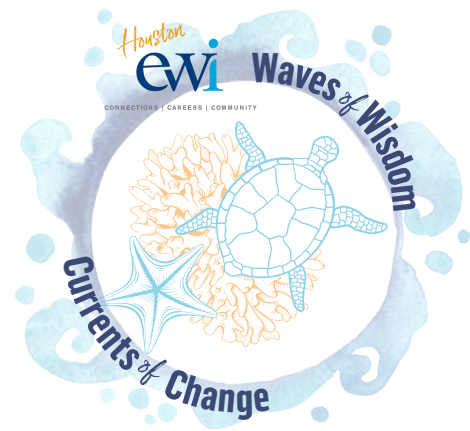
Black Haw Group LLC

Advisor

Shari Schiffman

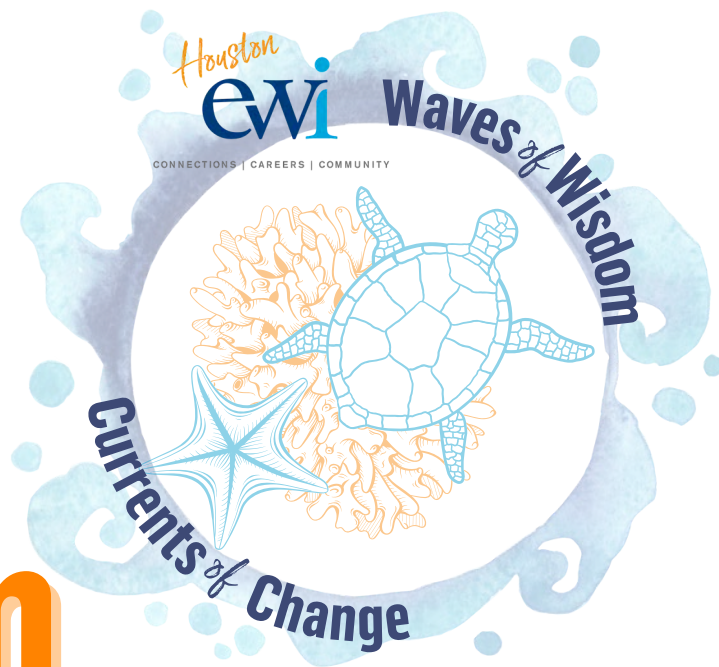
Douglas Elliman Real Estate

DIVE INTO THIS ISSUE

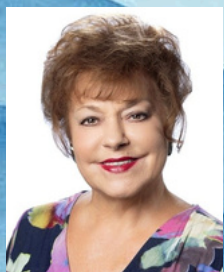


- **President's Letter**
- **Words of Wisdom - WOW**
- **"Sea" What's Coming - Event Calendar**
- **Waves of Celebration**
- **Festive Feature**
- **Currents & Highlights**
- **Currents of Growth - Professional Development**
- **Tides of Generosity**
- **Mission**
- **Leadership**
- **Surf the Digital Wave - Connect with EWI Houston**

Words of Wisdom

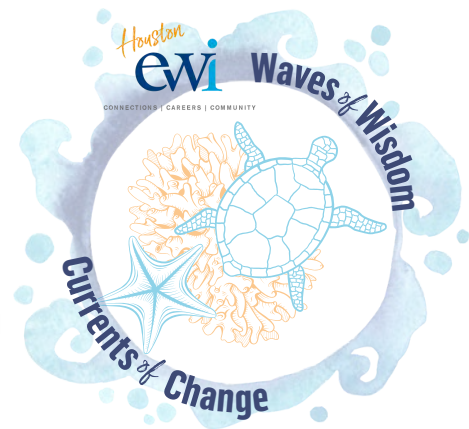


“EWI encouraged me to become involved with the following important programs in the Houston community: The Blue Santa Program, United Way projects, Reading Rallies for elementary students, volunteering with the Brookwood Community Village, Ronald McDonald House, Susan B. Komen Race for the Cure, Dress for Success and many more important volunteer opportunities. On a personal note, my life has been blessed meeting outstanding brilliant women in the Houston Chapter and making friendships that have lasted over 30 years.”



-Priscilla Massey-Hardy, WOW Member

“SEA” WHAT’S COMING



December 25

Christmas Day

January 1

New Year's Day

January 13

Chapter Monthly Meeting

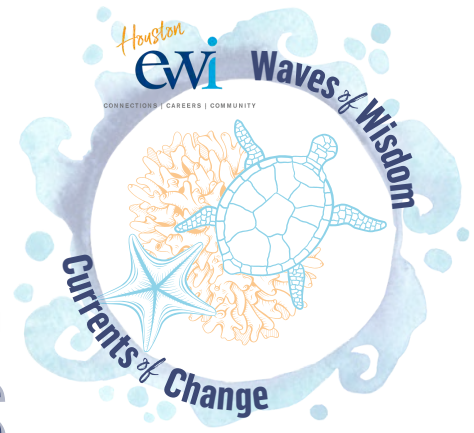
Amegy Bank on Main

January 22

Monthly Board Meeting

Hilcorp Energy





“SEA” WHAT’S COMING PHILANTHROPY HIGH TIDES

January 13

Houston Food Bank

Chapter Monthly Meeting
Bring nonperishable food items to the chapter monthly meeting
Bring a donation and get a free raffle ticket!

April 6

Durham Elementary

Distribute a small gift to each student to cheer them on ahead of STAR testing. RSVP to Patti Strawther at pattistrawther@hotmail.com

January TBD - Stay tuned!

Brighter Bites

Volunteer a morning at Brighter Bites

May 9

Dress for Success Drive

Chapter Monthly Meeting
More info to come!

February 13

Durham Elementary

Assist passing out lunch to the school staff.
RSVP to Patti Strawther at pattistrawther@hotmail.com

May TBD - Stay tuned!

EWI Houston’s Annual Reading Rally

More info to come!

February 21

Kids’ Meals

Decorate lunch bags at Patti McClean’s house
RSVP to Patti McClean at patti.mclean@daikincomfort.com

Waves of Celebration

JANUARY



REPRESENTATIVES BIRTHDAYS

DORY WARD, PAST PRESIDENT - JAN 3

MARY SPELTZ - JAN 6

VIRGINIA SCHNEIDER ILOFT, PAST PRESIDENT - JAN 10

STEPHANIE HOWARD - JAN 26

MEMBER FIRM ANNIVERSARIES

AMEGY BANK - 2014

BRIGHT EVENT RENTALS - 2024

CENTERPOINT ENERGY - 2003

JAMES J. POSTL INTERESTS - 2013



<https://ewihouston.org/>

Waves of Celebration

CONGRATULATIONS

MARK KAMIN & ASSOCIATES WAS NAMED 2025 INC. MAGAZINE POWER PARTNER AWARD WINNER!

About Mark Kamin & Associates

Mark Kamin & Associates (MKA) is an international learning and development firm that transforms individual and organizational performance. For over 40 years, MKA has partnered with thousands of leaders and managers to create high-performing cultures where people operate from an empowering context and deliver extraordinary results.

MKA's programs are designed to address the root causes of poor retention, employee engagement, top-line, and bottom-line results. MKA equips leaders and organizations to perform at extraordinary levels of authentic communication/teamwork and build organizational cultures in which a commitment to integrity and honoring accountabilities become essential elements of organizational culture.

With an international team of seasoned program leaders, MKA serves clients across industries and geographies who are ready to elevate their impact, align culture with strategy, and generate lasting transformation.

[Click here](#) to read the press release.

Submitted by EWI Member

Representative

Christina Hutchinson

<https://ewihouston.org/>

Transforming the world's most impactful
leaders and organizations



Inc.
POWER
PARTNER
2025

Waves of Celebration

**WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST LITTLE SEA STARS!
TWO NEW BUNDLES OF JOY HAVE ARRIVED, AND WE COULDN'T BE
HAPPIER. HELP US WELCOME THE NEWEST MEMBERS OF THE EWI FAMILY!**

MILLER ADELE MORGAN

BORN: 12/01/2025

22" LONG & 9 LBS, 2 OZ

GRANDCHILD TO DONNA GURNEY, PAST PRESIDENT



RADLEY LYNN MCPHERSON

BORN: 11/14/25

18" LONG

5 LBS, 5 OZ

**GRANDCHILD TO ELLEN RAMSEY,
EXECUTIVE; LET IT FLY EVENTS**



Have something to celebrate?! We'd love to share it. Email Victoria Maldonado at vmaldonado@harvestmidstream.com

<https://ewihouston.org/>

From EWI of
Houston Chapter

Season's Greetings
and
Happy Holidays

From EWJ of Houston Chapter

Sending shimmering New Year wishes from our EWJ shore to yours! May 2026 roll in with peaceful tides, bold waves of wisdom, and refreshing sea breezes of change to carry you into your next adventure.

Happy
New Year!

CURRENTS & HIGHLIGHTS

DECEMBER MEETING RECAP

December 9 , 2026 - Houston Country Club

Our December meeting at the Houston Country Club was truly something special. The venue was beautifully decorated in full Christmas spirit — twinkling lights, festive touches everywhere, and a cozy holiday atmosphere that set the perfect backdrop for our end-of-year gathering.

We enjoyed a delicious meal (the food was truly bomb), and had the pleasure of welcoming Officer Reyes from HPD and his wife Laura as our special guests. He joined us to share updates on the Blue Santa program and the changes coming to this long-standing community tradition. In the spirit of giving, our members brought gifts and collectively donated \$600 in cash and an estimated value of \$500+ in unwrapped toys to support the cause — such a wonderful show of generosity. As a sweet surprise, we were also gifted Christmas ornaments to take home, a fun little keepsake from the evening.

And of course, we couldn't end the night without celebrating Cindy Baker's birthday, adding even more joy to an already heartwarming event.

A lovely, festive, and meaningful way to wrap up the year with our EWI family!



-Amy Herod, Harvest Midstream



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CURRENTS & HIGHLIGHTS DECEMBER MEETING



Barbara Stokes, Amegy Bank; Bill Stokes, Guest; & Cindy Baker, Black Haw Group



Delynn Walker
Sustaining Member



Anna Bryant, H-E-B
Courtney Castellanos, LAN Inc



Ellen Ramsey, Executive, Let It Fly Events



Blue Santa Gift Donations



Lily Portales
Hilcorp Energy Company



Officer Reyes, Guest
HPD - Blue Santa



EWI of Houston presents a check to Officer Reyes for HPD Blue Santa

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CURRENTS & HIGHLIGHTS

DECEMBER MEETING RECAP



Shannon McNair, The Rose
Carole Pitts
Martha Turner Sotheby's International Realty



Cindy Stokes Baker, Past President



Blue Santa Gift Donations



Officer Reyes, Guest
Laura Reyes, Guest



Kathy Neal, Shell Trading Supplies
Patti Strawther, James J. Postl Interests



LaTonya Perez, The Rose
Anna Grace Perez, Guest

Group Picture: Ellen Ramsey, Let It Fly Events; Mary Margaret Carroll, Sustaining Member; Cheri Ferguson, Sustaining Member; Linda Petticrew, Shell Energy Resources



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CURRENTS & HIGHLIGHTS DECEMBER MEETING RECAP



Carole Pitts, Martha Turner Sotheby's International Realty & Lisa Anhauser, Guest



Marilyn DeSimone, Landry's
Cindy Baker, Black Haw Group



Amanda Billstone, The Chifley
Sanela Hasagic, LAN Inc.



Siena Schickel & Cristina Barron
Martha Turner Sotheby's International Realty



Sam Portales, Guest
Lily Portales, Hilcorp Energy Company

Group Picture: (top row) Cheri Ferguson, Sanela Hasagic, (middle row) Mary Margaret Carroll, Ellen Ramsey, (bottom row) Cindy Baker, Barbara Stokes, and Marilyn DeSimone

CURRENTS & HIGHLIGHTS

HOLIDAY SOCIAL

December 17, 2026

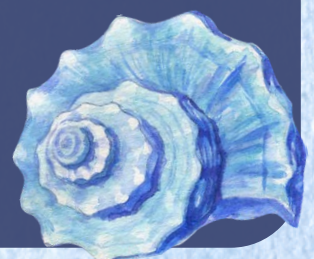
Lily and Sam Portales graciously opened their beautiful home to host EWI of Houston's Holiday Social, creating a warm and festive evening filled with fellowship, laughter, and cheer.

Members enjoyed a delicious spread of food and drinks. Gingerbread houses were constructed and decorated, thank you, Christina Hutchinson for taking one for the Team! Our White Elephant gift exchange was enjoyed outdoors by the fireplace, with Christmas music, warm blankets on a nice cool winter evening. A wonderful night spent connecting with our EWI family, celebrating and "toasting" the season together.

Thank you, Lily, and Sam, for a memorable and joyful evening! Happy Holidays!



-Elisa Garcia, Houston First Corp



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CURRENTS & HIGHLIGHTS

HOLIDAY SOCIAL



Members decorated gingerbread houses. Check out our [Facebook page](#) and vote for your favorite gingerbread house!



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CURRENTS & HIGHLIGHTS

HOLIDAY SOCIAL



Group Picture: Christina Hutchinson, Kay Bart, Lily Portales, Priscilla Massey-Hardy, Linda Petticrew, Patti Strawther, Cindy Joutraw, Isabel McKinney, Elisa Garcia, and Cristina Barron

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CURRENTS & HIGHLIGHTS

DECEMBER POP-UP SOCIALS



The Chifley Hotel Holiday Pop-Up Bar



Holiday fun at Sugar Land Sip and Stroll



Holiday fun at Sugar Land Sip and Stroll



The Chifley Hotel Holiday Pop-Up Bar



Holiday fun at Sugar Land Sip and Stroll



The Chifley Hotel Tinsel Town Holiday Pop-Up Bar

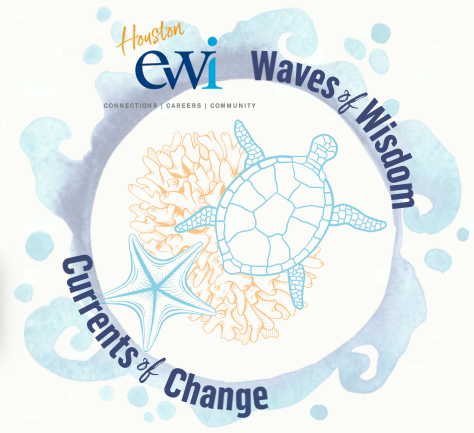


Holiday fun at Sugar Land Sip and Stroll



Pop Up Lunch at Amegy Tower

Our members caught the wave of the holiday season! From spontaneous sips at The Chifley to sweet holiday strolls — our members made the most of December with pop-up socials all over town! Cheers to connection, community, and end-of-year fun.



CURRENTS OF GROWTH

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



THE CURRENT EXCHANGE

Webinar: "The Anti-Resolution Reset: A New Way to Begin the Year"

Hosted by: Krysta Pogge -Transformational Coach

Date: January 21, 2025

Time: 12:00pm CT

 [Register Here](#) for this EWI Professional Development Webinar



THE CYBER CURRENT

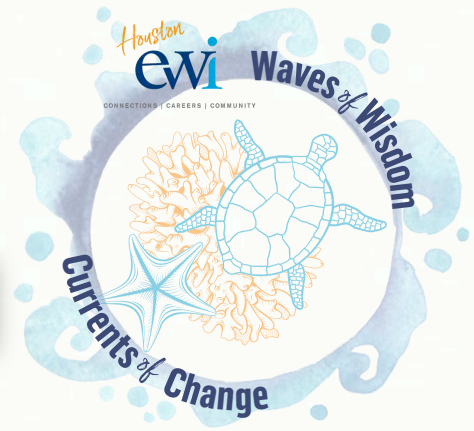
Top Tech Tips for the End of the Year

1. Clean up files, desktop, and downloads
2. Update passwords and enable two-factor authentication
3. Install all device and app updates
4. Back up documents and photos to the cloud
5. Unsubscribe and clean out your email inbox
6. Run a security audit across accounts
7. Restart devices and clear browser cache
8. Remove unused apps and software
9. Check battery health on devices



CURRENTS OF REFLECTION

"How did EWI help you end your year strong.."



CURRENTS OF GROWTH

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



CURRENTS OF CONVERSATION

Podcast: "ReThinking: Shonda Rhimes on saying yes to what scares you" (**Worklife with Adam Grant**)

 [Listen Here](#)



CURRENT READS

Read: "Why 'Daily-ish' habits can be better than everyday routines" (**Fast Company**)

 [Read It Here](#)

Visit the [EWI Corporate site](#) for [past professional development webinars](#).

 [Click Here](#)



KEEP THE CURRENT FLOWING

Help us grow the wave of wisdom! If you have a resource, article, or insight worth sharing email Victoria Maldonado at

[**vmaldonado@harvestmidstream.com**](mailto:vmaldonado@harvestmidstream.com)



THE CYBER CURRENT

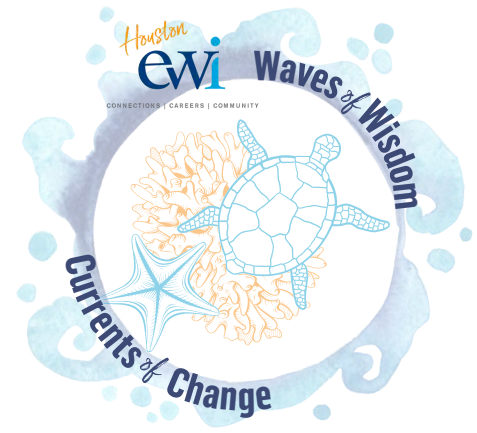
There's a new round of spam emails, text and phone calls posing as bank support teams claiming there's fraud on customer accounts and pressure them into sharing login details or verification codes.

Protect yourself!

- Never share passwords or MFA codes
- Contact your bank using a verified number, not links from texts or emails
- Be cautious of urgent messages claiming suspicious activity

<https://ewihouston.org/>

Tides *of* Generosity



**HELP US CREATE A WAVE OF SUPPORT
FOR EWI OF HOUSTON'S BIGGEST
FUNDRAISING EVENT OF THE YEAR!**

PURSES WITH A PURPOSE

Turn fashion into fundraising! Donate new or gently loved designer handbags to add a splash of flair to our event!

Contact: Lily Portales

lily.portales@hilcorp.com



LIQUOR WAGON

Donate unopened liquor, mixers, or chic barware to help us craft a show-stopping cocktail raffle. Every bottle adds to the splash!

Contact: Shari Schiffman

shari.schiffman@elliman



WINE PULL

Help us build an unforgettable wine pull! Donate wine valued at \$25+ or make a tax-deductible cash gift to support premium bottle purchases.

Contact: Patti Strawther

pattistrawther@hotmail.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 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.



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

Corporate Office

Vicki Chapman, EWI

c/o SWBC

9311 San Pedro Avenue, Suite 600

San Antonio, TX 78216

210-321-7535

www.ewiconnect.com



Leadership

Board of Directors



President
Lily Portales
Hilcorp Energy Company
lily.portales@hilcorp.com



President Elect
Elisa Garcia
Houston First Corp
egarcia@houstonfirst.com



Sergeant at Arms
Anna Bryant
H-E-B
bryant.anna@heb.com



Membership Director
Barbara Stokes
Amegy Bank
barbara.stokes@amegybank.com



Secretary/Treasurer
Linda Petticrew
Shell Energy Resources
linda.petticrew@shell.com



Communications Director
Victoria Maldonado
Harvest Midstream
vmaldonado@harvest
midstream.com



Program Director
Isabel McKinney
Hilcorp Energy Company
imckinney@jdhcap.com



Director at Large
Cristina Barron
Martha Turner Sotheby's
International Realty
cristina.barron@sothebys.realty



Advisor & Parliamentarian
Cindy Baker
Black Haw Group LLC
cindyb@blackhawgroup.com



Advisor
Shari Schiffman
Douglas Elliman Real Estate
Shari.Schiffman@elliman.com

Leadership

Committee Chairs



ASIST Committee Chair
Debra Jaime
The Rose
djaime@therose.org



Bylaws Committee Chair
Cindy Joutraw
CenterPoint Energy, Inc.
cindy.joutraw
@centerpointenergy.com



Courtesy Committee Chair
Elisa Garcia
Houston First Corp
elisa.garcia@houstonfirst.com



EWISP Committee Chair
Patti Strawther
James J. Postl Interests
pattistrawther@hotmail.com



Hospitality Committee Chair
Anna Bryant
HEB
bryant.anna@heb.com



Member/ Retention Committee Chair
Carole Pitts
Martha Turner Sotheby's International Realty
Carole.Pitts@sothebys.realty



Nominating Committee Chair
Cindy Baker
Black Haw Group LLC
cindyb@blackhawgroup.com



Philanthropy Committee Chair
Patti McLean
Daikin Comfort Technologies, N.A.
patti.mclean@daikin.comfort.com



Professional Development Committee Chair
Isabel McKinney
Hilcorp Energy Company
imckinney@jdhcp.com



Public Relations & Social Media Chair
Victoria Maldonado
Harvest Midstream
vmaldonado@harvestmidstream.com



Strategic Planning Committee Chair
LaTonya Perez
The Rose
lperez@therose.org



Web Committee Chair
David Jones
D. Jones Photography
studio@djonesphoto.com

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<https://ewihouston.org/>

