

# Houston EWI Connect

April 2022



## From Our President

We just completed our biggest event of the year: Executive Appreciation Night and Annual Fundraiser. What a glorious night it was! After having to cancel in 2020 and then having a much-subdued celebration in 2021, we were finally able to get back together to honor our Executives and to raise money in support of our

Educational and other Philanthropic Endeavors. Thank you to everyone who helped us raise almost \$84,000.

We could not have done this without the tremendous work of our Fundraising Director, Patti Strawther, representing James J. Postl Interests, and her awesome committee. I want to thank each and every one of them for all of their hard work over these past several months as we prepared for this event. In addition, I also want to recognize some of the many others who helped make this night such a success: Cindy Baker, Program Director, representing Black Haw Group; LaTonya Perez, Individual Member; Linda Petticrew, Secretary, representing Shell Energy Resources; Michele Votano, representing Atlantic Relocation Systems; Marji Zamora, representing Speedy Printing Katy Freeway; and especially Craig Howard, Executive of The Ballroom at Bayou Place. Through his generosity in underwriting the entire event this year, all funds collected will go into our BCDP Funds. This was one of the many reasons why The Ballroom at Bayou Place was chosen as the 2022 EWI of Houston Firm of the Year.

All of our hard work does not stop at Executive Appreciation Night. Our ASIST and EWISP Committees along with Director-at-Large, Carole Pitts, representing John Daugherty, Realtors, are in full swing with our Scholarship Applicants. Judging will wrap up at the end of April followed by interviews with our judges.

Each and every one of you should take pride in the fact that you all have played such a vital role in the future of these students and adults. You will have a great impact on helping to shape their educational journey. I could not be prouder to be the President of such a wonderful organization and am so thankful for all of your contributions as we continue our "Stepping Stones to Success".

Shari



2021-2022

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The Rose

#### Program Director

Cindy Baker  
Black Haw Group

# Save the Date!

## ***Thursday, May 12th***

Monthly Chapter Meeting will be held at Sewell Automotive Companies, Inc.

## ***Thursday, June 9th***

Monthly Chapter Meeting honoring Past Presidents will be held at The Forest Club

## ***Thursday, July 14th***

Monthly Chapter Meeting - Location Pending

## ***Friday and Saturday, July 15th – July 16th***

TEXOMA Board Forum in Houston - Hosted by EWI of Houston

## ***Thursday, August 11th***

Annual Scholarship Celebration Night Chapter meeting will be held at Amegy Bank

## ***Thursday, September 8th***

Monthly Chapter Meeting - Annual Business meeting - Location Pending

## ***Thursday - Saturday, September 15<sup>th</sup> – September 17<sup>th</sup>***

Leadership Conference and Annual Meeting (LCAM) - Corpus Christi, Texas

## ***Thursday, October 13th***

Monthly Chapter Meeting - 2022-2023 Installation of Officers - Location Pending

## ***Thursday, November 10th***

Monthly Chapter Meeting will be held at Cyclone Anaya's Woodway

## ***December 8th***

Monthly Chapter Meeting will be held at the Houston Zoo

## *EWI of Houston Executive Appreciation Night and Annual Fundraiser Meeting Recap*

*Submitted by Carole Pitts, representing John Daugherty, Realtors*

The 2022 EWI of Houston Executive Appreciation Night and Annual Fundraiser sure looked and felt like a smashing success! After two l-o-n-g years of the pandemic, being together in a large, festive group was absolutely delightful. Craig Howard, executive of member firm The Ballroom at Bayou Place, generously provided us with the perfect venue for the gala, underwriting the entire event, even including open bar and valet parking.

We had a great deal of support from former EWI reps including Rene Azinger, Katherine Brown, Stephanie Cleary, Naseeka Cox, Donna Gurney, Stephanie Hill-Franco, Patti McLean, Kathy Neal, Bobbie Pritchett and Candace Sanchez among the many guests in attendance.



Executives were well represented, too, with Catherine Lee, Douglas Elliman Real Estate; Myron Blalock, Black Haw Group; Neil Vansant, Atlantic Relocation Systems; Steve Stephens, Amegy Bank; Damir Skerl, Skerl and Associates; Wayne Swafford, Lockwood, Andrews & Newman, Inc.; Paul Kilian, Martha Turner Sotheby's International Realty; Romain Kapadia, Jackson and Company; as well as our very own executives Mary Margaret Carroll, MMC Carroll & Associates; David Jones, D. Jones Photography; and Ellen Ramsey, Let It Fly Events, L.P. were all in attendance.

The "traffic" around the silent auction items was heavy, and people were oohing and aahing over the vast array of really cool items up for auction. Many a "drats, I've been outbid" were heard! While it was certainly exciting to view and bid on the auction items on QTego's website, it did not compare to seeing the items in person. David Jones' Electric Blue Photograph, Michele Votano's Stone Flower, and Sara Waguespack's wreaths were beautiful to behold in person. And the liquor wagon . . . WOW!!!



With all the browsing, bidding, and visiting, it felt like we had only been there a few minutes when the bells told us that it was time to be seated for dinner and the program. The table presentation was beautiful, especially the salads; and what a great idea of having bottles of wine at each table, with the white wine chilling in ice buckets.



Our President, Shari Schiffman, representing Douglas Elliman Real Estate, welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. She shared her theme for 2021-2022, "Stepping Stones to Success," and indeed, everyone had a stone at their place setting with an inspiring word on it. Shari also shared that prior to the gala, EWI of Houston had received almost \$40,000 in monetary donations! Wow! She then invited Craig Howard to the podium. He also welcomed everyone to The Ballroom at Bayou Place and shared with us that he was opening another event space, The Ballroom at Tanglewood, where the former Hess Club was located. His wife, Stephanie Howard, will manage the new location. Shari then called Myron Blalock, Executive of Black Haw Group, to the podium to give our invocation, after which we enjoyed our salads and dinner while she continued the program.

Shari announced the winner of the 2022 EWI of Houston Firm of the Year award. Each year, our Chapter gives this award. It is always an awfully hard decision as all of our firms deserve this honor.

However, the firm that was chosen has definitely gone beyond our expectations. And the winner was . . . The Ballroom at Bayou Place! Craig Howard once again came up to the podium to receive the award.

Paul Kilian, Executive of Martha Turner Sotheby's International Realty, was then called to the stage to speak to the group. Originally from Philadelphia, then residing in New York City for many years, he spoke about his thoughts on his new home of Houston; how he has found that Houston is one of the biggest, small towns there is, and how very generous Houstonians are. Paul said although New York City is certainly generous, Houston has a "quiet" generosity that is unique. He also spoke about Houston's allergy challenges, which is certainly the truth, especially in springtime.





While we had our dessert, Shari recognized our many sponsors, and thanked the auction donors. She then welcomed auctioneer Randy "Col" Davis to conduct our live auction with goodies such as a BMW bicycle, happy hour for 50 on the patio of The Ballroom at Bayou Place (which Craig Howard raised to 100 during the auction), a Rockets luxury suite for 14, the Conoco Phillips Astros suite for 14, a custom firepit, and a pellet BBQ grill and accessories package. The live auction was so exciting, especially when there were bidding wars going on!

Shari then held the raffle for the liquor wagon, and it was won by . . . Patti McLean! I certainly hope she came in a large vehicle, because that wagon was jam-packed full of goodies!

Shari proceeded to explain that at our annual Leadership Conference and Annual Meeting (LCAM), an outstanding small, medium, large, and non-profit firm from the entire EWI international membership is selected and honored. At LCAM 2021 in Albuquerque, two of our member firms were so honored. Congratulations to our outstanding small member firm, Let It Fly Events, L.P., and to our outstanding non-profit firm, The Rose! Very well-deserved!

Shari then concluded the evening by thanking Patti Strawther, representing James J. Postl Interests, our 2021-2022 Fundraising Director and her entire Fundraising Committee. She also thanked President Elect Kay Bart, representing Skerl and Associates; Cindy Baker, representing the Black Haw Group; Marji Zamora, representing Speedy Printing - Katy Freeway; Linda Petticrew, representing Shell Energy Resources Company; Michele Votano, representing Atlantic Relocation Systems; and executives Myron Blalock, Craig Howard, David Jones and Paul Kilian.



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*EWI of Houston Executive Appreciation Night and Annual Fundraiser*



*David Jones, D. Jones Photography*



*Cindy Joutraw, CenterPoint Energy,  
Steve Joutraw, Guest*



*Larry Wesley, Guest & Javi Perez, Guest*



*Patti McLean, Guest & Bobbie Pritchett, Guest*

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*EWI of Houston Executive Appreciation Night and Annual Fundraiser*



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



*Jonon Wilson, Guest,  
Cherri Ferguson, Sustaining Member*



*Margo Faulkner, Sewell Automotive,  
LaTonya Perez, Individual Member*



*Lindsey Duhon, Harvest Midstream,  
Shaneka Young, Guest*

*EWI of Houston Executive Appreciation Night and Annual Fundraiser*



*Thank You to Our Generous Sponsors*

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SILVER SPONSORS



JAMES J. POSTL  
INTERESTS

DIANA SKERL

BRONZE SPONSORS



*Rosanna &  
Myron Blalock*



CRYSTAL SPONSORS

*Cheri Ferguson  
in honor of Ed Ferguson*



SKERL & ASSOCIATES



**Sterling**

SPECIAL THANKS



*Mary & Paul Wilson*



## ***EWI of Houston Executive Appreciation Night and Annual Fundraiser***

### ***Thank you to our Auction Donors***

Abejas Boutique  
ACT Pipe & Supply  
Al's Handmade Boots  
Avenida Brazil Churrascaria Steakhouse  
Backyard Pitmasters  
Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation  
Barbara Stokes  
Beverly & Jim Postl  
Blue Domino Designs  
Bodyworks Salon and Spa  
Brenda Meadows, Stagecoach Retreat  
Bryan Graves, Graves Mechanical  
Carolyn Toriggino  
CenterPoint Energy  
Cheri Ferguson  
Chuy's  
Cindy Joutraw  
ConocoPhillips  
Courtney & Robin Castellanos  
Crisp Wine Beer Eatery  
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Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion  
D. Jones Photography  
Darlene's Flower and Gift Shop  
Downtown Club at the Met  
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Holocaust Museum Houston  
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Kendra Scott  
Kevin Hutchison, Hill Country Flyfishers  
Kori Peters  
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Landry's, Inc. - Downtown Aquarium  
Laurenzos Restaurants  
Let It Fly Events, L.P.  
Lisa Blackwood  
Lone Star Flight Museum  
Marji Zamora  
Martha & Dan Ceballos  
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Patti & Tom Strawther  
Priscilla Massey  
Robin Jackson Photography  
Salon Vendome  
Sara Waguespack  
Shannon McNair  
Shari Schiffman  
Speedy Printing—Katy Freeway  
Stephanie Gusmeri  
Taste of Texas  
The Ballroom at Bayou Place  
The Hobby Center Foundation  
Three Brothers Bakery  
Total Wine & More  
Westpark Communications, L.P.  
William Cole Winery  
WTSO Wines Til Sold Out  
*As of print deadline*



# ***EWI of Houston Executive Appreciation Night and Annual Fundraiser***

*A Heart-felt and Sincere Thank You  
for Your Generosity*

Alcohol/Food/Valet/Venue  
**The Ballroom at Bayou Place**

Auctioneer  
**Randy “Col.” Davis**

Audio/Visual  
**Allshow Events, Inc.**

Executive Recognition Presentation  
**Linda Petticrew, Shell Energy Resources Company**

Floral/Linens/Décor  
**Kirksey Gregg Productions**

Photography  
**David Jones, D. Jones Photography**

Program and Invitation Design and Printing  
**Marji Zamora, Speedy Printing—Katy Freeway**

Save the Date Preparation and Printing  
**Cheryl Gilcrease, Main Street Marketing, Center, Texas**

Transportation of Auction Items  
**Atlantic Relocation Systems**

## *Fundraising Committee*

A special thank you to the members of the EWI of Houston Fundraising Committee for your commitment and dedication.

Additionally, thank you to the employers, co-workers, significant others and families for allowing them the time required to assure the success of this event.

You are all appreciated!

Patti Strawther  
Fundraising Director  
James J. Postl Interests

Barbara Stokes  
Amegy Bank

Craig Howard  
The Ballroom at Bayou Place

Martha Ceballos  
ELP Enterprises, Inc.,  
dba MC Business Products

Michele Votano  
Atlantic Relocation Systems

Lindsey Duhon  
Harvest Midstream

Liz Palacios  
Hilcorp Energy Company

Shannon McNair  
The Rose

Debra Crabtree  
Westpark Communications

Priscilla Massey  
Past President,  
Sustaining Member

Barbara Camino  
Sustaining Member

Carolyn Toriggino  
Sustaining Member



## ***EWI of Houston Executive Appreciation Night and Annual Fundraiser Report***

***Submitted by Patti Strawther, representing James J. Postl Interests***

### ***\$83,692.50 RAISED FOR THE 2022 EXECUTIVE APPRECIATION NIGHT AND ANNUAL FUNDRAISER!!!***

**\$39,497.50 Funds/Sponsorships** received, or committed, as of April 6th include:

- \$25,000 Silver Level Sponsorship (\$5k ea.): H-E-B, Harvest Midstream, Hilcorp, James J. Postl Interests, Diana Skerl
- \$7,500 Bronze Level Sponsorship (\$2,500) Amegy Bank, Rosanna & Myron Blalock, Douglas Elliman Real Estate
- \$5,000 Crystal Level Sponsorship (\$1k ea.) Cheri Ferguson in honor of Ed Ferguson, Martha Turner Sotheby's International Realty, Skerl & Associates, Speedy Printing Katy Freeway, Sterling
- \$1,700 Other Level Sponsorship: Dan & Denise Domeracki (\$500), Lockwood, Andrews & Newnam (\$500), Mary Wilson (\$500), Anonymous (\$200)
- \$297.50 Credit Card Fees sponsored (Domeracki, Ferguson, D. Skerl, Speedy Printing, Sterling)

**\$12,250 Live Auction** – 6 Items. The Happy Hour donated by The Ballroom at Bayou Place for 50 people, was increased to 100 people during the live auction. High bidder, Rosanna & Myron Blalock, generously donated the certificate back to EWI to use at a future event!

**\$20,105 Silent Auction** – 80 Items

**\$625 Give** - \$600 via Qtego donation request (Stephanie Cleary, Paul Kilian, William Stokes, and Melanie Gutierrez) and \$25 donation upon Registration (Tara Lawrence)

**\$4,315 Instabuy** (Wine Pull - \$2,175, Liquor Wagon Raffle - \$1,700, Centerpieces - \$440)

**\$6,900 Tickets** (As stated on the S-A-A Report but included in totals here for an overall amount raised since The Ballroom at Bayou Place was the underwriter, and all funds go towards BCDP.)

The evening was successful in every aspect, and it could not have been done without the sponsors, donors, bidders, and those who assisted in collecting auction items leading up to the event. So many people went above and beyond to make the event successful. Special gratitude to Craig Howard at The Ballroom at Bayou Place for underwriting the event and offering wonderful ideas to the Fundraising Committee, such as the stairway recognition and the scholarship winners display boxes. Mary Margaret Carroll for reaching out to former executives and member firms to engage their support of EWI. The awesome set up crew to make it look spectacular, as well as those who assisted with the checkout process included Atlantic Relocation Systems, Cindy Baker, Debra Crabtree, Craig Howard, Priscilla Massey, Shannon McNair, LaTonya Perez, Linda Petticrew, Shari & Bill Schiffman, Barbara Stokes, Michele Votano, and Marji Zamora.

Also special thanks to Marji Zamora and Speedy Printing Katy Freeway for working with me on the countless versions of the program, menu sheet, donation cards, invitations, and gift card labels. You were always so gracious and a true pleasure to work with on this project. And finally, my sister, Cheryl Gilcrease, with Main Street Marketing in Center, Texas, for helping me when I was in a pinch to get the initial Save The Date and sponsor/donor letter and forms out to the executives in a timely manner.

There were a number of items that were bid on from people not attending the event and distribution of those auction items is almost complete.

*EWI of Houston Executive Appreciation Night and Annual Fundraiser*



*Marcia Zelinsky, Guest, Priscilla Massy, Past President, Kay Bart, Skerl & Associates, Mary Sue Patronella, Sustaining Member*



*Deborah Jones, CenterPoint Energy, Candice Sanchez, Guest*



*Sara Waguespack, Sustaining Member, Carole Pitts, John Daugherty, Realtors*



*Craig Howard. The Ballroom at Bayou Place, Stephanie Howard, Guest*

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## *EWI of Houston Executive Appreciation Night and Annual Fundraiser*



*Mary Margaret Carroll, MMCarroll & Associates,  
Henry Palacios, Guest, Liz Palacios, Hilcorp,  
Vikki Bevers, Guest*



*Shannon Lecoq, The Rose,  
Shannon McNair, The Rose*



*Michele Votano, Atlantic Relocation Systems,  
Neil Vansant, Atlantic Relocation Systems*



*Kay Bart, Skerl & Associates,  
Kristin Hatteberg, Guest*