

# Texas Trailblazer

A quarterly newsletter brought to you by the

★ TEXAS BUSINESS HALL of FAME



## A letter from Amanda Brock, TBHF Chairman

Dear TBHF Network,

I am writing to you on the eve of our 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual Induction Dinner and in the final month of my second term as the Hall of Fame's Chair. Thank you to everyone in our network who made this year so exceptional—especially our Directors and Alumni leaders who have shaped such an impactful agenda. Thank you most of all to our 2025 inductees who have supported so many tables at our event and participated in our mission in such individual, unique ways. Honoring them on our stage is one of the greatest privileges of this role.



Through your support, our organization is growing by leaps and bounds, and it is because of the visionaries we engage in our mission. We look forward to introducing and awarding our organization's newest visionaries at our upcoming Awards Luncheon. Thank you to our Legends, Directors, and former Scholar recipients who support these prizes. These awards validate a work ethic, optimism and sense of duty that need to be preserved and perpetuated more than ever.

Last but not least, I would like to thank our longtime presenting sponsor Texas Capital. Thank you, especially, to their Chairman, President & CEO Rob Holmes for his continued confidence in our staff and organization and to Kayla Riley for overseeing our partnership for the past two years.

I look forward to seeing it all come together on our 2025 stage. Thank you for the part you all play in making us a national model for others trying to foster the same level of civic-minded business leadership that we enjoy in Texas.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amanda Brock".

Amanda Brock, TBHF Chairman

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# Sponsor Perspective: Texas Capital

## Matthew Johnson, Managing Director and Head of Equity Sales, Trading and Research at Texas Capital

Matthew oversees research, execution, and origination for institutional investors, bringing extensive banking experience from leadership roles at Barclays Capital and Lehman Brothers. Matthew earned a B.A. in Communications and an M.B.A. from Penn State. He also serves as Chairman of the Board for iDonate and is a registered principal.

### **You joined Texas Capital in 2025 from Barclays where you served as Head of Americas Equities. What attracted you to Texas Capital and why did you make the switch?**

I was drawn to Texas Capital because of the people – several of whom are former colleagues – and the strength of the executive team. Their passion and alignment with the firm’s values were immediately evident. After spending my entire life in the Northeast, I was inspired by the unmatched growth and energy in Texas. Texas Capital is the largest lender to Texas-based businesses and one of the fastest-growing commercial and investment banks in the U.S. The opportunity to help build an equity business was too compelling to pass up.

### **From Wall Street to Y’all Street, what has your personal experience been like as a new Texan?**

It has been incredibly positive. Texas has a momentum that is hard to ignore – from the economy to the pro-business environment, everything feels forward-looking. My wife and I were welcomed with open arms, despite not being from here. Texas is a big place, full of opportunity, and the spirit is warm and resilient. There is a real sense there’s nothing Texans can’t do.

### **What does the addition of equity sales, trading and research mean for your clients?**

The transformation of Texas Capital has been remarkable. Adding equities is a natural next step in the firm’s evolution – it is already a fee-generating business, even though it is highly competitive and difficult to enter. Our lending capabilities give us a unique edge, and Texas Capital is well-positioned to become the premier investment bank in Texas. Equities are essential to that journey, particularly in small and mid-cap products where there is significant alpha to be captured.

### **With the attention and traction around Y’all Street, why is Texas an exciting place to be?**

The diversification of the Texas economy, which now ranks the 8th largest in the world, is dynamic, innovative and inspiring. People outside of Texas often underestimate the state’s economy – but Texans are proud to invite others in and give them access to the impressive things happening here.

### **It is an honor to have Texas Capital sponsor our 2025 Hall of Fame Induction ceremony. Can you tell us how Texas Capital’s mission aligns with the Texas Business Hall of Fame?**

The Texas Business Hall of Fame’s mission is to honor the accomplishments and contributions of outstanding business leaders in our state by celebrating their impact on both business and community. Texas Capital’s vision to be the flagship financial services firm serving clients in the state and beyond aligns with supporting the leaders, businesses and charitable organizations that made the successes celebrated by TBHF possible. Our commitment to the community is unquestionable – through our foundation and small business lending across Texas, we live our values every day. Banking is a relationship business, and to be a good banker, you must be a good community member. That matters deeply to us.

### **In your own words, how do you define “excellence” in business?**

At its core, excellence in business is about generating positive outcomes for clients. If you support your clients and help them achieve their definition of success, everything else follows – revenue, innovation and long-term impact. Excellence is rooted in client obsession and delivering solutions that make a real difference.

# Celebrating 2025 Hall of Fame Inductees

The Texas Business Hall of Fame Induction Dinner will take place on Wednesday, October 29, 2025, at the Hilton Americas-Houston. We look forward to celebrating our 2025 Hall of Fame Inductees:


**Ken Fisher, Founder, Fisher Investments, Dallas**

**Rich Kinder and Bill Morgan, Co-Founders, Kinder Morgan, Houston**

**Chris and Harris Pappas, Co-Executive Chairmen, Pappas Restaurants, Houston**

**Gary Petersen, Marty Phillips, and Bob Zorich, Co-Founders, EnCap Investments, Houston**

**Holly Thaggard, Founder, Supergoop!, San Antonio**

We are grateful to all of our [2025 Dinner Sponsors](#), as well as  **Texas Capital** our longtime presenting sponsor, for helping us honor the most transformational business leaders in our state.

## Announcing 2025 High School Award Recipients

### **Michelle Moore**

CTE Marketing Teacher, Ronald Reagan HS  
Texas Business Hall of Fame Teacher of  
Excellence Award supported by  
Alan & Barbara Dreeben, San Antonio

### **Briady Hutchinson**

Owner and Operator, Bee's Rolled Ice Cream  
The TBHF Alumni Association Outstanding  
High School Entrepreneur Award in honor of  
Coulter & Lily Rush Hoppess, Wichita Falls

### **Lee Geffert**

Business & Marketing Teacher, Richardson HS  
Texas Business Hall of Fame Teacher of  
Excellence Award supported by  
Jason and Jean Signor, Dallas

### **Hudson Pietsek**

Founder, Hudson's Pressure Washing  
Ishaan Thakur Outstanding High School  
Entrepreneur Award, Abilene

## Additional TBHF Awards Announced in 2025

### **Gary R. Petersen Future Texas Business Legend Award**

This award, given to a student at Texas Tech University, is funded by Houston business leader Gary Petersen, Co-Founder of EnCap Investments and 2025 Hall of Fame inductee.

### **The Zorich Family Foundation Future Texas Business Legend First in Family Award**

Beginning in 2026, Bob Zorich, Co-Founder of EnCap Investments and 2025 TBHF Hall of Fame Inductee, will establish a statewide award for students who are the first in their families to attend college. Award recipients will be chosen from one of our Partner Universities and can be either undergraduate or graduate students.

**We are proud to recognize all 35 of this year's award recipients at the  
Annual Future Texas Business Legend Awards Luncheon on October 29,**

**generously sponsored by**



# Announcement Event Honoring 2025 Inductee Ken Fisher



TBHF Legends, Directors, Alumni, and friends gathered at Lucy and Henry Billingsley's home in Dallas to congratulate 2025 Hall of Fame Inductee Ken Fisher.



Guests congratulated Ken Fisher on his 2025 Hall of Fame Induction at the Dallas gathering.



TBHF Legend Lucy Billingsley welcomes Chairman Amanda Brock and Ken Fisher.



TBHF Legend Robert Rowling congratulates Ken.



2024 TBHF Chairman David Huntley with 2025 Chairman Amanda Brock.



Junior Director Mohammad Elashi, Chairman-Elect LaRhesa Moon and TBHF Legend Lucy Billingsley.



Dallas-area Future Texas Business Legend Award Recipients.

# Announcement Event Honoring 2025 Inductee Holly Thaggard

*Supergoop!*



TBHF Legend Graham Weston congratulated San Antonio's newest Hall of Fame Inductee and visionary entrepreneur.



Holly's family members were on hand to celebrate with her, including her son, Will.



Holly with some of her many friends who joined us.



TBHF Directors Robby Brown and Clay Jett.



Chairman Amanda Brock congratulated Michelle Moore, 2025 San Antonio-area Outstanding Teacher.



TBHF Junior Director Daniel Peavy and 2024 Outstanding Teacher Awardee Leslie Weil.



Award Recipients from 2024 and 2025.

# Welcome New Directors

## Two New Directors Join the TBHF Board

The Texas Business Hall of Fame welcomed two new members to our Board of Directors. We look forward to what their incredible experience and energy bring to our organization. To read their full bios, please visit our [Leadership](#) page.

**Directors, are you planning to attend the Statewide Directors' meeting on Thursday, October 30? Please let [Denise Cinadr](#) know.**



**Robert Baldwin**

PwC

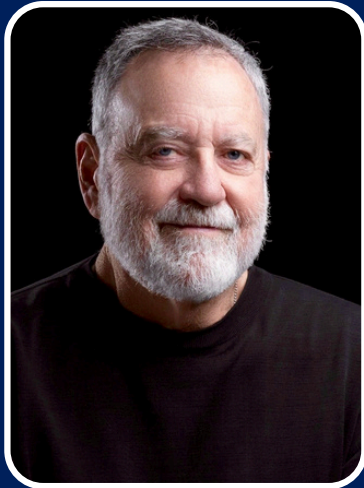
Dallas Office Managing  
Partner, Dallas



**Nancy Segrato Barnes**

Precision Medical Products  
Southern Regional  
Manager, Austin

## In Memorium



**Morton H. Meyerson**

**TBHF Alumni Jason McCann remembers TBHF Legend Morton H. Meyerson:**

"So grateful for the impact Morton Meyerson had on my life. His sheer intellect was inspiring, his curiosity unending, and he had a knack for asking just the right question at just the right time..."

His passion for entrepreneurship, lifelong learning, mentorship, technology, people, servant leadership... and giving back to those in need...has set an incredibly high bar for us to follow."



**Diane McNulty**

**TBHF Director Jessica Whitacre Thorne remembers fellow TBHF Director Diane McNulty:**

"Diane was a caring and compassionate person with tremendous enthusiasm and strength. She was a force within TBHF who advocated tirelessly for the scholarship program over many years. We all are grateful for her service, leadership, and friendship."

# Alumni Milestones

Sid Thakur, a 2024 Future Texas Business Legend Award recipient, founded Paradigm Robotics. The company just announced \$3.95M in pre-seed funding round to design and scale production of its Gen 1 platform, open a new operations facility, hire key talent, and deliver robots to customers.

2025 Award Recipient Reese Bookout has officially incorporated his new venture, American Drone Company, that will be developing next generation UAV technology for use in large land surveying, forest management and resource prospecting.

Veronica Gaskey Ume-Ezeoke recently launched CNTRD JUICE, an organic cold-pressed juice company in Dallas' Victory Park.

2025 Veteran Award Recipient John Albers' Albers Aerospace was just ranked #31 in this year's Aggie 100, recognizing the fastest-growing Aggie-led businesses in the world.

If you have exciting news you'd like share, please email [jfernelyus@texasbusiness.org](mailto:jfernelyus@texasbusiness.org).

## Alumni Raised More Than \$10,000 for PEP

The TBHF Alumni Association is proud to have chosen the Prison Entrepreneurship Program (PEP) as this year's service initiative. These business owners not only rebuild their own lives after incarceration, but they also create jobs for others and experience 33% lower recidivism rates.

The Phillips Family Foundation (2025 Inductee Marty Phillips) has matched all donations bringing the total amount raised to more than \$10,000. Many thanks to all who participated by making a donation or sharing with your network.

prison  
entrepreneurship  
program

Did you know that an estimated 10.6% of all entrepreneurs have spent time behind bars?



TBHF Alumni member Mitch Cantwell has volunteered for PEP.

## Directors In the News

Bill Zartler (Houston) is Executive Chairman and Amanda Brock (Houston) is CEO of Aris Water Solutions, which has been sold to Western Midstream Partners.

David Peacock's (Dallas) Messick Peacock & Associates was acquired by Corient in August.

Martina Lemond Dixon (Houston) is running for At-Large Position 4 on the Houston City Council this November.

Janet Campbell Clark's (Houston) BellaMia Technologies announced a new skin rejuvenation device that will enable full body rejuvenation using robotics and AI beginning in 2026.

Latisha Andrews' (Houston) Beta Academy celebrated 10 years and the grand opening of its new PK3 to 4th-grade "Confetti" campus.

Gov. Greg Abbott appointed TBHF Director Welcome Wilson, Jr. (Houston) as vice chair of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB).

# Hall of Fame Favorites



**JOHN GOFF**  
**TBHF Legend**  
**Class of 2020/2021**

## **Most Insightful Book**

"The Four Agreements" by Don Miguel Ruiz. I reread once a year. I have also collected the 11 volumes of "The Story of Civilization" by Will & Ariel Durant. Those volumes are distilled into "The Lessons of History" which is packed with perspective and wisdom.

## **Go-to News Source**

I am finally migrating from hard copy newspapers to on-line. I have to admit that I found satisfaction in turning the pages of newsprint, so I was slow to make that transition! I read the Wall Street Journal, Financial Times, among others. I use X (Twitter) and other "news gatherers" to quickly get up to date, as well as digital tools to identify news on specified topics. While the internet and technology have certainly sped up the distribution of news, it also has dramatically increased misinformation. I am now finding AI incredibly useful, and I utilize it frequently throughout the day. Finally, there are a number of "go to" analysts that I follow on a variety of subjects. For example, for the energy sector, I follow Arjun Murti's writings/commentaries.

## **Habit that Keeps you Creative and Motivated**

Mornings are my time to think. I somewhat jokingly say that I have no worthy ideas beyond noon! If my schedule permits, a great morning ritual is to read (current events and business news), stretch, think, and make notes of thoughts/ideas.



Austin City Chair Courtney Gallagher, Meredith Walker, Patti and Terry Black.

## **Austin Alumni Breakfast with Patti and Terry Black**

At our first-ever Austin Alumni Breakfast, Terry and Patti Black of Terry Black's BBQ shared the story of building an iconic Texas brand and their family's vision for the future of Black Family Hospitality. Moderated by Alumni City Chair Courtney Gallagher, the conversation highlighted growth, grit, and what it takes to keep this Texas brand legendary. What a great morning!