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# NORTHEAST NEWS

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## NEWS NOTES

### Griner trial in Russia update

Houston native and Nimitz graduate Brittney Griner, a WNBA star basketball player, remains in a Russian jail after her third day of trial last Thursday. She has pleaded guilty to a minor drug charge, and the third day of her trial consisted of character witnesses. US officials were present at the proceedings.

She has been able to communicate with her family, wife, and President Biden through written out emails and letters.

Her next day in court is July 26th. Experts say her conviction is almost certain, with imprisonment for up to 10 years, unless the US is able to bargain for her release.



DURING THE TRIAL, GRINER IS IN A CAGE. IN THIS PHOTO, SHE HOLDS A PHOTO OF USA ALL-STAR PLAYERS WEARING HER NUMBER IN SUPPORT.

## City, County join in Gun BuyBack program

HOUSTON - As part of his One Safe Houston initiative, Mayor Sylvester Turner is holding a Gun Buyback program to reduce the number of guns on our streets. The City - County Partnership will reduce the number of Unwanted Guns on our streets.

To make Houston's homes and streets safer and free from violence, Harris County Commissioner Rodney Ellis, Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner's Office and Police Chief Troy Finner announce a gun buyback program that will take place July 30. With no questions asked, residents can turn in firearms in exchange for gift cards in the amount of \$50, \$100, \$150 and \$200 - depending on the type of gun. It's part of a coordinated effort to reduce violent crimes.

The event, in partnership with Harris County



Precinct One Commissioner Rodney Ellis, the Houston Police Department, and Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church, will take place from 8 a.m. - noon on Saturday, July 30, at 3826 Wheeler Ave.

Gift Cards will be available as follows:

\$50 Gift Card for non-functioning firearm

\$100 Gift Card for rifles or shotguns

\$150 Gift Card for handgun

\$200 Gift Card for an automatic rifle

The no-questions-asked Gun Buyback program is open to all members of the public. People should unload the firearm before arriving at the collection site

and place it in the trunk or the rear of their vehicle. HPD personnel will remove the gun from the vehicle and ensure the firearm is unloaded and rendered safe. Once the weapon is collected, the person donating will receive a receipt to exchange for a gift card.

One Safe Houston is a \$53 million investment aimed at crime reduction. The comprehensive violence reduction initiatives link research-based strategies to improve public safety and reduce the harms caused by violent crime.

The initiative focuses on four (4) key areas:

- Violence Reduction and Crime Prevention
  - Crisis Intervention, Response and Recovery
  - Youth Outreach Opportunities
  - Key Community Partnerships
- Mayor Turner, Commis-

sioner Ellis, and event partners will announce additional Gun Buyback program details on Monday, July 18.

"We can't solve the gun-violence epidemic overnight, but we can take action right-now by removing guns from the streets," Commissioner Ellis said. "Gun buyback programs create an incentive for residents to turn in their firearms. I would argue there are two incentives: one is a gift card, the other is creating a safer community."

Said Mayor Turner: "The Gun Buyback program is part of my One Safe Houston initiative. Our goal is to get unwanted guns off the streets to prevent their use in a crime or an accidental shooting. I thank Commissioner Ellis, Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church, and

*Continued. See Gun BuyBack, Page 2*

## Garcia at White House Workforce Summit

### Comm. Garcia's Employ2Empower program recognized

Harris County, TX — Wednesday, July 13, Commissioner Adrian Garcia traveled to the White House to discuss the A R P A - f u n d e d Employ2Empower county-wide homeless workforce

initiative, which originally began as a pilot program in Precinct 2. Commissioner Garcia joined Vice President Kamala Harris, Secretary of Labor Marty Walsh, plus other officials from around the country for a series of events to discuss EMPLOY2EMPOWER.

Commissioner Garcia gave prepared remarks at 11:40 a.m. CST, and he

was available for interviews (in both English and Spanish) starting at approximately 12:30 p.m. CST.

The White House Summit on the American Rescue Plan and Workforce with Vice President Harris was held on July 13 in

*Continued. See Garcia at White House Summit, Page 2*



Harris County Pct. 2 Commissioner Adrian Garcia, second from right, participated in the Workforce Summit of the American Rescue Plan. The discussion and presentation was live streamed throughout the nation. Above, panel members are welcomed to the discussion by White House American Rescue Plan Coordinator Gene Sperling.

## Lone Star College's Law Enforcement Academy hosted at East Aldine campus



Twelve cadets began the full-time Law Enforcement Academy program on June 8 as the inaugural class at Lone Star College-East Aldine Center.

HOUSTON (July 12, 2022) – The Law Enforcement Academy is currently enrolling for this fall's program to train the next generation of cadets for careers as Texas peace officers.

Beginning in October, the 11-month, part-time program at Lone Star College-East Aldine Center provides cadets with a significant amount of skills-based training, including driving, firearms, emergency medical assistance, arrest and control tactics,

and de-escalation training. "Chancellor Dr. Steve Head was attempting to find a somewhat central location in the Lone Star College System and in an area with tremendous community support," said Law Enforcement Academy Director Glenn Riddle when asked about LSC-East Aldine Center being selected to host the program. "East Aldine seemed to be the perfect fit! We also needed to place the program at a campus

where the campus president supports this Continuing Education program. Lone Star College-North Harris President Dr. Archie Blanson is the right leader to work in collaboration with the Continuing Education division."

All prospective students must attend an information session before enroll

*Continued. See LSC Law Enforcement Academy, Page 2*

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SCHOOL NEWS PAGE

Aldine ISD Alumni News: Grad, Current UHD Student Named 2022 Newman Civic Fellow



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**ALDINE ISD GRADUATES:  
I'M MAKING A *Difference***

**Kayla Mazariego**



Kayla Mazariego desires to address issues of injustice and inequality

As a child, Kayla Mazariego was always told to mind her tongue and behave like a lady in certain instances. However, she realized her voice has always been her most powerful tool, and she is using it to make a difference in the world. The University of Houston-Downtown featured Kayla in a UHD News story.

Below are excerpts from that article written by Sheryl E. Taylor.

Kayla was named a 2022-2023 Newman Civic Fellow by the Boston-based non-profit Campus Compact, which works to advance the public purposes of higher education. The organization selected 173 student civic leaders from 38 states, Washington, D.C., and Mexico, for this year's cohort.

Her family settled in Houston by way of California's San Fernando Valley and Atlanta, Georgia. The third-year, first-generation created a social media platform to address gangs, domestic violence, drug use, political polarization, and inequality. Before attending UHD, she graduated from Davis High School (Class of 2020) in Aldine ISD.

She continues to use her voice in her community and alongside her peers at UHD to address issues such as social inequalities and voting rights. As a University's Honors Program member, Kayla worked on an honors research project with UHD's Dr. Judith Harris. They looked at lowering the recidivism rate at halfway houses, which she presented at this year's UHD Student Research Conference.

Kayla is majoring in criminal justice with a minor in political science.

Her mentor Harris had only a few words to describe her mentee, "She's absolutely brilliant," said the Associate Professor of Criminal Justice.

The 20-year-old's community activism began with volunteering at homeless shelters.

"I know what it's like to be homeless, and I want to give back to the

community that has so graciously helped me in my time of need," said Kayla. "As a college student, I enjoy educating my peers on civic matters, why it's so important to exercise our constitutional right to vote."

A few areas Kayla is passionate about are human rights and equality, such as Black Lives Matter and women's rights.

After graduation, she plans to set her childhood dreams into motion: joining the FBI.

"I was never able to help myself as a child, and now I want the opportunity to help others who can't help themselves, especially those affected by sex trafficking. I want to make a difference," shared Kayla.

According to the story, Kayla is the first criminal justice major to be nominated and named a Newman Civic Fellowship.

"My life has afforded me a lot of firsts ... first daughter, first granddaughter, and first female to be born in my family. I know where I belong and that I was meant for something much more than merely existing."

"Kayla is a passionate and exceptional leader with a strong voice," UHD President Loren J. Blanchard said in his recommendation letter for Kayla. "She inspires those around her with her energy and constant drive for success. Despite her upbringing, Kayla is unafraid to take on challenges and make a difference in the world."

The Newman Civic Fellowship recognizes and supports community-committed students who are change-makers and public problem-solvers at Campus Compact member institutions. The yearlong program provides the cohort of Fellows training and resources that nurture their assets and passions and develops strategies for social change. Fellows are nominated by college presidents or chancellors based on their potential for public leadership. The fellowship is named after Campus Compact co-founder Frank Newman.

Aldine ISD Summer School Sees Integration from FACE at the Primary Campuses



FACE Liaisons from left to right, Gina Mann, Magdalena Ruiz, Cynthia Aguilera, Charlotte Wynn, Jodi Angen

On June 30, Aldine ISD summer school for primaries ended, including the month-long integration by the Family and Community Engagement Department through FACE Liaisons, which were implemented to assist parents on campus during summer school, teaching them ways to engage and support the students from home. The program was incorporated into the summer school of several primary schools, including Stovall, Garcia-Leza, Keeble, Jones and de Santiago.

The liaisons offered multiple activities for the parents and students to participate in, including Zumba, yoga and reading strategies for the summer. The program was able to facilitate engagement through both the parents and students, which went on to bring enjoyment even outside the classroom.

Many of the parents expressed their

excitement of being able to bring the lessons home in various ways, and even how much FACE has helped them. For example, "I am a mother of three, and go to almost every school meeting or program, but nothing is like FACE," said Asia Nguyen, a parent who attended the sessions at Keeble. "FACE has shown me many ways and activities to talk and interact with my children that help them have fun while learning."

These are the types of interactions that FACE aims to have with all of their programs. Looking for ways to provide the families of the district more opportunities to engage with and assist the students and families at home is their goal. They will be continuing the initiative next year, with the integration of FACE Liaisons at summer school at the various campuses.

Summer School Classroom Sessions



Coming August 2, 2022: Families of Returning Students Must Complete Required Online Annual Update

**What is an Annual Update?**

The annual update ensures that Aldine ISD and the student's assigned school have your child's most current and accurate information. The measure increases customer service and ensures individual student information is updated annually. Families of returning students must complete a yearly update before starting each new school year.

**What will I need to complete the Annual Update in August 2022?**

A Home Access Center (HAC) Account — Families will access the Annual Update form through HAC. At least one legal guardian — a student's parent or legal guardian — needs to have a HAC account.

**When will I receive notification about needing to complete the Annual Update?**

The Annual Update Form online link will be available starting August 2. School staff can assist families with questions or assist in completing the online form.

**What type of information will I need to update for my AISD student?**

\*Physical address (verify or type in

the correct address)

\*Proof of address is required if the address has changed

\*Parent/legal guardian and emergency contact information

\*Health information

\*Food allergies

\*School Transportation

\*Technology Acceptable Use Agreement

\*Military/foster information

\*Siblings information

\*Student Code of Conduct Assurance

\*Release of student information for school use, non-school use, military, higher education, etc.

\*Household Income Survey for Socioeconomic Status

**What if I am new to the school district?**

Parents or legal guardians enrolling students new to the school district will complete the online New Student Online Enrollment Form, which is already available.

Please Visit the following website for more information:

[www.AldineISD.org/HAC](http://www.AldineISD.org/HAC)



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OPINION

By BILL KING



## Gun Deaths in America by the Numbers

The horrific slaughter of nineteen children and two teachers in Uvalde, has once again focused the attention of the nation on the toll taken on American lives by guns. As with most highly charged emotional issues, and particularly ones that fall on the partisan divide, I find there is little objective analysis of the actual data and even less perspective on what the data implies.

There are many who object to a statistical analysis of such events as being cold-hearted and that doing so minimizes the tragedy of the loss of even a single life. While I appreciate that sentiment, I respectfully disagree. To the contrary, the more consequential, or in this case the more horrific, the problem, the more urgently we need to call on our full intellectual capabilities to fashion solutions. So, after Uvalde I began to dig into the data on deaths caused by firearms and found quite a bit that surprised me.

Prior to 2015, the number of deaths from a firearm on an annual basis had moved in a fairly narrow range, averaging about 34,000, which was about 10-11 firearm deaths per 100,000 Americans or slightly over 1% of all U.S. fatalities. However, since 2015 firearm deaths have been consistently moving higher each year and then took a sharp upturn in 2020, reaching an all-time high of 45,222. Preliminary data for 2021 indicates that number was perhaps slightly lower than 2020. The rate per 100,000 Americans has moved up to 13.7.

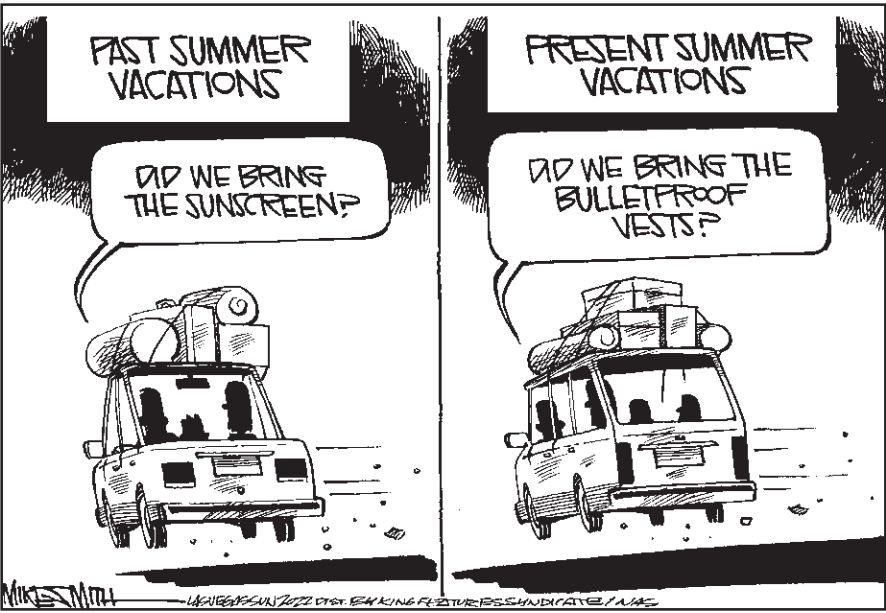
Most gun deaths in the U.S. are either suicides (~54%) or homicides (~43%). The remaining ~3% are due to accidents, police shootings or undetermined causes. Both suicides and homicides committed with a gun have been increasing over the last two decades, but most of the significant increase in gun deaths over the last two years has been due to an increase in homicides.

The significant increase in homicides coincides with an explosion in the number of gun sales in the U.S. The home security research group, HomeSafe.org, estimates that gun sales soared by over 150% in 2020 and 2021.

However, a series of Gallup surveys found that the percentage of U.S. households that own a gun has been slightly declining since 1972. This perhaps suggests that the increase in gun sales is more attributable to existing gun owners adding to their inventory, as opposed to a large number of new gun owners.

There is no question that the U.S. is an outlier when it comes to private gun ownership compared to other countries. The Small Arms Survey, an independent Swiss research group, estimated in its 2018 report that Americans, while making up only about 3% of the world's population, owns nearly half of the world's roughly 850 million privately owned guns. Their survey estimated that there were about 120 guns for every 100 Americans. That rate dwarfs all other countries. India came in second with just over 50. Canada was 34. The global average outside of the U.S. is about 7.

Next time, I will explore the issue of suicides and whether this ready access to guns has an effect on the incidence of suicide in our country.



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STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

By Gary Borders



## TEA Releases STAAR results for grades 3-8

The Texas Education Agency has released the 2022 State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness

Results for grades 3-8, which showed across-the-board improvements in all grades and subjects, with especially significant gains in reading.

"The investments that the state is making in reading academies and accelerated instruction are clearly paying dividends for our students, and the results are a testament to the hard work of teachers across our state," Texas Education Commissioner Mike Morath said. "While we still have much work to do to recover from COVID-related learning loss in mathematics, the improvements our students have made in reading are clear."

The spring results include exams in mathematics and reading for grades 3-8, 5th and 8th grade science, and 8th grade social studies.

### MILITARY BASES HAVE BIG IMPACT ON STATE'S ECONOMY

A study analyzing the impact on the state's economy from U.S. military installations concludes they contributed at least \$114.1 billion to the Texas economy last year and supported more than 600,000 jobs across the state. Texas is home to 15 military installations and the U.S. Army Futures Command, which is located in Austin and runs modernization projects for the U.S. Army.

The study was completed by the comptroller's office at the behest of the Texas Military Preparedness Commission.

"It is amazing to see the tremendous economic impact these military installations have in Texas," said Texas Comptroller Glenn Hegar. "The importance of these bases reaches far beyond direct jobs and personal income. The facilities, and the men and women who work and are stationed at them, form the backbone of communities and support countless businesses and induced jobs throughout the state."

### FORMER NFL PLAYER INDICTED FOR BOGUS MEDICAL CLAIMS

Former NFL player Narond "Roc" Alexander was indicted recently for submitting fraudulent health reim-



bursement claims totaling more than \$25,000 to a health program for former NFL players. The case was brought by Texas Department of Insurance investigators along with the Bexar County District Attorney's office.

Alexander allegedly filed the bogus claims between 2014 and 2018 under the Gene Upshaw NFL Player Health Reimbursement Plan, which helps pay certain medical care expenses for former NFL players. He could face up to 10 years in prison and a \$10,000 fine if convicted.

"Insurance fraud hurts the people who actually need these funds to cover their health care costs, like the NFL players who benefit from this particular fund," Bexar County District Attorney Joe Gonzales said. "This indictment allows us to seek justice on behalf of the NFL players with legitimate claims who rely on these funds."

After playing for the University of Washington, Alexander signed with the Denver Broncos in 2004 and later played for the Houston Texans.

### GRANT PROGRAM TO BENEFIT TRAVEL INDUSTRY

The travel industry, hard hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, is set to receive \$180 million of funds under a grant program funded by the federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. The program is designed to provide grants for the recovery of Texas businesses in the tourism, travel, and hospitality industry affected by the pandemic.

"Travel and tourism are critical components to both the state and local economies," said Gov. Greg Abbott. "Visitor spending at Texas destinations brings new money into communities and spurs local job creation across industries

in every region of the state."

A series of webinars are slated to provide information for specific businesses. To get more details and register, go to: <https://ttir.gov.texas.gov>.

### DEMOGRAPHIC CENTER ANALYZES STATE CENSUS RESULTS

The U.S. Census Bureau has released its 2021 population estimates, and the Texas Demographic Center has crunched the numbers to determine:

- Texas is growing both older and more diverse. Median age increased to 35.4 years in 2021, up from 33.6 in 2010.
- Texas has more Black residents than any other state.
- All urban core counties in Texas, except for Travis County, lost non-Hispanic white population.
- The state has the third-largest Asian population in the country.
- Harris County has more Black residents than all other counties in the country except Cook County, which includes Chicago.

### SHARING THE ROAD WITH LARGE TRUCKS

Anyone who has driven the state's major highways recently likely has noticed the number of 18-wheelers on the road has risen as businesses and industries work to fill demand in many sectors. The Texas Department of Transportation is reminding motorists to take extra care when driving around big trucks.

Drivers are especially at risk in the state's energy sectors, according to TxDOT. Last year, more than 79,000 crashes occurred in the state's five major energy production areas, resulting in 1,119 deaths — a 20% increase over the previous year.

Among the safety tips offered by TxDOT are staying away from a truck's blind spot; not tailgating; when passing a truck, making sure you can see both of the truck's headlights before moving back into your lane; and never crossing behind a truck that is backing up, since the driver can't see you.

### COVID-19 CASES INCREASE AGAIN

The number of new COVID-19 cases reported in Texas during the past week by the Coronavirus Resource Center at Johns Hopkins University rose again to 84,417, with 115 deaths recorded. Both numbers are up modestly compared to what was reported the previous week. However, lab-confirmed COVID-19 hospitalizations in the state continue to rise steadily, with 3,007 reported by the Department of State Health Services. That's up 22% from the previous week and more than double what was reported a month ago.

Gary Borders is a veteran award-winning Texas journalist. He published a number of community newspapers in Texas during a 30-year span, including in Longview, Fort Stockton, Nacogdoches and Cedar Park. Email: [gborders@texaspress.com](mailto:gborders@texaspress.com).

★

THE POSTSCRIPT

By Carrie Classon

## "The Perfect Pet"

My mother has found the perfect pet. She just doesn't realize it yet.

A clever little red squirrel has been trying to get my mother's attention for months. "He's such a pest!" my mother complains. But the squirrel does not give up.

He has become quite tame, hanging out below the bird feeder, waiting for seeds to drop. He would much prefer to get them from the feeder himself, but my father has inconsiderately installed a length of stovepipe on the pole that holds the feeder, and the squirrel cannot climb up the slippery metal. Instead, he waits impatiently for the birds to drop seeds—which they always do—eating them as fast as they drop. When he runs out of seeds, he finds other things to do, like dig up my mother's planters, leaving dirt all over her deck.

"Is he digging something up, or burying something?" I asked my mom.

"I have no idea! He's a troublemaker!"

Last night, a bear finally finished off the birdfeeder my father made a few years back. The poor feeder had been knocked to the ground countless times by countless bears, and my dad always nailed it back together. This time, it was shattered beyond repair.

My dad went down to his workshop and started building a new feeder. I wonder how many times this feeder will be knocked to the ground and survive. It looks pretty stout—but so did the last one.

In the meantime, my mother didn't want the birds to suffer, so she put a meatloaf pan filled with seeds at the top of the pole. My dad removed the stovepipe while he was working on the feeder and, in no time flat, the red squirrel climbed to the top of the pole and knocked the pan down, then sat at the foot of the bird feeder, gorging on the seeds piled below.

"This is more like it!" I could almost hear the squirrel say.

My father replaced the stovepipe, my mother refilled the meatloaf pan, and order was restored. The little red squirrel, however, was not happy. We were sitting outside on the deck and the squirrel positioned himself on a short branch directly over my mother's head.

"Chip, chip, chip!" he said loudly.

"Be quiet!" my mother said. The squirrel shook his tail and got noisier.

"He has a serious beef with you, Mom," I told her. "He is trying to be your friend, and you are not very friendly."

"He is not my friend!" my mother said, almost as loudly as the red squirrel.

"He's a perfect pet," I continued. "I don't know why you pamper those birds and ignore this fellow who wants to be your friend." The squirrel continued. We could no longer carry on a conversation with him ranting away. He sounded like a late-night radio host on a tear.

My mom jumped up, stomped her feet and waved her fists at the squirrel. "You get out of here!" she hollered. The squirrel ran up the tree.

A moment passed. "Plunk! Plunk!" A handful of pinecone seeds dropped onto the deck.

"Is it raining?" my dad asked.

More pinecones fell, directly on our heads.

"It's that squirrel!" my mom said. "You stop that right now!" A shower of pinecones fell.

I think my mother should just give in and adopt the little red squirrel. Sure, he's a troublemaker and full of mischief, but he obviously wants to be part of the family. I suggested it.

"He's not my pet!" my mother said, indignantly.

But I'm not sure she gets to decide.

Till next time,  
Carrie

Carrie Classon's memoir is called "Blue Yarn." Learn more at [CarrieClasson.com](http://CarrieClasson.com).

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# Juan Vargas: How Foreign Roots Grew a Family of Teachers and an Aldine ISD Executive Director of Buildings and Properties

Take a visit to the Bamberg Professional Development and Resource Center, and everything is lively. Cars are shuffling in and out of the parking lot, with workers moving about just as diligently. Multiple entrances demonstrate the various departments that are housed within the building. Walk in, and past, the large doors of the north side entrance, and you open up to a room of cubicles, with the office titled Executive Director of Buildings and Properties laying straight ahead. Step in, and you see photos of family surrounding the office, brothers, parents and kids all overlooking the desk. At first glance, you can see that family and unity are integral to Juan Vargas, Aldine ISD's new Executive Director of Buildings and Properties. Vargas first visited the U.S. in 1995, when he came to Houston to visit his in-laws. Both in-laws worked in Aldine as teachers, and were starting their third year. "They went through the phone books, and Aldine was one of the first districts," said Vargas. "They were recruiting bilingual teachers, so my father-in-law started teaching, and my mother-in-law started right after." At the time, the district was going through a demographic shift and was searching for educators to meet the new demand. Vargas accompanied his father-in-law on a quick trip to the Human Resources office and, having come from Chile, the staff questioned if he had considered teaching. Additionally, they explained the district would be happy to sponsor him if he chose to work in Aldine. He turned it down and jokingly explained that his wife



Juan Vargas ISD's new Executive Director of Buildings and Properties

was the teacher. He wanted to focus on finishing his engineering degree back home. After the trip was over, they went back to Chile, and soon after, they were expecting their first child. "We talked about the fact that her parents were here," said Vargas. "I knew we would need their help and support with raising the baby." Having that familial support was important for them, so they both decided they would move to Houston and teach in Aldine. Upon returning, Vargas started as a volunteer teacher for bilingual prekindergarten. He did this while the paperwork for his sponsorship was being approved. "I volunteered for six months without pay for two pre-K classrooms because they didn't have teachers," said Vargas. "I thought if I volunteered, I would save myself a spot, and they could get to know me." After completing the necessary steps, he became a bilingual teacher at Carroll Elementary, while also teaching various optional classes for the parents on Saturdays. From Carroll, Vargas went on to work in

administration for Bussey Elementary. His love for bilingual education continued to motivate him, and was the reason he took the position of Program Director for Bilingual Elementary. After several years of working elementary, Vargas felt he wanted something different. He transitioned to Aldine High School, where Vargas enjoyed working the most. Vargas' transition to Aldine High School was accompanied by his newest position as assistant principal. What initially drew him to the position was the fact that he was able to create more of a change for the students through policies; however, what he would soon grow to enjoy the most was being able to have more meaningful conversations with his students. "I loved being at the high school," said Vargas. "These were the same kids I used to teach, who were still passionate, but now were able to have a deeper conversation with you." It was also at this time that Vargas recalls helping the student council when they would ask him for advice with their

meetings. Through his guidance, the student council thought of the idea to help the community during the holidays and started the tradition, that they still continue to this day, of collecting gifts and giving it out to the people of the community. Vargas also recalled how one of those same student council members grew up and ran for a position on the school board. "When I saw that, I thought of how a little bit of what I was telling them is still there," said Vargas. "It was a beautiful experience." Even though the former student did not get elected to the school board, he still talked to Vargas to let him know how excited he had been to run. After being an assistant principal for several years, Vargas looked to transfer somewhere else that would allow him to make change within the community, and decided on transitioning to work with the staff, instead of the students. "At first, I was hesitant because it seemed as if I was deviating from the community by going into operations," said Vargas. "Once I started,

that's when I realized how this is still the same community." He saw that the staff were also the parents and grandparents of the children he had been teaching. He enjoyed the notion that he was still finding ways to be a part of, and help, the bilingual community he had been so passionate about throughout his career. This is something that is shared within all the teachers of his family. They want to help the people of the community, and they find teaching to be the best way to do that. The Aldine teaching bug may have started with both his in-laws, and then made its way to him, his wife and sister-in-law, but that is not where it stopped. Vargas' two daughters have also grown up to become teachers. One teaches at La Promesa, and the other just graduated with her teaching degree from the University of Houston. She is also looking to teach in Aldine this upcoming school year. What Vargas enjoyed the most about teaching bilingual students was the fact that he could relate to their struggles. He came here without knowing the language. His first years of teaching were spent teaching and learning the language himself. It was difficult for him to learn English, but he did not let that deter him. "When I started, I felt that this was a cause worth fighting for," said Vargas. "I wanted to try and help the community as much as I could." He felt that connection with the students and the parents. He was a product of that same community of immigrants, and it was important that they felt comfortable and heard within the district. Some initiatives he has started

since taking over as Executive Director have been implementing a system so that the custodial staff gets assistance with learning English and gaining GED opportunities. Along with this, he has implemented different roles within the staff so that they are able to get computer training and managerial experience. "When I came here, my first thought was to try and empower them," said Vargas. "I want them to think of themselves as managers, needing to know how to place work orders; how to complete tasks with computers; that's the direction I've been moving them towards." He wants to provide these opportunities because it is beneficial both inside and outside of work. This role has allowed him to experience a full circle moment, where once he used to help the children of the community, now he is helping their parents and grandparents. By looking through the career path Vargas has had within Aldine ISD, a ripple effect starts to come into focus. One seemingly innocent visit to HR by a teacher and their son-in-law, led to multiple generations of teachers, and the eventual Executive Director of Buildings and Properties, all embracing the community. From bilingual teacher, to Executive Director, Vargas has been a passionate member of the district for more than 25 years. Even in his latest role, Vargas is still looking for ways to improve his community. "I felt the support of the community back then, and I still feel it now," said Vargas. "It's not over. I'm just starting."

# Dr. Kimberley Booker Completes Leadership TASB Training

Aldine ISD Trustee Dr. Kimberley Booker Completes Leadership TASB Training

Aldine ISD Board Vice-President Dr. Kimberley Booker recently completed training with 35 other school board trustees across Texas in Leadership TASB (Texas Association of School Boards).

Dr. Booker earned the title "Master Trustee" upon her completion of the program. "Master Trustee" is the highest designation recognized by TASB.

Leadership TASB is a one-of-a-kind program that elevates the leadership skills of experienced board members through

yearlong training.

Dr. Booker said she was honored to be a part of Leadership TASB's Class of 2021, and she hopes to share what she learned with her fellow Board members and Aldine ISD Superintendent Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney.

As a Leadership TASB participant, Dr. Booker and her classmates toured the successful school and investigated innovative programs. They also heard from nationally known speakers in experts in business and education address the following topics:

- \*Teamwork
- \*Trusteeship
- \*Equity

- \*Diversity
- \*Visionary leadership

The program consisted of five-weekend sessions that began in the fall at the TASA (Texas Association of School Administrators)/TASB Convention and concluded in June at the Summer Leadership Institute (SLI). Sessions were held across the state of Texas.

Leadership TASB only selects 36 trustees from across Texas each year. To qualify, Dr. Booker and her classmates had to meet the following qualifications:

- \*Have completed a minimum of 36 hours of board training or 30 hours, including New Board Mem-

ber Launch classes.

- \*Have demonstrated leadership ability on their respective school boards and in their communities.
- \*Attendance at the first session was mandatory, and trustees must attend three of the four remaining sessions to graduate.

Dr. Booker was appointed to the Aldine ISD School Board in 2017. She has served as Board Secretary and currently serves as Board Vice-President.

TASB is a nonprofit association established in 1949 for school board members, the state's largest group of publicly elected officials.



Aldine ISD Board Vice-President Dr. Kimberley Booker, front row, second from left, poses with fellow members of the Leadership TASB Class of 2021 upon their completion of the year-long program.

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CHURCH PAGE

BIBLE TRIVIA

By Wilson Casey —

1. Is the book of Zechariah in the Old or New Testament or neither?

2. In 2 Peter 3:3, what shall come in the last days walking after their own lusts? Politicians, Scoffers, Fools, Serpents

3. What was the hometown village of Jeremiah, a biblical book author? Anathoth, Neapolis, Patara, Sodom

4. From Genesis 14, what city was Melchizedek the king of? Nineveh, Salem, Jericho, Rome

5. In Matthew 27, what position of authority did Pontius Pilate hold? Doctor, Governor, Saint, Pharaoh

6. From Genesis 4:9, who asked, "Am I my brother's keeper"? Joseph, Cain, Abel, Seth

ANSWERS: 1) Old; 2) Scoffers; 3) Anathoth; 4) Salem; 5) Governor; 6) Cain Hardcore trivia fan? Visit Wilson Casey's subscriber site at [www.patreon.com/triviaguy](http://www.patreon.com/triviaguy). (c) 2022 King Features Synd., Inc.


THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

Whoever of you loves life and desires to see many good days, keep your tongue from evil and your lips from telling lies. Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.

PSALMS 34:12-14

"Study of a woman's head" by Leonardo da Vinci (1490)

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UPDATE ON COVID SHOTS FOR CHILDREN

Harris County Public Health Now Administering COVID-19 Vaccine for Children Under 5 Years Old

Vaccination for children 6 months to 4 years follows the recent approval by FDA, CDC, and DSHS

**Houston** – Harris County Public Health (HCPH) is now administering the COVID-19 vaccine to children 6 months to 4 years old. This follows the recent emergency use authorization given to both Pfizer and Moderna by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), along with approval by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS).

HCPH encourages parents or guardians to first seek a COVID-19 vaccine for their children from their primary care provider or pediatrician. HCPH will provide vaccines to children at its vaccination sites to residents who cannot obtain it otherwise.

All COVID-19 vaccines and boosters are safe and effective and have proven to provide strong protection against severe illness, hospitalizations, and death, including the latest version approved for children aged 6 months to 4 years old.

“Receiving the approval by the FDA and CDC to have children under 5 years vaccinated is another major step for us to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and hospitalization for everyone,” said Ericka Brown, MD, MBA, FACHE, interim local health authority for HCPH. “We encourage all parents or guardians to contact their children’s pediatrician or primary care provider and consider the options for a vaccine.”

The Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine for children ages 6 months to 4 years old is a three-shot series, and each dose is one-tenth the dosage given to adults. Children would receive two doses three weeks apart, and a third dose at least two months later.

Moderna’s vaccine approved for children from 6 months to 5 years is given in two shots (four weeks apart) and each dose is one-quarter the dose of that used in adults.

Vaccines provided by HCPH are free, and appointments are not required. To find a location near you, click here. Parents who wish to schedule an appointment online will be able to do so through ReadyHarris.org or vacstrac.hctx.net starting Monday, June 27.

COVID-19 Vaccine Booster Now Available for 5–11-year-olds

Following CDC, DSHS, and FDA approval of the Pfizer vaccine booster

**Houston** – Following approvals of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), Harris County Public Health (HCPH) encourages parents to have their children aged 5 to 11 receive the COVID-19 Pfizer vaccine booster. All child boosters must be administered at least five months after the primary series. If you or your child have not received the COVID-19 primary series, please do so as soon as possible.

Parents/guardians can seek a COVID-19 vaccine booster for their children from a primary care provider, pediatrician, or local pharmacy. HCPH will provide free vaccine boosters to children at its vaccination sites to residents who cannot obtain it otherwise. Residents who would like to have their children receive the COVID-19 Pfizer vaccine booster can do so now by visiting ReadyHarris.org to find the location closest to them or visiting HCPH’s vaccine registration page.

All COVID-19 vaccines and boosters are safe, effective, and provide strong protection against severe illness, hospitalizations, and death, including this latest version approved for children aged 5 - 11. This version of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine booster for young children is a smaller dose or one-third of the version approved for adults and teens.

Vaccines provided by HCPH are free and appointments are not required. If you would like to schedule an appointment, go to a ReadyHarris.org, vacstrac.hctx.net, or call 832-927-8787. To find a location near you, click here.

###

HCPH is the local public health agency for the Harris County, Texas jurisdiction. It provides a wide variety of public health activities and services aimed at improving the health and well-being of the Harris County community.

HOLLYWOOD

by Tony Rizzo

**HOLLYWOOD** — I was 11, and Carol Burnett was 26 when we first met. I haunted a candy store next to the off-Broadway Phoenix Theater, where Carol was starring in “Once Upon a Mattress.”

When she became a regular on “The Garry Moore Show,” I was her guest at tapings each week. Had it not been for Carol, you might not be reading this. “The Carol Burnett Show” became a classic CBS variety series, and she became a legend.

At 89, Carol’s in her third marriage to Hollywood Bowl Orchestra drummer Brian Miller, and they’re celebrating 21 years together come November.

The “Carol Burnett Show” and “Mama’s Family” have been huge successes in syndication for years. She could easily rest on her laurels, but happily, she’s signed to be a regular in the 10-part Apple TV+ series “Mrs. American Pie,” produced by and starring Oscar-winner Laura Dern, who’s assembled a great cast: Kristen Wiig, Allison Janney, Ricky Martin and Josh Lucas. It’s about a woman trying to break into Palm Beach Society. Thanks, Carol, for pointing me in the right direction.

\*\*\* Obviously taking a cue from Lin-Manuel Miranda’s mega successful “Hamilton,” which depicted all of our forefathers diversely (the only non-person-of-color being King George III), a revival of the classic musical “1776” is now headed to Broadway, getting booked for the Ahmanson Theater in Los An-



CAROL BURNETT

geles from April 5 to May 7, 2023.

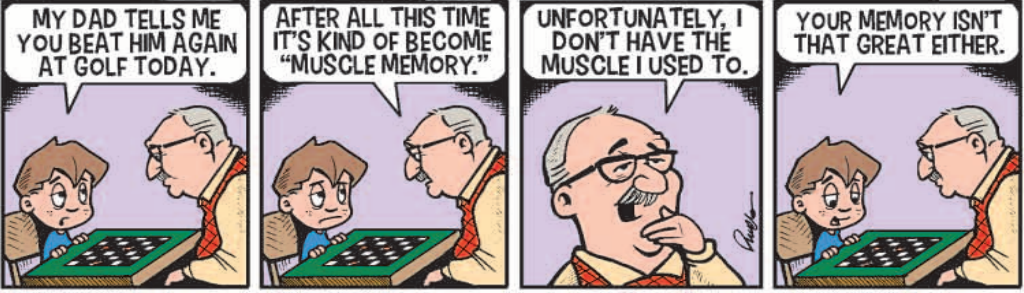
This production will feature a cast of female, trans and nonbinary performers. Since the show originally consisted of mostly 23 men and only 2 women — being about the Continental Congress’ creation of the Declaration of Independence — the question is, Are they re-writing history, or are they just taking many liberties?

\*\*\* Movie theaters may finally be getting their audiences back. It’s going to be a three-way fight between “Top Gun: Maverick,” which joined the billion-dollar film club after one month in release; “Jurassic World: Dominion,” which reached a billion-dollar gross in half the time; and “Elvis,” which swiveled out of the gate strongly and is nipping at their heels.

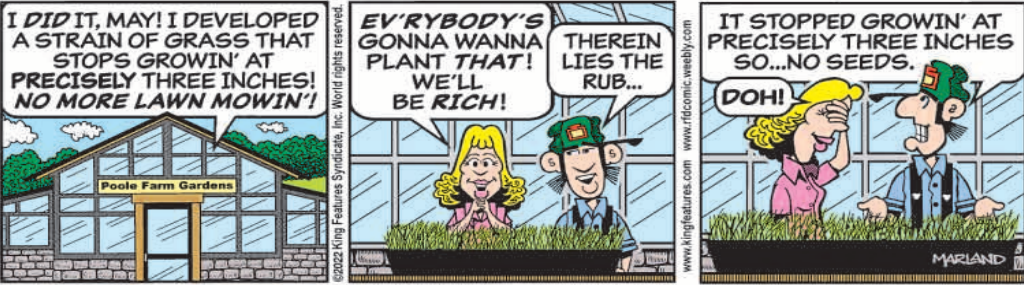
Moviegoers were stunned by Tom Hanks’ portrayal of Col. Tom Parker, partly because they didn’t know Parker was a greedy, ruthless man who purposefully held Elvis Presley back to make more money.

ENTERTAINMENT

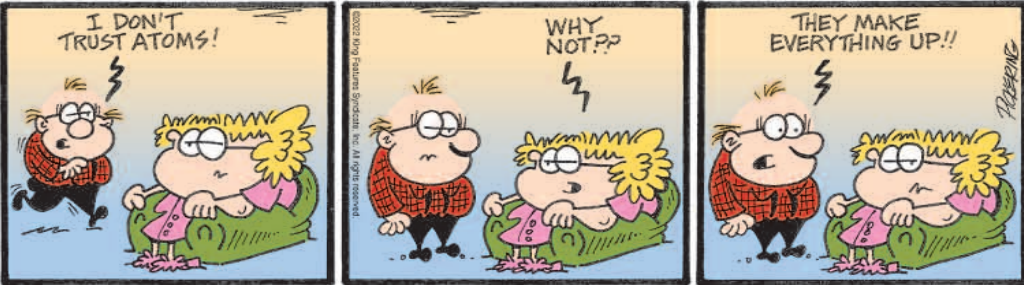
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Weekly SUDOKU by Linda Thistle

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Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦♦ Challenging ♦♦♦♦♦ Boy!

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HOCUS-FOCUS BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

Differences: 1. Fence is shorter 2. Raincoat is different 3. Leash is shorter 4. Stripe is missing 5. Sign is missing 6. Puddle is smaller

July 18, 2022 Posting Date

King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Baseball's Ripken
- 4 Glacial
- 7 Mrs. Flintstone
- 12 Baton Rouge sch.
- 13 Extinct New Zealand bird
- 14 Figure of speech
- 15 "— show-time!"
- 16 Parthenon locale
- 18 "The A-Team" actor
- 19 Le — (French news-paper)
- 20 Pear type
- 22 Sugary suffix
- 23 Actress Tyne
- 27 Director Howard
- 29 Cut up, as a pizza
- 31 Metric measure
- 34 Desert haven
- 35 Tam topper
- 37 "Ray Donovan" actor
- 38 Money maven
- 39 Vichy water
- 41 Latin love
- 45 Shadow
- 47 Mimic
- 48 Maryland's

DOWN

- 1 Scale
- 2 Houston
- 3 Has an intense craving
- 4 Mosque
- 5 Butterfly protector
- 6 Tales
- 7 Use a sponge
- 8 Altar promise
- 9 Dogpatch adjective
- 10 Miss Piggy's pronoun
- 11 Early hrs.
- 17 Rhyming tributes
- 21 Thin pancake
- 23 Hunting goddess
- 24 Rm. coolers
- 25 Island garden
- 26 QB's gains
- 28 Spanish gold
- 30 Privy
- 31 Vinyl records
- 32 Debtor's letters
- 33 Celeb gossip site
- 36 Office note
- 37 Legal expert
- 40 More skilled
- 42 Food from heaven
- 43 Verdi work
- 44 — a beet
- 45 High hairstyle
- 46 Nile vipers
- 48 Spa sounds
- 49 PBS funder
- 50 Opposing vote
- 51 MGM motto start

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Answers

King Crossword

Solution time: 26 mins.

Answers

1. The Sahara; 2. The Saharar; 3. President Theodore Roosevelt; Peace Prize; 4. Bone marrow; 5. "Deliverance"; 6. Massachusetts; 7. See of Tranquility; 8. "The Member of the Wedding"; 9. "Love Me Tender"; 1956; 10. Walgreens

Trivia test by Fifi Rodriguez

- 1. TELEVISION: Which “Star Wars” character did Tina Fey dress as in the sitcom “30 Rock” to avoid jury duty?
- 2. GEOGRAPHY: What is the largest desert in Africa?
- 3. HISTORY: Who was the first American to win a Nobel Prize?
- 4. ANATOMY: Where in the body is blood produced?
- 5. MOVIES: Which movie features a theme song titled “Dueling Banjos”?
- 6. U.S. STATES: Which state was the first to make same-sex marriage legal?
- 7. SCIENCE: Where did the first manned spacecraft land on the moon?
- 8. LITERATURE: Which 20th-century Southern novel features a character named Frankie Addams?
- 9. MUSIC: What is the first movie that featured the singer Elvis?
- 10. AD SLOGANS: Which company’s slogan once was “At the corner of happy and healthy”?

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# HCC Mattress Mack School of Selling® Evening Series Onsite At Gallery Furniture

Houston Community College (HCC) is collaborating with WorkTexas to offer an expanded onsite program. WorkTexas offers Customer Service Training. HCC offers six three-hour onsite sessions based on the Mattress Mack philosophy of sales practices in collaboration with Jim McIngvale.

Evenings, Monday - Thursday 8/8 - 9/27 at Gallery Furniture 6006 North Frwy:  
16 hours - Boot Camp - WorkTexas M, Tu, W, Th, August 8, 9, 10 & 11, 6:00 pm - 10:00 pm  
54 hours - Customer Service Training - Work Texas M, W, Th 8/15 - 9/26, 5:00pm - 8:00pm  
18 hours - HCC Mattress Mack School of Selling® - Houston Community College  
Tuesdays 8/23, 8/30, 9/6, 9/13, 9/20, 9/27, 5:00pm - 8:00pm

The Expanded Program can also include the opportunity for a paid apprenticeship at Gallery Furniture or another employer during this time frame. This program is designed to empower individuals seeking a better job and/or career by improving their skills in these areas. Expanded Program applicants will be given highest priority. We will also allocate a limited number of seats to proposed and start up entrepreneur applicants wanting to attend just the HCC Mattress Mack School of Selling® dates.

More about the HCC Mattress Mack School of Selling®  
Session Presenters:  
Kimberly Burroughs, Ph.D  
Austin Tenette, MBA  
Session Topics:  
The Art of Listening,  
Persistence,  
The Ability to Say No,  
Caring Customer Service,  
Building a Book of Business  
What You Learn After You Know It All.

We encourage early applications! For applicants interested in the Expanded Program AND the Paid Apprenticeship, apply by July 21.

All other applicants apply by July 29.

To Apply Now at No Cost  
For questions call 713-718-6650 or email c4e@hccs.edu

Thanks to the generosity of our sponsor Gallery Furniture, this program is offered at NO COST to accepted applicants who complete the program!

Refundable Deposit Upon Graduation - A note from the WorkTexas Training Center at Gallery Furniture - This program is free to all Graduates. However, all chosen applicants selected for participation in the class will be required to submit a \$100 deposit before the class starts, which will be returned in full to the participant if/when the participant fulfills all program requirements.

Hear from Mattress Mack himself, his son, our partners from WorkTexas and others who are a part of this collective effort to empower Houstonians seeking better jobs and more fulfilling careers.  
Mack's programs empower people to love their work and find work they love. As Mack puts it, "Work is life's greatest therapy, work gives meaning to our life, we are all responsible for our destiny."  
Just a few more quotes from Jim:  
"If it is to be, it is up to me. That's called the great American virtue of self-reliance"....  
"Get up, go to work and make something of your life!".....  
"Chaos is huge opportunity".....  
"Stay relevant and be active in your community"....  
"We're all selling whether you are a teacher, lawyer, preacher, policeman....selling our ideas, learning to compromise and come up with solutions to problems.".....  
"Practice pitching your ideas"....

The HCC Mattress Mack School of Selling® sessions are based on the Mattress Mack philosophy of sales practices. Jim McIngvale's philosophy for career success and community empowerment is modelled throughout the entire program. The energy onsite at Gallery Furniture in the WorkTexas training center is uplifting, motivating, and inspiring!

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  - Automotive & Diesel Repair
  - Auto Body/Collision Repair
  - **Bilingual AC Technician I & II (new)**
  - Cosmetology
  - Certified Nurse Aide (CNA)
- **Digital Communication (new)**
  - Electronics Technician
  - General Office Administration
  - Microsoft Office Technology Specialization
  - Process Operator/Instrumentation Tech
  - Petroleum Technician
  - Police, Fire, & EMS
  - Welding & Bilingual Welding
  - Air Conditioning Technician I & II
  - Plumbing Technician I & II

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**Northline Campus** | 8001 Fulton Street | Houston, TX 77022  
**North Forest Campus** | 6010 E. Little York Road | Houston, TX 77016  
**Northeast Campus** | 555 Community College Drive | Houston, TX 77013  
**Automotive Tech. Training Center** | 4638 Airline Drive | Houston, TX 77022

713.718.8300

[hccs.edu](http://hccs.edu)



Scan for steps on how to get started!



HCC does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender identity and gender expression, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, or Veteran status. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies: David Cross, Director, EEO, 504, & Title IX Coordinator, 713.718.8271 or Institutional.Equity@hccs.edu

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# JULY 28

## THURSDAY 12PM

### EAST ALDINE DISTRICT OFFICE

2909 East Aldine Amphitheatre

## REGISTER BY JULY 25

[AldineDistrict.org/networking](http://AldineDistrict.org/networking)

FOR QUESTIONS AND TO REGISTER BY PHONE  
(713) 595-1232

REGISTER

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