



From Our President

July has been a month of emotions. So many of us have been touched by one of Texas' greatest tragedies. Whether you lost a family member, friend, related to a first responder, or are a team member on a disaster relief team. The hill country flood touched so many of us in so many different ways, but in ways that cut deep. I know for me, I have hugged my loved ones and friends a little tighter. So many of our members have had personal tragedies and trials this past year, that have tested us in various ways. My heart goes out to each and every one of you!

July also brought a celebration of our scholarship winners. We had so many great ASIST and EWISP winners to support this year! We will have more details on our winners in our August newsletter. I promise you will hear their names in the future!

TEXOMA was amazing, the Tulsa chapter did a great job capturing the spirit of what TEXOMA was created for. There was a lot of professional development, along with self-reflection, networking, and bonding with like-minded women. New friends were made, and old friends were enjoyed!

There is still so much more coming this year. I am inspired every day by the amazing women I have the pleasure to collaborate with! We work hard today to build for the future.

Working Together to make the Magic Happen!

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.

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Anna Bryant

HEB

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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!

Wednesday, August 27

August Professional Development Webinar: Having Hard Discussions with
Charles Heasley

September 17th - 20th

2025 LCAM - Leadership Conference and Annual Meeting in Houston



Scan For
Event Calendar



REGISTRATION IS OPEN!



REGISTER NOW!

LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE & ANNUAL MEETING

HYATT REGENCY HOUSTON WEST
September 17–20, 2025 | Houston, TX



<https://ewiconnect.com/page/lcam2025>



Houston
ewiConnect

Celebrate!

Representative Birthdays

July

- 03 - Carolyn Noack
- 14 - Jean Hunt, Past President
- 23 - Deborah Jones
- 30 - Sara Waguespack

August

- 02 - LaTonya Perez, Past President
- 10 - Christina Hutchinson
- 12 - Elisa Garcia
- 16 - Katherine Brown, Past President
- 19 - Priscilla Hardy, Past President
- 23 - Carolyn Toriggino
- 27 - Victoria Maldonado
- 27 - Rebekah Wesley, Past President
- 28 - Amanda Billstone
- 31 - Linda Petticrew, Past President

The background of the slide is a light blue surface decorated with various party items including colorful balloons (red, pink, purple, blue, yellow), gift boxes wrapped in matching colors with ribbons, and party hats. There are also scattered confetti dots in various colors. The text is centered and reads: "Houston ewiConnect Celebrate! Member Firm Anniversaries".

Houston
ewiConnect
Celebrate!

Member Firm Anniversaries

July

- 2000 Atlantic Relocation Systems
- 2018 Black Haw Group LLC
- 2016 The Rose

August

- 2014 ELP Enterprises, Inc., dba MC Business Products
- 2023 Experience Houston
- 2024 GGT Worldwide

Membership

Current Membership:

36 Member Firms
42 Representatives
11 Sustaining Members
3 Honorary Members
as of July 17, 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>



Membership

SALES SALE

NEW MEMBERSHIP PROMOTION

**BUY ONE GET ONE
50% OFF**

JOIN TODAY: PAY YOUR CHAPTER FEES AND GET
HALF OFF THE CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP FEES
FOR YOUR 1ST YEAR.

(SALE DATES: MAY 1, 2025 - AUG. 31, 2025)



SALES SALE

1/2 OFF CORPORATE FEES

Meeting Recap

June 12, 2025

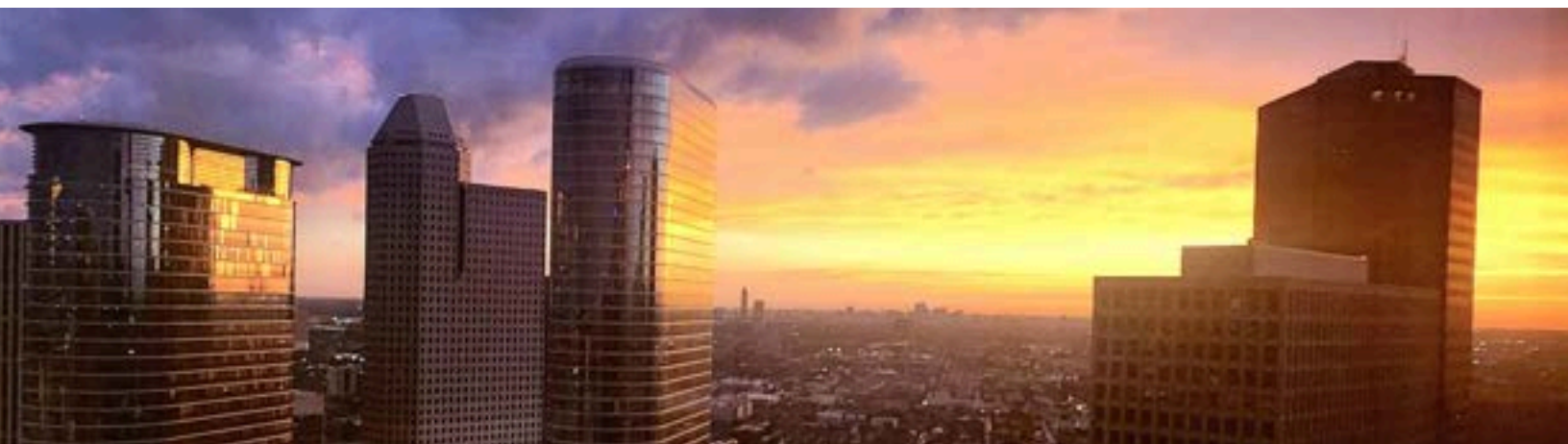
Honoring Past Presidents & Business Meeting The Petroleum Club

On June 12, members and guests of EWI Houston gathered at the elegant Petroleum Club to celebrate the legacy of our Past Presidents. The evening featured breathtaking views of the Houston skyline at sunset, adding a special glow to the occasion.

Anna Bryant, representative of member firm H-E-B, was awarded the 2025 Past President Award for her exceptional dedication and service to EWI of Houston. From coordinating countless in-kind donations to supporting multiple committees behind the scenes, Anna has consistently gone above and beyond—embodying the spirit of servant leadership and strengthening the mission of EWI through every act of generosity.

A special thank you to David Jones of D. Jones Photography for capturing updated professional headshots for our members during the event.

It was an evening of connection, reflection, and appreciation—a true celebration of our past and the bright future ahead.





Lily Portales, Hilcorp; Cindy Baker, Black Haw Group LLC



LaTonya Perez, The Rose; Cindy Baker, Black Haw Group LLC



Anna Bryant, HEB and
Past President Representative of the Year



Past Presidents: LaTonya Perez, Shari Shiffman, Jessica Sebesta,
Linda Petticrew, Cindy Baker, Carolyn Noack, Priscilla Hardy, Kay Bart



Fun Door Prize!



Monthly Meeting at The Petroleum Club

Meeting Recap

June 14, 2025

EWI Pillowcase Project Benefiting Child Advocates



In early 2025 the Philanthropy Committee, chaired by Elisa Garcia representing Houston First, met and the consensus was to coordinate a pillowcase project benefiting Child Advocates after following the successful event in 2023. I volunteered to organize this event again and began reaching out for volunteers, purchasing and collecting donated fabrics and supplies, and getting things ready for the Sew Day on Saturday, June 14, 2025. Stephanie and Craig Howard graciously provided space at The Ballroom at Tanglewood where 207 handcrafted pillowcases were made and donated to Child Advocates. The pillowcases were made using a variety of themes that appeal to children from toddler to teenager. Ashley Zustovich, representing Child Advocates, spoke to the group of volunteers explaining what Child Advocates does for the children within the foster care system. She also said many times children are removed from their residence, or moved from one foster home to another, without anything to transport their personal belongings. She explained these pillowcases are provided to the child for their keepsake and use and will not only serve as intended as a pillowcase but can also be a way to carry their personal items. Stephanie later shared a picture of the sweet baby girl she is currently assigned as the child's advocate.

We had 29 volunteers, which some were using sergers or rotary cutters for the first time. There were several “stations” set up and everyone did an outstanding job getting the pillowcases through each phase of creating a fun and lovely pillowcase. Many volunteers learned a new task and jumped right in after a brief instruction. We are grateful for the experienced sewers who came in from East Texas to assist with this project and helped to guide the volunteers.

It was an enjoyable day, and you could hear comments such as “oh, I love this fabric”, “this one is my favorite”, “look how cute”. Throughout the day we had drawings for door prizes to keep the fun energy going, and incredible boxed lunches and snacks were provided by H-E-B thanks to Anna Bryant. Lisa Anheiser brought some of her specialty blend coffee to share with the group and keep the caffeine flowing. Each volunteer also received a thank you gift box filled with candy and could take a pattern home to continue making pillowcases from themselves. David Jones, representing D Jones Photography, joined us later in the day to capture the event and group photos.

Of course, upon conclusion we needed to have a “Ta-Da” toast for a job well done with the mimosas provided by The Ballroom at Tanglewood.

This was a successful philanthropy project, and many have already said they hoped we do it again.

With gratitude for those who donated items for the door prizes, fabrics, food, and accommodations:

Lisa Anheiser, Cindy Baker, Brenda Bishop, Anna Bryant, Mary Margaret Carroll, Leanna Davis, Cheri Ferguson, Nancy Fredo, Elisa Garcia, H-E-B, David Jones, Needle Niche, Kori Peters, Ellen Ramsey, Kristin Skille, Patti Strawther, Tea Time Quilting, The Ballroom at Tanglewood, Teena Widner

By: Patti Strawther, Representing James J. Postl Interests

Easy Pillowcase

Using the "Burrito" Method



MATERIALS

1. 27" x Width of Fabric rectangle for the main piece
2. 9" x Width of Fabric rectangle for the cuff
3. 2" x Width of Fabric for the accent strip; press in half lengthwise to make a 1"-wide folded strip

MAKING THE PILLOWCASE

STEP 1

Layer the fabric as follows:

- Place the 9" x Width of Fabric (cuff piece) right side up.
- Place the 1"-wide folded accent strip on top of the cuff piece along a long edge so that the raw edges are aligned.
- Place the 27" x Width of Fabric (body) right side down, aligning it with the raw edges of the first two pieces. NOTE: if it is directional fabrics ensure the design is facing correctly.
- Pin the pieces together.



2

Starting at the bottom, roll the main fabric into "burrito" (tube). Stop near the center of the cuff piece.



3

- Take the layered cuff edge fabric and bring it up over the burrito.
- Align with the raw edges of the main fabric (right sides together) and pin all layers together.
- Sew or serge a $\frac{3}{4}$ " seam allowance along the pinned edge to form a tube.





Ashley Zustovich, Child Advocates



Shari Schiffman, Douglas Elliman Real Estate



Lisa Anheiser, Volunteer



Leanna Davis, Dianna Lowe, Cindy Baker, Patti Strawther, Nancy Fredo, Brenda Bishop, Cheryl Gilcrease



Showing off our pillowcases!



Everyone has a job!

Meeting Recap

June 21, 2025

The Rose Shrimp Boil

The Rose, an EWI of Houston Member Firm, hosted its 36th Annual Shrimp Boil and raised \$173,222 to support its mission, including \$400 donated by EWI of Houston, with additional donations still coming in.

The Boots & Bling theme lit up the night with big smiles, spirited auctions, and a crowd-favorite Dolly Parton Look-Alike contest. EWI representatives Shannon McNair and LaTonya Perez—Past President of EWI of Houston—helped lead the festivities with the support of a dedicated committee and volunteer team. Nine of our EWI representatives attended in person to show their strong support for The Rose and its mission. Some of our members helped with the kid's zone, setup, and the auction.

One powerful moment came when a quilt donated in 2018 was re-auctioned. After learning it was the only surviving quilt made by former Rose patient Sarah McCormack, the winning bidders returned it to her family. The story touched everyone present and underscored the impact of community and generosity.

Congratulations to The Rose and all who made the event a success!



Shannon McNair and Latonya Perez, The Rose



Dr. Carmen Herrera and Family;
Javi Perez; Kay Bart, Skerl & Associates; Tom
Strawther, Patti Strawther, James J. Postl Interests



LaTonya Perez, The Rose; Barbara Stokes, Amegy Bank
Cheri Ferguson; Mary Margaret Carroll; Sustaining Members
Bill Stokes; Cindy Baker, Black Haw Group



LaTonya Perez, The Rose; Cindy Baker, Black Haw Group;
Anny Bryant, HEB; Shannon McNair, The Rose

Meeting Recap

Texoma 2025

On July 11–12, 2025, Houston Chapter members Cindy Baker, Elisa Garcia, Lily Portales, and LaTonya Perez traveled to Tulsa, Oklahoma, to attend the Executive Women International Texoma Board Forum, hosted at Hotel Indigo. This annual gathering brought together chapter leaders from across the Texoma region for two days of networking, professional development, and sharing best practices.

The program featured engaging sessions including Unlocking Potential: Emotional Intelligence in Leadership with Danelle Newnam, a corporate leadership perspective panel, and strategies for member recruitment and retention from Sarah Alfred and Amy Henderson. Attendees also learned about nonprofit fundraising with Amanda Grace and gained valuable insights into newsletters, standing rules, and strategic planning from Jody Davis, Past President of EWI of Tulsa.

In addition to the educational sessions, the Forum provided opportunities to connect with fellow EWI leaders, exchange ideas, and strengthen relationships within the region. The Houston delegation returned inspired, equipped with fresh ideas and practical tools to further enhance our chapter's success.

The Tulsa Chapter did a fantastic job hosting the event from the happy hour on the rooftop of Hotel Indigo to dinner at Isla's Kitchen. We are grateful for the opportunity to represent Houston and look forward to applying what we learned to continue advancing the mission of EWI in our community, careers, and connections! We celebrated our strengths and unleashed our potential!





Kathy Scott, EWI President; Lori Heerlyn, EWI of Tulsa;
LaTonya Perez, The Rose; Cindy Baker, Black Haw Group



Lily Portales, Hilcorp; Cindy Baker, Black Haw Group



Elisa Garcia, Houston First Corporation;
Lily Portales, Hilcorp



Cindy Baker, Black Haw Group; Kathy Scott, EWI President



Cindy Baker, Black Haw Group;
LaTonya Perez, The Rose



Even the skies are fun when this group gets together!

Professional Development

August Professional Development Webinar: Having Hard Discussions with Charles Heasley.

Charles Heasley is passionate about leadership development. A former police sergeant, he founded Blue Lion Leadership, helping hundreds of leaders each year boost results and reduce workplace issues. He holds a Master's in Executive Leadership from Liberty University, where he's a doctoral candidate, and is a certified coach and emotional intelligence practitioner. Charles is also a husband, cat dad, guitarist, and red wine enthusiast.

When: August 27, 2025 Noon CST

Where: <https://ewiconnect.zoom.us/j/83344094253>
United States

Contact: Shelby Gifford
ewi@ewiconnect.com
262-269-5625



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 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.



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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.

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Hundreds of brands, hundreds of ways to earn



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

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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
Black Haw Group LLC
cindyb@blackhawgroup.com



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



Secretary
Courtney Castellanos
Lockwood, Andrews &
Newnam, Inc.
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Treasurer
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Fundraising Director
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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
Hilcorp Energy Company
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EWISP Committee Chair
Linda Petticrew
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Hospitality Committee
Chair
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Member/ Retention
Committee Chair
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Nominating Committee
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The Rose
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Philanthropy Committee
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Professional
Development
Committee Chair
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Public Relations/ Social
Media Committee Chair
Lisa Diaz
Metromarketing
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Strategic Planning
Committee Chair
Kay Bart
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Web Committee Chair
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Communications

Connect with EWI Houston!



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<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.

