



 **TEXAS BUSINESS HALL of FAME**

Annual Future Texas Business Legend Awards Luncheon

Dallas | November 13, 2024

Sponsored by



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OF TEXAS**

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Our Mission



The Texas Business Hall of Fame Foundation honors the accomplishments and contributions of outstanding business leaders in our state by celebrating their impact in both business and community. We tell their stories to inspire and instill their same sense of enterprise, community, and excellence in all generations of Texans.

In addition to recognizing a small group of transformational business leaders each year, the Texas Business Hall of Fame Foundation grants approximately forty financial awards in the higher education, Veteran, and high school communities to those who demonstrate exceptional entrepreneurial aspirations, a commitment to leadership excellence, and a desire to embrace their success as a responsibility to improve their community.

Thank You to Our Sponsor



At Bank of Texas, we help individuals, families and businesses create a better financial future. We work with our clients to achieve long-term financial success by leveraging our collective expertise, while cultivating a supportive and inclusive work environment for our employees, and being a positive force in our community.

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Afternoon Program

WELCOME & INTRODUCTION

Norm Bagwell
Chairman, Bank of Texas

INVOCATION

Amenemopé McKinney
Junior Director, TBHF Alumni Association

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

David S. Huntley
2024 Chairman of the Board, TBHF

LUNCH

FUTURE TEXAS BUSINESS LEGEND AWARDS

Jessica Whitacre Thorne
VP New Initiatives, TBHF Board of Directors

PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

Dr. Lawrence Hanrahan
VP Alumni Association, TBHF Board of Directors

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

Roundtable Participants

MICHAEL M. BOONE

Co-Founder and Senior Counsel, Haynes Boone
Dallas

JOE GEBBIA

Co-Founder, Airbnb; Co-Founder, Samara
Austin

KATHLEEN S. HILDRETH

Co-Founder, M1 Support Services
Denton

DAVID B. MILLER

Co-Founder and Managing Partner, EnCap Investments
Dallas

DAVID ROBINSON

Co-Founder, Admiral Capital Group; Co-Founder, The Carver
Academy; Minority Owner, San Antonio Spurs
San Antonio

TAYLOR SHERIDAN

Film & TV Creator, Writer, Director, Producer, Bosque Ranch
Productions; President, Four Sixes Ranch
Fort Worth



LUKE BARNES
FOUNDER, CRUX SECURITY - AUSTIN
Nau Future Texas Legend Marine Corps Veteran Award
U.S. Marine Corps Reserve, Lieutenant Colonel

Luke has over 20 years of leadership in information security and risk management. As the Founder of Crux Security, an Austin-based cybersecurity consulting and software company, Luke and his team have implemented information security programs, conducted security assessments, secured applications, and supported compliance objectives for companies ranging from Fortune 500 titans to enterprising startups across diverse sectors. Luke holds the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve serving at the Marine Innovation Unit (MIU). As a Marine infantry officer, he had two combat tours to Iraq and served as an Information Warfare Officer within the special operations community. Along with the PMP and several cybersecurity certifications, Luke holds an M.S. in Information Security from UT-Austin and an MBA from the University of Kansas.



DENNIS CAIL
CEO & FOUNDER, ZIRTUE - DALLAS
The Douglas L. Foshee Future Texas Legend Veteran Award
U.S. Navy Systems Engineer

Dennis Cail, CEO & Founder of Zirtue, is an accomplished entrepreneur and Navy Veteran. Zirtue, a rapidly growing FinTech firm, revolutionizes financial inclusion with streamlined loans and automated repayments, supported by partnerships with Morgan Stanley, Google, and others. Under Dennis's guidance, Zirtue has garnered national acclaim as a top 50 FinTech company and has seen rapid month-over-month growth. Dennis's entrepreneurial journey spans over 20 years, marked by leadership roles at PwC and IBM, where he specialized in technology, M&A, and corporate development. His career began as a Systems Engineer in the U.S. Navy, leveraging top-secret clearance to enhance naval communications. Dennis actively contributes to various boards, including the Dallas Regional Chamber and Goodwill Dallas, where he helps bridge wealth gaps in underserved communities. He holds a degree from SMU.



FRANK COPPERSMITH
CEO, SMARTER REALITY - ROUND ROCK
The Miller Family Future Texas Legend Veteran Award
U.S. Air Force Reserve, Colonel

Frank Coppersmith is the CEO of Smarter Reality, an Inc. 5000 and Austin "Fast 50" company in Round Rock that delivers training and simulation software to the Department of Defense using VR and AI. His career spans education, simulation, entertainment, and defense—raising funds from top-tier VCs and leading companies from inception to sale. A frequent speaker on AI, he holds patents in entertainment, training, and computer vision. Frank served 32 years in the U. S. Air Force Reserve, deploying to Turkey, Iraq, and Qatar. Named Austin's "CFO of the Year" in 2010 by the Austin Business Journal, he holds an MBA from the Wharton School, a law degree from Samford University, and a degree in electrical engineering from The Citadel. Frank served as the chair of the Austin Game Developers Association, serving more than 3,000 members of the Austin entertainment software community, and helped developers grow their companies through continuing education opportunities, networking events, and expert presentations.



EDWARD CRAWFORD
CO-FOUNDER & CO-CEO, COLTALA HOLDINGS - DALLAS
The Greg Armstrong Future Texas Legend Veteran Award
U.S. Naval Intelligence Officer, Bronze Star

Edward Crawford is an award-winning business leader and the Co-Founder and Co-CEO of Coltala Holdings. Edward's journey has ranged from being a Peace Corps Volunteer in the Dominican Republic to leadership roles at Goldman Sachs and the U.S. Navy, to building multiple successful companies. Edward co-founded War Veterans Fund, aiding war Veterans to serve in congress and he has served appointments with Texas Economic Development and the Texas Work Force Commission. Edward is a TEDx speaker and leader in the "Mission and Margin" movement. He is dedicated to integrating service with entrepreneurial success and nurturing leaders driven by purpose and impact. Edward served as a Naval Intel Officer in Latin America and was the Tribal and Political Advisor for a Special Operations Task Force in Afghanistan earning the Bronze Star. Edward is a Board Member of The Dallas YPO Chapter and has degrees from TCU and Tulane, as well as an MBA from MIT.



DAVID HOLLAND
FOUNDER & CEO, LONGTAB BREWING COMPANY - SAN ANTONIO
Future Texas Legend Army Veteran Award in Honor of James Galloway
U.S. Army National Guard, Special Forces Warrant Officer (Ret)

David Holland is the founder and CEO of Longtab Brewing Company in San Antonio, Texas. He started Longtab to honor the military unit he served in for over three decades as a Special Forces Medic and Warrant Officer. Longtab's award-winning brand and mission celebrate the history, culture, and Veterans of the US Army Special Forces, or "Green Berets." Despite opening in early 2020 during the pandemic, Longtab has grown in size and revenue by over 300% since its inception. The company is now in the early stages of opening a second location. In addition to brewing great beer, David uses Longtab to raise awareness and funds for Veteran-supporting charities through dedication beers named in honor of fallen Green Berets. Longtab has raised over \$30,000 for charity. David is also a registered Texas Architect and holds a Bachelor's Degree in Architecture with honors from Auburn University.



JOSHUA LAWTON
FOUNDER & MANAGING PARTNER, SQUARED COMPASS - AUSTIN
The Pefanis Family Future Texas Legend Veteran Award
U.S. Army, Staff Sergeant Combat Medic, Bronze Star Medal

Joshua Lawton is a U. S. Army Veteran, former combat medic, investor, and serial entrepreneur. He has founded four businesses, two of which were successfully acquired. His company Abraxas, a digital analytics platform for analog and out-of-home advertising, was recognized as a top Texas startup in 2018. His current venture, Squared Compass, founded in 2019, specializes in identifying, bidding on, and procuring government contracts for small and medium organizations, helping clients secure over \$200 million in contracts and grants. Joshua worked for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs in Washington D.C. and served as a Senior Consultant at Booz Allen Hamilton. He serves on the Texas Advisory Committee to the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition, advocating for investments in development and diplomacy. Joshua holds a B.A. from George Mason University, an MBA from Johns Hopkins University, and an M.S. in Technology Commercialization from UT McCombs.



EMMA KONET
CO-FOUNDER & CTO, TIERRA CLIMATE - HOUSTON
T.T. & W.F. Chao Chairman's Award
Rice University

Emma Konet is Co-Founder and CTO of Tierra Climate, a Houston-based, venture capital-backed startup that is accelerating the clean energy transition. Tierra Climate's mission is to achieve a Net Zero power grid by unlocking and monetizing grid decarbonization services for batteries. She previously worked three years at battery developer Key Capture Energy as Director of Market Strategy & Operations. At Key Capture, Emma led a team of twelve traders and software developers to build the optimization platform for over 300 megawatts of grid-scale batteries. Prior to Key Capture, Emma spent four years at Citibank as a power trader managing risk in East power markets. In addition, Emma holds an MBA from Rice University's Jones Graduate School of Business and graduated Summa Cum Laude from Tulane University with a B.S. in Chemistry and Mathematics. Emma was selected as a Forbes 30 Under 30 Honoree for Energy in 2023.



LARISSA MARTINEZ
FOUNDER & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CIRCLE OF ARMS - SAN ANTONIO
Shaun D. Kennedy Award of Excellence in Empathy & Innovation
Texas A&M University School of Law

Larissa Martinez is a serial entrepreneur and U.S. Air Force Veteran with a B.S. in Technology and a minor in Project Management from Texas A&M University - San Antonio. She founded Sweet Girl Ice, crafting gourmet granitas with brioche bread, and COA Transportation LLC. Her nonprofit, Circle of Arms (COA), founded in 2019, provides medical escorts and rides for Veterans and seniors undergoing sedative procedures. COA also offers art, equine & outdoor therapy, conflict resolution, and mental health first aid classes. Larissa serves on the Texas MST Policy Working Group, Veteran Advisory Council, Mayor's Commission on the Status of Women, and the Governor's Sexual Assault Taskforce. She is pursuing a master's in legal studies from Texas A&M School of Law, graduating in Summer 2025, to further mental health awareness and advocate for minority groups.



KIM McCORMACK
VICE PRESIDENT, JPMORGAN CHASE - HOUSTON
AT&T Future Executive Leader of Distinction Award in Honor of Randall Stephenson
Rice University

As Vice President on the Global Technology Team at JPMorgan Chase in Houston, Kim develops and drives technology strategies around financing, supply chain, procurement, and digitization while leading cross-functional teams that manage over \$2.5 billion worth of technology hardware. In 2020, Kim spearheaded a Business Resource Group at JPMorgan Chase that now has over 2,000 members. She started this organization to empower young professionals by providing them with career development and networking resources along with creating volunteer events in the Houston community. In 2013, Kim graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with a B.S. in Mathematics and minors in Chemistry and Neuroscience while playing Division 1 Soccer. In May 2024, Kim received her MBA from Rice University's Jones Graduate School of Business. Her future goals include furthering her career at JP Morgan Chase, mentoring others, and one day starting her own business.



SIDDHARTH THAKUR
CO-FOUNDER & CEO, PARADIGM ROBOTICS - AUSTIN
The Brett Wiggs Innovative Leadership Award
The University of Texas at Austin

Siddharth Thakur is a serial founder, researcher, roboticist, and innovator. He is a fourth-year student at The University of Texas studying Electrical and Computer Engineering at the Cockrell School of Engineering. He is the founder and CEO of Paradigm Robotics, which builds advanced robotics solutions to protect firefighters and first responders in the most hazardous environments—a company he is expanding nationally in the next five years through a wide variety of public and private sector partnerships. Before founding Paradigm, he co-founded and served as the CTO of Gazelle Ecosolutions, a climate-tech startup developing geospatial data platforms that enable remote sensing for customers around the world. Siddharth is the 2022 Greater Austin Business Awards Entrepreneur of the Year, was on Austin Inno's top 24 under 24, Diversity in Action's 20 under 20, and has been featured in TechCrunch, Fortune, and more. Siddharth's vision is to build technologies to solve the world's most challenging problems.



JENNY BREUER
BUSINESS INCUBATOR & ENTREPRENEURSHIP TEACHER, BOERNE ISD - SAN ANTONIO
The Texas Business Hall of Fame Teacher of Excellence Award Supported by Alan and Barbara Dreeben
Champion High School

Jenny Breuer is a seasoned business educator and coach with 27 years of experience, including 11 years with Boerne ISD. She currently teaches in the Career and Technical Education Department as a Business Incubator and Entrepreneurship teacher and serves as the CTE Department Chair. In 2022, Jenny was named Boerne ISD District Teacher of the Year and earned the Kens 5 Excel Award in 2023. Before joining Boerne ISD, she worked for Spurs Sports & Entertainment and spent 17 years teaching and coaching at Trinity University, UTSA, Hanover College, and The University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Jenny holds a Bachelor's degree in Sport Management from Belmont Abbey College and a Master's in Sport Administration from The University of Tennessee. She lives in Boerne with her husband and is the proud mother of four.



LESLIE WEIL
CAREER & TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT HEAD, COMAL ISD - SAN ANTONIO
The Texas Business Hall of Fame Teacher of Excellence Award Supported by Alan and Barbara Dreeben
Pieper High School

Leslie Weil is a dedicated educator with an entrepreneurial mindset, passionate about building community connections. As the Career & Technology Department Head at Pieper High School in Comal ISD, she teaches courses in Entrepreneurship, Marketing, and Career Preparation, emphasizing real-world applications. Leslie is actively involved in fostering community partnerships through initiatives like Community Job Shadow Day, serves on the district's Career and Technology Community Advisory Board, and connects students with volunteer opportunities to develop a strong sense of service. She also leads student organizations such as DECA, providing leadership and business experience. Leslie and her husband, both educators, live and work in Bulverde, Texas, where they are raising their three children, all students in the district. With a background in marketing and a commitment to innovative education, Leslie strives to inspire students to discover their unique talents and pursue their passions confidently.



KASSIDY ALLEN
FOUNDER, CEO & PRESIDENT, KRESCENT - FORT WORTH
Future Texas Business Legend Award
Texas Christian University

Kassidy Allen is the founder, CEO, and President of krescent, the first manufacturer of allergen-friendly foods specifically for college students. Drawing from her experience living with ten food allergies, Kassidy is dedicated to empowering the food allergy community. Many college campuses lack diverse allergen-friendly options, making it difficult to find safe alternatives. krescent solves this problem with accessible, on-demand meals delivered to your door. Officially launching in early 2025, customers will order online, with nationwide shipping available. The company recently launched a new website and finalized its roster of allergen-friendly recipes. As the brand grows, krescent seeks to partner with colleges nationwide to raise awareness. Kassidy is a senior at Texas Christian University, double majoring in Marketing and Entrepreneurship, with a Leadership minor and a Consultative Sales Certificate. She is Vice President of Program Development for the BNSF Neeley Leadership Program and will graduate in May 2025.



CALEB BIGGURS
CO-FOUNDER & EXECUTIVE PRODUCER, AREA51MEDIA - FORT WORTH
The Mitchell Family Foundation Award
Texas Christian University

Caleb Biggurs is a strategic content and media architect known for marketing, media production, and digital audience engagement. His entrepreneurial journey began after his college football career, when he co-founded Switch, a consumer-to-consumer marketplace in Lagos, Nigeria that allows college students to buy, sell, and trade within their peer network—an untapped market in the region. He then founded Area51Media, a pioneering marketing agency serving music, fashion, tech, real estate, and beyond. The agency's success led to the launch of Area51Radio, a platform and radio show spotlighting independent talent through interviews, performances, and targeted promotions. Under his leadership, Area51Radio has amassed over 3 million views, growing 20-30 thousand views per episode. Caleb holds an MBA in Marketing and a B.S. in Political Science from Texas Christian University and is currently focused on expanding Area51 full-time while pursuing creative projects like his short film.



HAILEY BROWN
ENGINEER, STREAMLINE INNOVATIONS, INC. - SAN ANTONIO
The Mike A. Myers Award
The University of Texas at Austin

Since moving to San Antonio in 2017 after earning his mechanical engineering degree from Georgia Tech, Hailey Brown has been instrumental in developing the technology and team at Streamline Innovations. He helped grow the company from an early-stage startup to an institutionally funded GreenTech firm with over 100 employees. Before Streamline, Hailey honed his problem-solving skills at the Georgia Tech Research Institute and served as an engineering mentor for the Westminster FIRST Robotics Team. He also co-founded Wobble Tech, an award-winning health technology platform specializing in concussion recovery for young athletes. Today, Hailey is focused on tackling the technical and organizational challenges at Streamline as it advances sustainable solutions for reducing toxic emissions in the industrial and energy sectors. He is also pursuing an MBA at The University of Texas at Austin to further his business expertise.



CALEB BUSE
FOUNDER, BUSE'S PRESSURE WASHING & FINDR - BEAUMONT
The Ben J. Rogers Award
Lamar University

Caleb Buse, a Smith-Hutson Scholar at Lamar University, is a driven entrepreneur and student leader. In 2022, he founded Buse's Pressure Washing to service Hardin County. Recognizing the importance of community, Caleb established the Future Entrepreneurs Organization at Lamar University to connect local entrepreneurs and students through campus events. In 2023, Caleb participated in a business pitch competition and is set to compete again in 2024. His extensive extracurricular activities include positions in the College of Business Student Advisory Council and the Student-Faculty Relations Committee. Professionally, Caleb completed a tax internship with RSM in Houston and is currently a commercial banking intern at Stellar Bank in Beaumont. Recently, he has begun developing a platform, FindR, to help college-bound students find affordable pathways to marketable majors and careers. A triple major in finance, accounting, and industrial engineering, Caleb is set to graduate in Fall 2025.



CHRISTOPHER CASTLE
OWNER, BUILT WITH FAITH MOTORSPORTS - BOYD
 The Mitchell Family Foundation Award
 Dallas Baptist University

Christopher Castle is the owner of Built with Faith Motorsports, specializing in building muscle cars and providing classic car restoration services. Inspired by his faith and passion for all things fast, Christopher founded Built with Faith in 2022 after retiring from the U. S. Air Force. Throughout his service, Sergeant Castle deployed multiple times to repair aircraft, earning several service medals for his dedication and expertise. While not deployed, he furthered his education, earning a bachelor's degree from Embry Riddle University and later attending Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. After 23 years of military service, he transitioned to civilian life and is currently completing an MBA in Marketing at Dallas Baptist University. Christopher has purchased and built over 100 cars since he was 16. He now uses his extensive skills to mentor others while profiting from the sale and repair of classic vehicles.



VICTORIA CLARK
FOUNDER & CEO, SPA LUXE - GEORGETOWN
 The Paul Foster Future Texas Business Legend Award
 Baylor University

Victoria Clark is an entrepreneur committed to uplifting her team and community through family-oriented leadership, service, faith, and education. Victoria's entrepreneurial journey began when she inherited a struggling nationwide charter bus company, Clark Travel, in 2014. By implementing strategic restructuring and fostering a family-centric work culture, she transformed Clark Travel into a multimillion-dollar success within four years. In 2018, Victoria co-founded The Spa Mart, a B2B e-commerce distribution company, before venturing into Spa Luxe, an award-winning resort-style spa ranked as one of the top three spas in Texas by "Happy to be Texas." Serving as the president of her local business networking group and on the boards of the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Boys and Girls Club of Georgetown, Victoria fosters strong business and community relationships. She is currently pursuing an MBA at Baylor University.



JONAH DODDRIDGE
FOUNDER & CEO, DODDRIDGE LANDSCAPING & REEL CAUSE FISHING - HOUSTON
 The T.T. & W.F. Chao Award
 Rice University

Jonah Doddridge is the founder and CEO of two successful business ventures, both of which he operates as a full-time student. In 2020 he founded Doddridge Landscaping LLC, a company servicing the DFW area, which earned \$120,000 in sales in 2023 under his leadership. Leveraging digital marketing and customer referrals, he achieved 39% year-over-year sales growth. Jonah also leads Reel Cause Fishing LLC, founded in 2021, a venture that combines business with community service. Achieving a 10% nominal return on investments within two years and sponsoring fishing experiences for cancer patients, this venture won the prestigious Shaddock Seed Fund Program pitch competition in 2022. In addition to his entrepreneurial pursuits, Jonah is also an accomplished athlete, having played football at Rice. Jonah is currently pursuing a B.A. in Business with a Finance concentration from Rice University's Jones School of Business, with an anticipated graduation date of December 2024.



MASON ESPEDAL
FOUNDER, DIGIMADE STUDIOS, ESPEDAL CREATIVE & VELOCITY PATCHES - SAN MARCOS
 The Alan and Barbara Dreeben Future Texas Business Legend Award
 Texas State University

Mason Espedal is the founder and owner of three successful businesses. He launched his first venture, Velocity Patches, at age 15. Velocity Patches manufactures and imports custom patches and insignia for police, fire, EMS, and other government agencies. In 2023, Mason founded Espedal Creative, a freelance design agency catering to local clients on single-engagement projects. His latest venture, DigiMade Studios, is a full-service design and marketing agency. Alongside his partner, Mason specializes in brand development and building brand awareness. DigiMade Studios delivers intricate brand identities, logos, websites, packaging designs, 3D modeling, renders, and engaging social media content. Across his three businesses, Mason has served over 5,000 customers and generated \$400,000 in revenue. Mason recently graduated from Texas State University, where he received multiple academic scholarships and prizes, with bachelor's degrees in business management (focusing on Entrepreneurship) and communication design.



JOHN GRAHAM
OWNER & CEO, WHITE ROCK PRESSURE WASHING - DALLAS
 The Mitchell Family Foundation Award
 The University of Texas at Dallas

John Graham is the founder of White Rock Pressure Washing, an exterior cleaning service in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. He launched the business at 18 and has grown it from a solo operation to a team of six, serving both residential and commercial clients. More than just a pressure washing company, White Rock also offers window cleaning, gutter cleaning, holiday lighting, and commercial building maintenance. White Rock has earned a strong reputation, reflected in its top-rated Google reviews. Since 2020, John has scaled the business to multiple six-figure revenues. Beyond his business, John serves as the lead counselor at Athleader, a Dallas-based after-school program for young leaders and athletes aged 5-11. He oversees onboarding, hiring, team management, and coaches his own group. John is pursuing a B. S. in Accounting at The University of Texas at Dallas and plans to earn a Master's in Accounting to further enhance his business acumen.



JARET V. GRAYSON
OWNER & FOUNDER, LONE STAR SPORTS - DALLAS
 The Mitchell Family Foundation Award
 Dallas Baptist University

Jaret V. Grayson has embodied an entrepreneurial spirit from a young age, turning his passions into successful ventures. Starting with a lawn mowing business and a lemonade stand, he expanded to selling livestock and established a pressure-washing business. Prior to attending college, he owned and operated JV'S Pressure Washing for two years, managing all aspects of the business and growing a large clientele. At 21, Jaret V. left a full-time job to attend Dallas Baptist University as a first-generation college student. In 2021, Jaret V. combined his interest in sports and social media savvy to found Lone Star Sports, a media brand covering high school and college sports across Texas through digital content, social media, and a podcast—a platform he has successfully monetized to support his college education. When not working or studying, Jaret V. volunteers at his church as a youth leader. Jaret V. graduated from DBU this summer with a Bachelor's in Marketing.



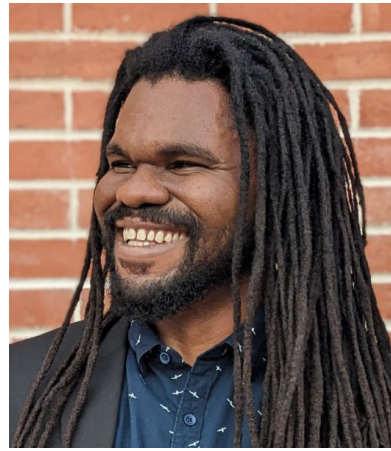
MICHELLE GUZMAN
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, FIRST NATIONAL BANK TEXAS - KILLEEN
 The SWBC Foundation Award
 Sam Houston State University

Michelle Marie Williams Guzman is the Accounting Deputy Controller, SVP at First National Bank Texas, located in Killeen. Her banking interests were sparked during her junior year at Sam Houston State University (SHSU) when she had the pleasure of meeting Dr. James Bexley, who is the reason she has devoted twenty-five years to the Banking Industry. She witnessed the Bank grow from \$384 million to \$4.3 billion in total assets. Throughout her journey, she has navigated regulatory and legislative changes that have had a significant impact on the Banking Industry, implemented new accounting standards, and weathered some of the most challenging times in financial history. Collaborating with remarkable individuals, she has been able to incorporate their leadership skills into her own management style. In 2009 she pursued her biggest challenge, becoming a CPA. Michelle's latest milestone was coming full circle to graduate with her EMBA in Banking and Financial Institutions from SHSU in 2024.



MICAH HARKLESS
FOUNDER, PARLORLENS & MONASTERY MEDIA - DALLAS
 The Mitchell Family Foundation Award
 Dallas Baptist University

Micah Harkless is a serial entrepreneur with a proven track record of building successful businesses. In high school, he created a YouTube account and taught himself video production, photo editing, and digital content creation. Those skills and his interest in art led to the creation of two media agencies. Monastery Media specializes in wedding photography and videography and creating original content for local organizations and nonprofits. His second agency, ParlorLens, provides tailored social media content, audience growth strategies, professional photography, custom-built websites, email marketing, and SEO tools for tattoo artists. Later this year, he is launching a new venture, Kilter, a high-end jewelry brand partnered with influencers. Along with running his businesses, Micah works part-time at In-N-Out Burger and studies Entrepreneurship at Dallas Baptist University, graduating in the fall 2025. When not working or studying, Micah volunteers at his church and with the Prison Entrepreneurship Program.



BEN HODGE
FOUNDER & CEO, EEVET, INC. - SAN ANTONIO
 The William E. "Bill" Greehey Award
 St. Mary's University

Ben is a seasoned entrepreneur with experience in technology, real estate, ranching, healthcare, and entertainment, currently pursuing an MBA at St. Mary's University in San Antonio. His entrepreneurial experience has taught him the value of transparency, which forms the foundation of his AI booking service, EEVET. This platform piqued his interest in technology and motivated him to learn various coding languages and agile software development techniques. In 2017, he was invited to the Collision Conference and Project Music in Nashville and was awarded \$40,000 in equity financing and \$350,000 in sponsorships from Rackspace and Microsoft to accelerate EEVET's development. Despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, he pivoted to leverage his software development and digital marketing expertise to stay in business. Now, as the live entertainment industry rebounds, Ben has relaunched his platform and plans to use his award and the TBHF network to continue scaling EEVET.



ANISHA HOLLA
FOUNDER & CEO, FOODIFY - DALLAS
 The Mitchell Family Foundation Award
 The University of Texas at Dallas

Anisha is the founder and CEO of Foodify, a first-of-its-kind algorithmic "dating app" that matches small restaurants to local food influencers. Since its launch, the company has won recognition on multiple news outlets, made over 180 restaurant-influencer matches, and generated over 56 billion social media impressions, helping dining rooms form lines out the door. She found her passion for restaurants when she was scouted by the Dallas Observer as a food writer and later founded Dallas's 5th largest food influencer account—with over 40 million yearly Instagram impressions. It was noticing social media's impact on mom-and-pop restaurants that drove her to launch Foodify. While an undergrad at UT Dallas, Anisha has also been named a Coca Cola Scholar, awarded the Eugene McDermott scholarship, worked at the White House Office of Communications, written a book on overachieving, and started Mind Journey, a nonprofit seeking to provide teenagers with access to free resources aimed at improving mental health.



ANTHONY KELLEY
FOUNDER, THE ENGINEERING ROOM - BURLESON
 The Kelcy Warren Graduate Fellowship for Engineering Award
 The University of Texas at Arlington

Anthony Kelley is a dynamic student, engineer, and entrepreneur making waves in the automotive industry. Set to graduate with a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from The University of Texas at Arlington next fall, Anthony has already founded The Engineering Room, a cutting-edge company specializing in bespoke carbon fiber car parts. Since its inception in 2023, The Engineering Room has redefined customization in the automotive world, creating avant-garde designs like exhaust systems, body panels, and steering wheels. Anthony's commitment to exceptional customer service and a strong online presence has rapidly expanded the business's reach. Leading a team of three full-time employees, he also implemented a mentorship program to foster professional growth. With projected revenues of \$120,000 this year, Anthony is now working on an innovative online platform to connect automotive enthusiasts with custom car parts manufacturers, further solidifying his impact on the industry.



JUDE LUGO
FOUNDER & CEO, LECTURELOGGER - DALLAS
 The Robert H. Dedman Award
 Southern Methodist University

Jude Lugo is a senior business student at Southern Methodist University in Dallas. Jude is the founder of LectureLogger, an app that supports university student success by tracking key indicators of engagement, starting with attendance. During LectureLogger's first two semesters, 2,100 students used the app, with notable increases in academic success. LectureLogger has been recognized as one of the "Most Disruptive Business School Startups" by Poets & Quants business school publication and won more than \$85,000 from pitch contests. Jude launched his first business venture, an e-commerce store, while in 7th grade. Since then, he's sold more than \$1.5 million worth of items, received an eBay grant, and reinvested a significant portion of his profits back into the community. At SMU, Jude represents the student body as a voting member of the University's Board of Trustees and mentors his peers through SMU's Big iDeas program and Student Senate.



JOHN NAVARRO
CEO & FOUNDER, BLYNX, INC. - SAN ANTONIO
 The Harvey Najim Future Texas Business Legend Award
 The University of Texas at San Antonio

John Navarro is the co-founder and CEO of Blynx, Inc., which makes sophisticated lighting control accessible to the public. At Blynx, John develops affordable hardware alongside user-friendly software, that enables users to effortlessly create complex light shows. Blynx went through the Geekdom Incubator Program, and John participated in the Capital Factory Fellowship and Google Latinx Leadership Summit. A notable achievement came when Blynx placed 3rd in the \$100 thousand Venture Tech Pitch Competition as sophomores, competing against all senior teams. Currently an Electrical Engineering major at The University of Texas at San Antonio, John blends his engineering knowledge with a fervent entrepreneurial spirit. His passion extends beyond lighting to innovating medical devices, particularly AI models and simulation software for device development. John is driven by a commitment to transforming industries through technology, aiming to introduce solutions that address real-world challenges.



MICHELLE NG
MHA CANDIDATE & CO-FOUNDER, AR SMARTSHOP - SAN ANTONIO
 The Doug & Martha Hawthorne Family Fund Award
 Trinity University

Born and raised in Taiwan, Michelle moved to the United States with her family at age ten. She earned her undergraduate degree from Baylor University, majoring in Health Science Studies with a minor in Business Administration. While at Baylor, Michelle co-founded AR SmartShop, an innovative augmented reality grocery shopping app tailored to students with demanding schedules. The app replicates the in-store shopping experience from home, with a focus on promoting healthy eating habits. Michelle's keen understanding of market demands in college towns and consumer behavior contributed to the app's success. She is currently pursuing a Master of Healthcare Administration at Trinity University, with an anticipated graduation in the fall of 2025. Michelle has since exited AR SmartShop and is focused on her next venture, developing ID chip card technology to streamline patient information storage and access, with plans to license this technology to health insurance companies.



JENNIFER OLIVOS
FOUNDER, OPALNOPAL - MISSION
 James and Kathleen Collins & Vantage Bank Texas Future Texas Business Legend Award
 The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

Jennifer Olivos is an entrepreneurial leader with a strong focus on sustainability and innovation. Holding a bachelor's degree in finance and economics and currently pursuing an MBA, she has a solid foundation in business management and strategic planning. Jennifer's entrepreneurial journey began in high school when she conceived the idea for OpalNopal, a venture creating eco-friendly paints from nopales-based pigments. This sustainable alternative to conventional paints aligns with Texas's growing emphasis on environmental stewardship. Currently in the prototype phase, OpalNopal plans to launch next year online. Jennifer's leadership and market acumen earned her a first-place win in the National Blackstone LaunchPad Idea Competition. With a formula that uses just four natural ingredients—nopales, coarse salt, lime, and water—OpalNopal offers a cleaner, more ecological approach to paint manufacturing. Jennifer is poised to make a significant impact on the industry, championing a sustainable future.



XAVIER PIPER
FOUNDER & CEO, SUPPLYFY - DALLAS
 The Mitchell Family Foundation Award
 The University of Dallas

Xavier Piper is the founder and CEO of SupplyFy, a Dallas-based third-party logistics firm dedicated to empowering small businesses and startups. Set to launch in January 2025, SupplyFy will offer tailored solutions to simplify the complexities of online retail, including seamless order processing, warehousing, and distribution. Xavier identified a gap in the market during his freshman year of college, realizing that startups needed a logistics partner offering exceptional customer support and flexibility to market trends. Before SupplyFy, Xavier founded Orbari, a custom merchandising platform for small creators, and Trenbolic, a trend-driven clothing company. His experience in these industries provided him with a deep understanding of manufacturing logistics and small business needs. Having exited both ventures, Xavier now focuses entirely on SupplyFy while also pursuing his studies at the University of Dallas. In his spare time, he volunteers with Badger Boys State as a content creator and marketing strategist.



HASSAN SBEITI
OWNER & OPERATOR, SWIFT AUTO - HOUSTON
 The William Zartler Future Texas Business Legend Award
 Texas A&M University

Hassan Sbeiti is the founder, owner, and operator of Swift Auto, an automotive dealership in Houston. Since founding Swift Auto in 2020, Hassan has grown his inventory from a 5 to a 75-car lot. Through strategic marketing, effective employee training programs, and product diversification, Hassan established a loyal clientele, which allowed him to sell the retail portion of his business. He now focuses strictly on wholesale, selling to other dealers. Hassan's leadership extends to his role as Assistant Director of the TX Automotive Dealer Webinar. His previous entrepreneurial experience includes partnerships in two successful restaurants. Academically, he holds dual degrees in Finance and Accounting from the University of Houston and is pursuing an MBA at Texas A&M's Mays Business School, where he has received multiple honors and merit-based scholarships. Hassan is active in his community, regularly volunteering and lending his administrative and technical expertise to startups within several industries.



PRANJAL SHETH
CO-FOUNDER, LIQUIDIUM - HOUSTON
 T.T. & W.F. Chao Award
 University of Houston

Pranjal Sheth, a Houston native, is a first-generation college student graduating in Fall 2024 from the University of Houston. Pranjal is an award-winning entrepreneur and local community leader focused on encouraging entrepreneurship in the Texas business ecosystem. He is the CFO and co-founder at LiQuidium, a startup focused on providing sustainable, low-cost critical mineral extraction services. He fell in love with finance through his experience at investment banks and private equity funds and with energy entrepreneurship as a fellow for the Texas Entrepreneurship Exchange for Energy, an MIT-run program. Pranjal previously co-founded two additional startups: Stedu Association, a nonprofit focused on providing resources and support to students in STEM, and Pecan Credit, a platform to connect developers of climate-tech projects with investors. Pranjal enjoys the thrill of working with different personalities on unique projects and plans to become an operational growth leader for companies.



WYATT STINEBAUGH
CEO & FOUNDER, BY-A-NOSE TRAINING SYSTEMS - COLLEGE STATION
 The McFerrin Center for Entrepreneurship Future Texas Business Legend Award In Honor of James Galloway, '29 - Texas A&M University

Wyatt Stinebaugh is the CEO & founder of By-A-Nose, a venture capital-backed startup revolutionizing the barrel racing industry, and a managing partner of Stinebaugh Racing, a horse racing and breeding investment portfolio. As the founder of By-A-Nose, he financed, designed, and manufactured a patented rodeo timing system that solves long-standing industry issues and ensures the integrity of the sport. By-A-Nose, unveiled this year, is officially partnered with the Women's Professional Rodeo Association. Wyatt is the third generation in a horse racing family. He began working in the industry at a young age, and has become the head placing judge at Ruidoso Downs. He earned a B.S. in Wildlife & Fisheries Sciences with a minor in Genetics and as an undergraduate researcher, presented at global conferences. Currently pursuing an MBA at Texas A&M University, Wyatt serves as Assistant Director of Aggies in Business and he interns at Power Transitions, a rapidly growing energy startup and EnCap portfolio company.



TOM VAZHEKATT
CO-FOUNDER & CEO, ROUTORA, INC. - DALLAS
 The Mitchell Family Foundation Award
 The University of Texas at Dallas

Tom Vazhekatt is the Co-Founder and CEO of Routora, a route-optimization platform revolutionizing logistics. While earning his Computer Science degree at UT Dallas, Tom leveraged his technical expertise and passion for sustainability to tackle challenges faced by drivers and small businesses. After winning UT Dallas's Big Idea competition and raising over \$100k in funding, he launched Routora, which creates faster, cost-efficient multi-stop routes. Through an interactive dashboard via web or mobile app, users can add stops, visualize routes, and manage their entire journey. Leading a team of seven, Tom has grown Routora to serve 45,000 drivers across 90+ countries, saving over 2 million miles and reducing CO2 emissions by 934 metric tons. Routora's impact extends to sectors like real estate, sales, field services, and home healthcare. Tom, who enjoys playing soccer, has also represented UT Dallas on the Men's club soccer team.



HOLT MILLER
OWNER & OPERATOR, CAPPUCCINO MONK FOOD TRUCK - SAN ANTONIO
 Ishaan Thakur Outstanding High School Entrepreneur Award
 Pieper High School

Holt Miller began his entrepreneurial journey in 7th grade by founding SA Shoe Club, a high-end sneaker resale business that generated over \$325,000 in revenue. With his earnings, he invested in a mobile shoe bus, organizing pop-up events around San Antonio. He later pivoted to launch Miller Enterprises, a digital marketing agency supporting small businesses. Holt is now launching Cappuccino Monk, a food truck offering fresh donuts, artisanal coffee, and homemade pastries, targeting busy individuals in Comal County. With a focus on sustainable growth and exceptional customer experience, he plans to scale the business thoughtfully. A senior at Pieper High School, Holt was a top 15 finalist in DECA's Business Growth Plan competition and earned the title of International Champion in 2023. Recently accepted to Texas A&M's Mays Business School, Holt aims to expand his businesses and invest in real estate, positioning himself as a rising entrepreneurial leader.



GRANT STEINAUER
FOUNDER, GS3DIMENSIONAL - AUSTIN
 TBHF Alumni Association Outstanding High School Entrepreneur Award
 in Honor of Coulter and Lily Rush Hoppess
 Westlake High School

Grant Steinauer is an accomplished entrepreneur and engineer, specializing in custom 3D-printed products, with a focus on iconic university buildings and personalized designs. His passion for 3D printing began in elementary school, and by selling items on his school bus, he built a thriving business with over 5,000 sales and \$140K in revenue. In 2022, Grant officially founded GS3Dimensional, and his business continues to grow rapidly. With 15 3D printers running around the clock, Grant's unique designs are sold online and at retailers like The University of Texas Co-Op, where they are displayed during UT football games. Licensed through the Collegiate Licensing Company, his products serve high-profile clients, including The University of Texas. Grant plans to study Mechanical Engineering with a focus on Additive Manufacturing, continuing to innovate and meet unique design needs.

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