



Independent small businesses are the backbone of our communities. But today, more than ever, People of Color (POC)-owned small businesses are hurting. The time for talking and offering shortterm gestures is over. We're putting our words into real, long-term, sustainable action through the creation of Comcast RISE. We know that Comcast alone can't remedy complex, systemic issues. But we are deeply committed to playing an integral role in driving lasting change.

Comcast RISE stands for Representation, Investment, Strength and Empowerment. The initiative combined the talent and resources of two business units with expertise in the small business space—Effectv, the ad sales division of Comcast Cable, and Comcast Business—to sustain, support and rebuild POC—owned small businesses within their combine footprints. The current program is geared towards the POC—owned business community. As Comcast RISE is a multi-year initiative, the future complimentary services will be open to other underrepresented groups.

## Selected businesses could receive one or more of the following business services :



#### Consulting

Advertising and marketing consultations to gain insights on how to grow your business.



#### Media

A linear TV media schedule over a 90-day period.



#### **Creative Production**

Turnkey production of a 30-second TV commercial plus a media strategy consultation and 90-day media schedule.



#### Technology Makeover

Computer equipment and complimentary connectivity, voice and security services for 12 months.



Now is the Time to Rise Apply today. ComcastRISE.com





#### Greetings,

The past year and a half has been a difficult one for everyone. The pandemic caused an economic downturn. In spite of all these challenges, a group of individuals and companies in Houston emerged and did extremely well. Today we are recognizing this year's class of **Rising 10** Award recipients. These businesses found a way to fight through and emerge stronger in the end.

We recognize the following Asian-owned businesses in the greater Houston area as those who have the highest level of growth over the past few years. Asian businesses make up a fast-growing segment of the Houston economy and represent a diverse field from restaurants to construction to professional services. AAPIs are building successful enterprises. The contributions made by these businesses is significant and we want to highlight their achievements in their dynamic growth.

#### Our **RISING 10** winners this year include:

- A1 Mortgage Group LLC
- Breaktime Corner Market LLC
- Builders Direct Depot
- burger-chan II LLC
- C & Y Global Inc.
- Gap Engineering
- Golden Town International LLC
- Grand View Construction LLC
- Phat Eatery
- Wison USA LLC

Please join me in applauding the success of these businesses and congratulating their founders and CEOs for leading their organizations to new heights.

The Asian Chamber of Commerce fosters economic and business development through civic advocacy, networking, collaboration and connections in the Houston Asian American communities and promotes trade between Houston and Asian countries. Our vision is to be the premier resource and unifying voice guiding the business community to achieve economic success both locally and globally.

Sincerely.

Bin<sup>V</sup>Yu Board Chair

Asian Chamber of Commerce





Sylvester Turner

Mayor

P.O. Box 1562 Houston, Texas 77251-1562

Telephone - Dial 311 www.houstontx.gov

September 10, 2021

Greetings,

As Mayor of the City of Houston, I congratulate all attending the Houston Asian Chamber of Commerce's Trade Forum and Expo 2021 and Rising 10 Awards on September 10, 2021, at the Marriott, Houston Westchase.

Since 1990, the Houston Asian Chamber of Commerce has fostered economic and business development through civic advocacy, networking, collaboration and connections in the Houston Asian American community and promotes trade between Houston and Asian countries. By promoting the common business interests of its members, this event in particular the facilitates the promotion and commercial trade between Houston-area businesses.

As you gather on this auspicious occasion, the City of Houston thanks and appreciates the Asian Chamber of Commerce for its staunch community advocacy and for providing worthwhile opportunities for Asian Americans.

Best wishes for a memorable event.

Sincerely.

Sylvester Turner

Swtn

Mavor



Council Members: Amy Peck Tarsha Jackson Abbie Kamin Carolyn Evans-Shabazz Dave Martin Tiffany D. Thomas Greg Travis Karla Cisneros Robert Gallegos Edward Pollard Martha Castex-Tatum Mike Knox David W. Robinson Michael Kubosh Letitia Plummer Sallie Alcorn



Time to Re-Engage Mayor Sylvester Turner

City of Houston

International Trade Christopher Olson

City of Houston

Houston Tourism Jorge Franz

Visit Houston

Houston Airport Mario Diaz

Houston Airport System

Houston Port Ric Campo

Port of Houston

(2) 12:50PM

#### **RISING 10 AWARDS PRESENTATION**

1:20PM

CLOSING REMARKS

Kenneth Li

ACC Board Chair-elect





#### **2021 AWARD AUDITOR**



The Rising 10 Awards highlight the 10 fastest growing Asian-owned companies in the greater Houston area.

#### WE ARE PROUD TO PRESENT OUR 2021 RISING 10 AWARD RECIPIENTS.

A1 Mortgage Group LLC
Breaktime Corner Market LLC
Builders Direct Depot
burger-chan II LLC
C & Y Global Inc.
Gap Engineering
Golden Town International LLC
Grand View Construction LLC
Phat Eatery
Wison USA LLC





A1 Mortgage was formed in 2007 in the Kansas City area. Bei Zhou and her husband bought A1 Mortgage in 2017 and since then have added the Houston area office and tripled their business.

They are particularly proud of the fact that they have grown significantly in the Houston area Asian community. By offering super low rates and great service, they have proven themselves as a reliable partner. This great service is reflected in the fact that they have a 4.9 rating on Google and have hundreds of 5-star reviews.

Their plan is to continue growing by adding new loan officers and putting them through their proven training program.

They are known for closing fast and they frequently close in as little as 10 days but their average is well below the industry standard. This is why almost half of their business comes from referrals and previous customers



#### **BEI ZHOU**

Bei Zhou relocated to Japan and got her master's degree in International Relations from Sophia University of Japan.

She started her career as a business and investment consultant. Since then, her career has ranged from law, trading, market research and product planning, as well as manufacturing. She

was also a founding member of "China Helpline", an online translation company, which broadened her insight of business.

The 16 years of studying and working in Japan not only enabled her to speak fluent Japanese but helped her to develop a strong focus on quality customer service. Before the acquisition of A1 Mortgage, she became a successful real estate investor and property manager, which provided a good transition into the mortgage business.

Besides Bei's passion towards travel, hiking and sailing, she also enjoys studying psychology and health care. Her dream is to sail around the world with her other half Richard.



Break Time Houston based group of companies and boasts upon more than two decades of services in the US. Breaktime Group set up first business in early 2000 as a sole gas station and has developed and emerged into a chain of gas stations, grocery stores, real estate businesses across six states of the US. Group runs multiple businesses and aims at expanding further in many other states too.

Breaktime Group is a chain of independently owned and operated groceries stores that specialize in serving basic amenities and petroleum products. The group takes pride in serving the communities through professional and trained staff as corporate player in US business market. The group owns and operates more than 150 modern convenient stores equipped with latest technologies for processing across Texas, Colorado, Nevada, California, Kansas, Louisiana, and Florida. The company is staunch believer of equal opportunity and racial indiscrimination and employs best trained and professional staff irrespective of gender, race, belief, and other discriminations.



#### **OMAIR BASHIR**

Mr. Bashir has been an entrepreneur and a master trainer for young business leaders for more than two decades now. Mr. Bashir, a Pakistani Immigrant hailing from Karachi, came to the US in late 90's at the age of 17 and that famous story of arriving almost empty handed and succeeding in building a successful empire holds true in his case too as he too arrived with only 100

bucks in his pocket. He started his work at very young age as an employ at local gas station, worked several shifts day and night along with his parents, and gained valuable experience of the ways how industry worked.

Mr. Bashir invested his savings into buying his own first gas station after working for five years at gas station and thus started his career as a business owner in his early twenties. Under Omair Bashir's leadership, his family businesses grew from one to many and he ended up establishing Break Time group of companies.

Omair Bashir with his vision to invest and progress together with communities and partners, owns multiple million-dollar businesses in seven different states. Mr. Omair Bashir's group of companies provide employment to more than 1000 employees believing in equal opportunity without any discrimination.

Omair Bashir's group of companies Breaktime Group has started to invest in the ever expanding real estate market in Houston and plans expanding the real estate businesses to some other states with a dream to contribute in US economy and create more jobs for the market and grow hand in hand with communities and employees.





Builders Direct Depot a company based in Houston, TX serves the hospitality, multi-family, student housing and assisted living industries for all of their new build and renovation projects.

We have dedicated years of experience and are a direct manufacturer of guest room doors, barn doors, tub/shower surrounds, shower doors, solid surfaces, and cabinets. We are also a direct supplier of bathroom fixtures, bath accessories, ptacs/vtacs, and appliances.

Our niche is to provide competitive pricing and ensure the best customer satisfaction. The way Builders Direct Depot accomplishes this is, we not only provide the product but we listen to our client's needs and guide them from the very beginning until the completion of their project.

The role of Builders Direct Depot is to support all businesses with the utmost professionalism and develop a bond between our team and our clients to form a long-lasting partnership.



#### **CHUNG KHUONG**

Chung Khuong is one of the cofounders of Builders Direct Depot, as business enthusiast Chung specializes in strategic planning, systems thinking, team development, and communication. With his experience in international trade, Chung has drastically changed the hospitality market and all of its supply chain ideals. Chung loves traveling, spending time

with family and friends and networking with other entrepreneurs.



burger-chan is a quick-service gourmet burger concept co-owned by Diane and Willet Feng. Back in 2016, Willet was determined to open his own restaurant, and a couple friends in the food and beverage industry convinced him to take over a second-generation restaurant spot located in an underground food court in Greenway Plaza. Willet utilized his fine-dining training to transform an office lunch spot into a burger mecca that drew diners from all over Houston.

From 2016 until 2020, burger-chan not only won a steady stream of customers, but also won accolades from food critics like Alison Cook of the Houston Chronicle and Eric Sandler of CultureMap. burger-chan was on Alison Cook's Top 100 Houston Restaurants list from 2016-2019, and came in at #25 on CultureMap's 2019 Top 100 Restaurants in Houston list.

We serve some burger classics and some innovative items, but hopefully will never be labeled as "gimmicky." What sets our burgers apart is that each burger is topped with a special glaze that amplifies the umami flavor of the beef. Willet created the signature Asian-inspired glaze and other popular sauces like scallion aioli and sambal mayo to elevate the typical burger and fries experience.



#### DIANE AND WILLET FENG

Diane and Willet Feng are the co-owners of burger-chan.

Diane graduated from Rice University with aspirations of becoming a Sociology professor. After a short stint in graduate school, she quickly realized she preferred teaching to research. So Diane got her middle school math teaching certificate from

the UTeach program at UT-Austin. Diane taught for a few years in HISD and won "Teacher of the Year." She also taught for a couple years at an international school in Shanghai. Diane had plans to return to teaching a few months after their daughter was born, but her husband Willet soon realized he needed her help to run his new burger restaurant. Fast forward four years to the present, Diane has as much experience in a restaurant as in a classroom.

Chef Willet Feng was born and raised in Houston, but he also spent a few formative years in Southeast Asia. He earned his bachelor degree from Rice University and culinary arts degree from Le Cordon Bleu. Willet worked as a line cook at Uchiko and Oxheart before travelling across the world to become the head chef at The Grumpy Pig in Shanghai. In 2016, he opened Kuma Burgers—now known as burger-chan.





CY Global, Inc was established in 2004 in Houston, TX. We specialized in buying, processing and selling a wide variety of scrap metal including copper, brass, lead, zinc, electric motors, shredder pickings ( Zorba, sealed units, insulated copper wire,brass radiators, transformers, alternator, stators, armatures, aluminum and a host of different scrap metal. In the past 15 years, C&Y Global has been rapidly growing to become one of the largest metal recyclers in the United States. We ship more than 170,000 tons of non-ferrous metals annually. To date, there are 8 associated yards in the US including Houston, Chicago, Cleveland, Atlanta, Dallas, Kansas City, Oakland and Oklahoma. C&Y Global has a self-owned processing facility in Thailand which has an annual processing capacity of 100,000 tons of variety of scrap metal.

We are proud of always matching our behavior to our words and taking responsibility for our actions. We are honest, trustworthy, respectful, and ethical in our actions with each customer. We serve our goal to deliver the best value products and guaranteed quality service.

We are looking forward to establishing a long term and steady relationship with you.

**JANE CHEN** 





GAP Engineering offers expertise in Process Engineering, Electrical/Mechanical Engineering, Design and Construction, Project Management, and Commissioning. GAP is comprised of professional engineers and senior associates recognized as top authorities in their respective fields. The combined experience of our senior staff exceeds 300 man-years; all with proven track records in process industries.

GAP specializes in automation control consulting and design services but has also executed projects in many different sectors, including pharmaceutical, energy, oil & gas, food processing, paper, mining, manufacturing, and construction. GAP provides many industries with the abilities and innovative ideas necessary to streamline production and automate a variety of processes.

GAP engineers, project and construction managers offer strong operational experience. Nothing is more important to us than the continued top notch service and pursuit of delivering perfect projects. Our goal is to provide peace of mind to owners and companies requiring solutions from electrical/mechanical projects. We commit to always offer clients the highest quality personnel, to support and guide projects to their financial and operational success. Our core values of integrity, selflessness, and accountability provide the foundation for outstanding service to our customers.



#### **MIKE HOMMA**

Mike Homma is an experienced Project Engineer with over 36 years of experience in project management and project engineering. Gap Engineering was created by Mike Homma in 2004. Mike stands as the President and CEO bringing over 3 decades of large project management experience. Mike began in the Refining and Petrochemical Industries prior to forming

Gap and functioned as an owner's representative for projects \$1 billion or greater. As project manager of these mega projects, Mike managed resources from many disciplines and kept the projects on schedule and on budget.

Mr. Homma has over 35 years of proven construction, engineering, development, asset transactions, risk, and advisory management experience. Mr. Homma worked for Hercules Aerospace in Salt Lake City, UT working in operations and moved to West Texas working in the capital projects group managing large construction and infrastructure projects for Fina Oil in Big Spring. In 2000 Mike went to work for Several Engineering and Construction firms managing projects before creating Gap Engineering in 2004. Since then Gap has grown from a regional engineering and construction company to executing projects throughout the U.S. and internationally.



Golden Town Design is an interior design and materials company based in Houston, TX with over 20,000 sq ft warehouse/factory. Founded in 2004, Golden Town Design has been providing design, building materials, and customized furniture to the restaurant industry all across the US. In 2021, Golden Town Design acquired a new warehouse in Missouri City to be in a better position to serve our industry through the global pandemic - arguably one of the most tumultuous times for the restaurant industry. Golden Town Design's mission is to help restaurant owners build and realize their dream restaurants so that they can focus on what they do best in running the business.



#### **TING GENG**

Ting Geng grew up in Houston and obtained her Computer Science degree from the University of Texas at Austin. In addition, she is currently attending the Executive MBA program at Rice University. After graduating from UT, Ting pursued a career in Finance where she worked and lived in New York City and London. Eventually ending up in Hong Kong where she

spent 13 years. In 2018, Ting and her husband, Patrick Ma, decided to leave the financial industry together and embark on a one-year journey around the world. Prior to Ting's departure, she held the position as Executive Director of a High Frequency Trading desk in Morgan Stanley HK. In 2019, Ting decided to return to Houston to be closer to her family and to continue the family legacy, Golden Town Design. While Ting was living overseas, she traveled to 35 countries across 4 continents. Ting always wanted to bring back to Houston the wonderful culinary experiences found around the world during her travels. Her vision for Golden Town Design is to be a one-stop interior design shop for elevating the perception and rating of countless restaurants with exceptional food but lackluster decor.



Grandview Construction is a dynamic commercial construction company established in 2016 in Houston, Texas. Grandview's building passion and tradition can be traced back to the 1960s when Grandview's parent company Blossom Construction started building in cities overseas.

Today we are proud builders of numerous hotels, high rise buildings and various types of construction projects both in the U.S. and abroad.

Grand View Construction is jointly established by Chinese and local Professionals in the United States. The front-line American workers are all professionals with rich construction experience. Under strong leadership, the company's employees formed a united fighting group. It has maintained "China speed" under efficient management. One of the star projects is the Houston Chinese Businessman's largest four Diamond luxury hotel located at the Houston Medical Center. Designed by renowned US architecture firm MCS and optimized by The China Academy of Fine Arts, the one-acre hotel has a total floor area of more than 400,000 square feet, including 16 floors of the main building and eight floors of parking, and a total of 267 elegant rooms on 16 floors.

Adhering to the management concept of "pragmatic, innovative and improve", the company has unique market competitiveness and strong fighting capacity in the construction industry, and under the strict control of quality, the project period ahead of time, repeatedly creating miracles to create more architectural quality!

At Grandview, we are powered by proven expertise and driven by best-in-class people from both the U.S. and aboard. Each division is home to superintendents, project managers, engineers, and other specialists, and we are ready to help your project succeed. We take pride in presenting you with the best value and high efficiency.





Opened in June 2018 in Katy Asian Town at 23119 Colonial Parkway, Phat Eatery quickly earned acclaim thanks to Chef-Owner Alex Au-Yeung's nimble approach to scratch-made Malaysian street food paired with welcoming, attentive service. Drawing influence from his upbringing in Hong Kong, his Malaysian heritage and Malay cuisine's rich history of borrowing elements from other Southeast Asian culinary traditions, Phat Eatery turns out fresh takes on regional classics in a relaxed atmosphere. Its early success earned the venue recognition by both Houston Chronicle and CultureMap Houston as one of the Top 100 Restaurants in Houston of 2019. Attention from ABC's Localish, Thrillist, Eater Houston, Houston Public Media, Houstonia, Houston Food Finder and others followed. To meet increased demand, Phat Eatery expanded its footprint to accommodate twice as many guests in 2020. In 2021, Phat Eatery was named among the Best Nine Restaurants in Houston by CultureMap Houston. The restaurant welcomes visitors seven days a week for lunch and dinner. phateatery.com



#### **ALEX AU-YEUNG**

Alex Au-Yeung emigrated to the U.S. at age 17 and made Houston his home. He first studied aviation technology, then ran a successful automotive shop before catching the hospitality bug and opening a small Chinese restaurant in the Galleria area. Two years later, he pivoted and created a point-of-sale business that grew into a full-service restaurant tech company with clients

across Texas, which renewed his passion for cooking.

Au-Yeung returned to Hong Kong and studied with Cantonese chefs, working intensely for no pay to learn their craft. In 2008, he returned to Houston, partnering to open a Malaysian restaurant. By 2018, Au-Yeung was ready for a new challenge and opened Phat Eatery in Katy Asian Town, featuring Malaysian specialties scratch-made with fresh ingredients. In its first year, the Houston Chronicle and CultureMap named Phat Eatery one of Houston's best new restaurants.

In 2020, Au-Yeung collaborated with Chef Cuc Lam to create Yelo, a craft banh mi bistro, quickly earning avid fans and critical acclaim. Most recently, Au-Yeung's Phat Eatery was named among the Top 9 Best Restaurants in Houston at CultureMap Houston's 2021 Tastemaker Awards.



Wison USA LLC was founded in May of 2013 in Houston, Texas. In 2020, we have successfully accomplished EG-2 Expansion Project. We offer engineering services to the downstream, midstream and offshore industries. We specialize in technology solutions and engineering construction services in refining, petrochemical, syngas chemical, advanced materials, and LNG & renewable energy. With multiple commercialized proprietary intellectual property rights. Wison can provide solutions to its clients covering the entire project life cycle. Wison Offers integrated solutions for constructing energy infrastructure by leveraging solid experience in fabricating large-scale modules for onshore and offshore plants, harnessing our world-class fabrication facilities in China. In the offshore and marine field, Wison is a well-known solution-provider Natural Gas Monetization. Relying on professional international teams, a project implementation system in line with the international standards and state-of-the-art facilities in Nantong and Zhoushan Yards, Wison provides the global energy industry with innovative floating solutions for LNG value chain developments, quality module fabrication for onshore & offshore plants, and offshore wind power solutions.



#### BEI "VIVIAN" LI

Vivian is dedicated her whole career in the oil & gas industry, Vivian joined Wison, a local EPC firm in 2012. As the President, she is responsible of establishing the business ventures and promoting Wison's capabilities, both onshore and offshore, in the North American market.

Prior to Wison, Vivian created and operated the new business line, EPCM, at GTC Technology, focusing on the East European, Central European, and CIS markets. During her time in Brno, Czech, Vivian and her team promptly penetrated the local EPC market with numerous successful project deliveries.

After graduated with a B.S. in chemical engineering in China, Vivian spent 18 years with Sinopec, sharpened her skills starting as a process discipline engineer, then, eventually becoming a mega project manager.

Besides work, Vivian enjoys spending time with her family, reading, and travelling. She and her husband Jack have a lovely 19-year-old daughter.



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**BUSINESS CONFERENCE** 



#### **RISING 10 AWARDS UNDERWRITER**



#### **2021 AWARD AUDITOR**



#### SUPPORTING COMMUNITY PARTNERS —





























## Variety adds STRENGTH to our business

At H-E-B, we value our partnerships with women and minority suppliers.

Through their contributions, we better understand the needs of our customers and add to the growth of our company and the

communities we serve.





H-E-B SUPPLIER DIVERSITY

For more information on becoming a supplier with H-E-B, visit

WWW.heb.com

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#### MAYOR SYLVESTOR TURNER

Since taking office, Mayor Turner has expertly managed significant challenges facing the nation's fourth-largest city, including budget deficits, homelessness, and natural disasters such as Hurricane Harvey. He is currently leading Houston's response to the COVID-19 global pandemic. Amid national unrest and calls for improving the community and police relations, the mayor signed an executive order restricting the use of force and created a Task Force on Policing Reforms.

Operating within the city's fiscal constraints, Mayor Turner has passed five balanced budgets. He also oversaw Houston's remarkable rebound from Hurricane Harvey, championed historic pension reform, cheered on the 2017 and 2019 World Series Houston Astros, and hosted a successful Super Bowl LI. He also launched Houston's first Climate Action Plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, meet the Paris Agreement goal of carbon neutrality by 2050, and lead the global energy transition. Mayor Turner's signature priorities include Complete Communities, an initiative designed to revitalize and improve Houston's most under-served neighborhoods by partnering with local stakeholders to leverage resources to create a more equitable and prosperous city for all Houstonians. He also created the Hire Houston Youth program to provide jobs and internship opportunities for thousands of young people each year. He forged public-private partnerships to improve neighborhood parks and expand Houston's technology and innovation footprint.

Before serving as Houston's mayor, Turner served for 27 years as the Representative for Texas House District 139. He worked on the House Appropriations Committee for 21 years and served as Speaker Pro Tem for three terms. He was appointed to several Budget Conference Committees to balance the state's budget and serve on the Legislative Budget Board.

Mayor Turner is a trustee of the U.S. Conference of Mayors and serves on the Audit and Finance Committee, Chair of Climate Mayors, member of the C40 and Global Covenant for Mayors for Climate and Energy, President of the African American Mayors Association, and a member of the Environmental Protection Agency's Local Government Advisory Committee.

As a life-long resident of Houston, Mayor Turner is passionate about his city and continues to live in the Acres Homes community where he grew up. He is a graduate of the University of Houston and earned a law degree from Harvard University. He began his law practice at Fulbright & Jaworski L.L.P. and later founded Barnes & Turner Law Firm.





MARIO DIAZ

Diaz is responsible for the overall management of the Houston Airport System's three aviation facilities: George Bush Intercontinental Airport (IAH), William P. Hobby Airport (HOU) and Ellington Airport (EFD). He is one of the industry's leading authorities in the study of future developments in commercial aviation.

Since his arrival in Houston in 2010, Diaz led efforts along three broad strategic fronts: establish Bush Airport as the region's long-haul, full service international airport; convert Hobby Airport to a regional international airport of the Americas; and to develop Ellington as the nations' 10th licensed spaceport.

The airport has welcomed 10 new international passenger airlines and three new international cargo airlines since 2013. Thanks to that growth, 23 air carriers overall now provide international service out of Bush Airport, connecting passengers to 71 international destinations in 38 countries.

In October 2015, Hobby Airport celebrated the completion of a new \$156 million terminal expansion and in 2016, its first full year with international service connecting to the growing market in Latin America, Hobby Airport welcomed more than 800,000 international passengers.

In 2013, Diaz was named "Airport Director of the Year" by Airport Revenue News Magazine and was named "Public Official of the Year" by the University of Houston Master of Public Administration (MPA) Program in 2014. The Houston Business Journal also named him as a finalist in its inaugural "CEO of the Year" competition in 2015.

Prior to his appointment in 2010, Diaz was the deputy general manager for Atlanta's Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport in 1999, where he was responsible for ensuring the daily operational activities of the world's busiest airport. In 1981, he began a 17-year tenure with the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey that included key management positions in leasing, finance, marketing, operations and properties. During this period,

A native of Barranquitas, Puerto Rico, and a licensed private pilot with instrument certification, Diaz earned his Bachelor of Arts degree from Rutgers University in Newark, New Jersey. He also earned a Master of Business Administration in finance from Rutgers Graduate School of Business Administration in New Jersey.





**RIC CAMPO** 

Ric Campo is Chairman of the Port Commission of the Port of Houston Authority. He was appointed to the position in January of 2019 by the City of Houston and Harris County Commissioners Court and was sworn in Feb. 7. He also serves as chairman of the Board of Pilot Commissioners of Harris County Ports, which oversees ship pilot matters.

Mr. Campo is Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer of Camden Property Trust and has served in this capacity since May 1993. He joined a private Houston real estate company after graduating from Oregon State University in 1976, and co-founded Camden's predecessor companies in 1982.

He serves on the Board of Directors of several organizations that focus on the economic development, business outlook and future growth of Houston, including Central Houston, Inc. and the Greater Houston Partnership. Mr. Campo is the past Chairman of the Houston First Corporation, a local government corporation that facilitates the city's economic growth through the business of conventions and the arts. He also was past chairman of the Houston Super Bowl Host Committee, responsible for Super Bowl LI festivities and logistics, including Super Bowl Central, the Business Connect Program and the Committee's charitable arm.

Ric holds strategic roles within the real estate industry. He is currently a member of the National Association of Real Estate Investment Trusts, where he serves on the Board, and the National Multifamily Housing Council, which he formerly chaired, as well as the Urban Land Institute.

Mr. Campo also is a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants.



#### CHRISTOPHER OLSON

Christopher was appointed by Mayor Sylvester Turner in 2018 to serve as the Director for Trade and International Affairs for the City of Houston. In this role, Christopher leads the City's international business development efforts as well as engagement with foreign governments and international organizations.

Prior to his appointment, Christopher held positions as a diplomat, business consultant, and military officer. With the U.S. Department of State, Christopher had diplomatic postings in the Balkans, South and Central Asia, worked as a program manager in Washington, D.C. supervising programs in Africa, the Middle East, and Eastern Europe, and advised U.S. and international business executives on a range of economic, trade, and political issues.

As a business consultant in the private sector, Christopher advised companies on corporate market strategy, organizational structure, and business processes. During his military service Christopher was a U.S. Navy Officer leading large, diverse, cross functional teams. Christopher has supported special warfare operations, worked as a staff officer for the Chief of Naval Operations in the Pentagon, and led antiterrorism and continuity of operations programs.

Christopher is a graduate of Northwestern University with a degree in history and political science and holds a master's degree from the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service. Prior to joining the City of Houston, Christopher obtained an MBA from Rice University Business School with a focus on strategy and innovation where he was recognized as a Jones Scholar for academic and leadership excellence. Christopher helps lead the World Energy City Partnership network of global cities leading the energy transition, is a member of the Beta Gamma Sigma business honors society, was recognized as a Global Leader of Influence by the World Affairs Council and is active in entrepreneurship and veterans' affairs.





**JORGE FRANZ** 

Jorge (George) Franz is Senior Vice President of Tourism and Industry Relations for the Houston First Corporation and President of the Greater Houston Convention and Visitors Bureau. He is a 20-year veteran at the company.

In his Senior VP role, he oversees the Tourism Department of Houston First which is tasked with international leisure promotion of the City of Houston and for various initiatives designed to help promote Houston to potential visitors like the "Houston Marketplace." He also oversees the Houston Film Commission which is tasked with attracting film, television productions to Houston. Lastly, he oversees the Services Department for Houston First which is tasked with the management of events for the company.

In his capacity as President of the Greater Houston Convention and Visitors Bureau, Jorge is tasked with overseeing the operations of the organization and with interaction and value delivery for the 700-members who represent Houston's hospitality sector. It is the largest organization of hospitality professionals in Houston.

Mr. Franz is very active in the Tourism sector. He currently serves on Expedia's Media Solutions Select Board, is on the Executive Board of the Texas Travel Alliance and on the board of the Texas Association of Convention and Visitor Bureaus. He is also a Past Chair of the Governor of Texas' Tourism Advisory Committee.

Mr. Franz was born in Santiago, Chile and has lived in Chile, Venezuela, Spain and the United States. He has also represented Houston personally all around the world, working especially close with Houston's Mayor Sylvester Turner to attract visitors to Houston. He is married to Holly and they have a beautiful eight-year old boy named Ethan.



**TONI BECK** 

Toni Beck is Vice President, External Affairs for Comcast's Houston Region, with responsibility for governmental affairs, external communications and community impact.

Over her more than 25-year career, she has led the development and execution of innovative and effective engagement strategies, and overseen the communications, government relations, stakeholder engagement, sustainability and branding functions at a number of major North American-based companies.

Prior to joining Comcast, Beck was Vice President Corporate Communications and Community Relations at NextDecade, an energy infrastructure development company developing a large-scale liquified natural gas export terminal in south east Texas.

Before that, Beck was the Vice President of Corporate Communications and Community Relations at Waste Management, overseeing all communications and community relations activities for the company. She has also held senior communications and external affairs leadership positions at Entergy Corporation, Spectra Energy and Duke Energy.

Beck holds a Bachelor of Social Science degree from the University of Cape Town, South Africa.







#### NATALIE HEE

Natalie Hee is thrilled to join FOX 26 News as a reporter in her hometown. Prior to this, Natalie was a reporter at KIAH-TV, the CW affiliate in Houston. She has also reported at WDSU-TV, the NBC affiliate in New Orleans and KXAN-TV, the NBC affiliate in Austin, Texas, where she began her news career. Natalie has covered a number of breaking news and weather stories including the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey, the mass shooting at Santa Fe High School, former President George H.W. Bush's funeral and the Astros 2019 World Series run.

Like many families in Houston, Natalie is an "oil baby." Born in Malaysia to a family of ex-pats, she spent majority of her childhood moving to various cities around the world before her family settled in The Woodlands in 2003. She's a graduate of The John Cooper School and an alumna of The University of Texas at Austin. Natalie is a proud Longhorn and honorary LSU Tigers fan -- Hook 'em Horns and Geaux Tigers!

Her family's nomadic lifestyle has also given Natalie the opportunity to travel to countries across the world. She dreams to one day step foot on all seven continents, including Antarctica! When she's not working or traveling, Natalie enjoys perusing for new restaurants and cuisines, listening to live music, dancing, karaokeing, shopping, playing volleyball, binge-watching TV shows, and trying to be artsy.

Natalie has served as co-President of the Asian American Journalists Association's Texas Chapter since 2018 and is a member of the Texas Exes Houston Chapter.





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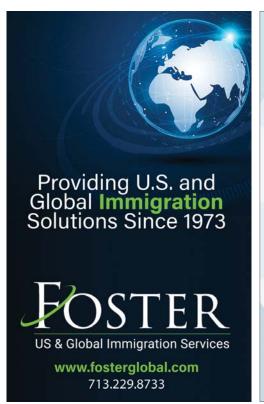
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