

Written by Jeffrey L. Boney
Wednesday, 15 August 2012 08:01



From Young To Old: The Houston Forward Times Is On The Frontline Supporting Small Businesses

The Houston Forward Times has been on the frontlines, working collaboratively with the Texas Business Alliance (TBA) to help educate, equip and empower small businesses in the Greater Houston-area.

The Houston Forward Times has been actively sponsoring and participating in key collaborative efforts with TBA, through a partnership with the Jack Yates School of Communications, the Youth Entrepreneurship Academy (YEA) and now the Governor's Small Business Forum and the One Woman National Business Conference.

Texas Business Alliance, a nonprofit, membership-driven leader of small business advocacy, development and promotion is presenting their 4th Annual One Woman® National Business Conference and the Governor's Small Business Forum on August 17 - 18, 2012, at Sugar Land Marriott Town Square, 16090 City Walk, Sugar Land, TX 77479. As a part of One Woman® this year, TBA is pleased to partner with the Texas Office of the Governor to present the Governor's Small Business Forum.

REGISTRATION AT: <http://www.onewomanconference.com/>

GOVERNOR'S SMALL BUSINESS FORUM

Small business owners in the Greater Houston-area will benefit from valuable information designed to assist them as they grow and expand their businesses. The Governor's Small Business Forum is designed to educate the small business community on workforce development, employee skills training and growth opportunities.

The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) will present information on the \$2 million Skills for Small Business employee training grant program and other programs available through TWC. While the Texas Business Alliance is the host of the event, the Houston Forward Times is a key media partner and sponsor of the event. Other area partnering organizations include the Goldman Sachs Small Business Program, Houston Community College, BizConnect, Asian Chamber of Commerce, Indo-American Chamber of Commerce, Women's Business Enterprise Alliance (WBEA), Houston-Galveston Women's Business Center, Houston Minority Supplier Development Council (HMSDC) and Houston Business Executives.

The Governor's Small Business Forum General sessions and workshops begin promptly at 9 a.m. and they are all FREE. Door prizes will be given away at each General session.

ONE WOMAN® NATIONAL BUSINESS CONFERENCE

One Woman® is a two-day national business conference and signature-business development program of the Texas Business Alliance (TBA). One Woman® is one of the TBA Women in Business Development signature programs that empowers, educates, and inspires continued growth among the fastest-growing segment of small business – women business enterprises. The Governor's Small Business Forum features two days of workshops, general sessions, and an expo to encourage business development and support. The goal of One Woman® is to transform women from the inside out. The wisdom, life sessions, and practical tools obtained will cultivate an inner confidence to produce even larger external results in business, relationships and in the home.

During the forum, attendees will be able to take advantage of free opening general sessions and two tracks of development workshops throughout the course of the two-day conference for small business owners representing start-ups and large and small businesses. TBA targets small businesses as defined by the Small Business Administration as independently owned and operated, organized for profit, and has annual revenues up to \$21.5 million.

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“Soaring: Reaching New Heights,” is the theme for the conference – the purpose is intended to highlight successful entrepreneur women, so they can empower those who desire to be their own boss, in addition to providing women with the tools to enhance your business.

At One Woman®, women in business (and men) hear from top presenters regarding the latest industry trends and business growth strategies.

Attendees build business contacts and establish relationships with decision makers who listen to their business value proposition for potential contracting opportunities. This will be an invigorating opportunity to network, and to receive pertinent information about growing your business and thriving as an entrepreneur.

Anchoring the conference is a large tradeshow where exhibitors come to sell, demonstrate and share their products, services and book projects. The Houston Forward Times will be an exhibitor at the conference, and we hope you will come by and visit us at our booth.

TOP-NOTCH SPEAKERS

Speakers from Hewlett-Packard, Nielsen, NASA, ExxonMobil, Goldman Sachs, Houston Community College, Constant Contact and even the Houston Forward Times will be presenting critical information.

The Houston Forward Times' own Jacqueline Lawson will be one of the presenters.

Cheryl Pearson McNeil (Senior Vice President, Public Affairs and Government Relations, Nielsen), will be the keynote speaker at the Small Business Forum luncheon on Friday.

Brian Tippens (Director, Compliance and Social Responsibility, Global Procurement, Hewlett-Packard Company), will be delivering a stirring keynote address at the Soaring Heights Awards Brunch on Saturday.

"I plan to provide game-changing actionable advice for small businesses that are ready to move to the next level," said Tippens. "My message will be inspiring, educational and entertaining."

TBA board member Jennifer Dean (President and CEO, Dean's Professional Services), states that participants will receive the tools that has led to her company's 19+ years of success and they will walk away with new leadership tools to transition their company through exploring and expanding the employee's talents to meet the new and ever-changing demands of America.

"We will discuss topics that include internal customer service, cross training, and servicing yourself to serve others," says Dean. "My audience will leave energized, excited, and with the enthusiasm needed to build a super bowl team."

YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP ACADEMY

The Houston Forward Times had the privilege to provide resources and mentorship to 10 young people who will be graduating from the third installment of the Youth Entrepreneurship Academy on this Saturday.

Each participant in the program recently competed in the YEA Shark Tank competition; a prerequisite for graduation from the program. The 2012 program and the YEA Shark Tank competition were all held at the headquarters of Capital One Bank. Capital One Bank is the 2012 Platinum Sponsor of the YEA program and has supported the program since 2010. Capital One Bank Houston Market President Annella Metoyer will be on hand to offer congratulatory sponsor remarks to the YEA graduates this Saturday at graduation ceremony.

Houston Forward Times Publisher and CEO, Karen Carter Richards, served as one of the judges for the competition. Other judges included Laurie Vignaud (Capital One Bank), John Whaley (Goldman Sachs 10k Small Business Program), Byron K. Carter (YEA Chairman) and Kerry Willrich (YEA Class I graduate).

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Each participant had to provide each judge with a written business plan and then had to defend that business plan before that group of judges for 15 minutes. Half of their score was based on their written business plan and the other half was based on their business presentation. The winner of the Shark Tank competition will be announced at the Soaring Heights Awards Brunch on Saturday.

Participants leave the program having obtained DBA's, logos, business plans and are assisted in generating revenue. The youth continue their mentorship through teaming with industry-specific mentors to assist them with their development and growth beyond graduation.

The YEA graduates that will be honored on this Saturday are:

Graduate New Business Name

Geron Adams..... Sudo:

Kira Christian..... Glitter – A Glamorous Kupkakery

Kristen Cravens..... Jecko Engineering

Dimitri Ferrier..... The Ferrier Youth & Family Center

Demi' Forte..... Demi's Dollhouse

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Briona Hester..... Kreative Dezigz by Bri

Bryana Jackson..... The Hero Effect

Taylor Ross..... Academic Consultation Enterprises (A.C.E.)

Brooke Vallaire..... Vallaire's

Brandi White..... Jamese Sweets & Treats

The Youth Entrepreneurship Academy (YEA) is a FREE six-month small business and leadership development incubator program that equips high school and college students with the tools and resources to pursue an entrepreneurial alternative. YEA program modules include: entrepreneurial training, financial literacy, technology, economic language, practical experience, and business and life skills. Up to fifteen high school and college students enroll in the six-month program per year. Youth get a hands-on, dynamic experience of the fundamentals of business ownership and mentorship.

Statistics show that an unacceptable number of U.S. students in underserved communities fail to develop the academic, social and citizenship skills necessary to compete and succeed in today's economy. YEA is a method to bridge the gap and provide an alternative to the traditional career footprint. Many of our youth have extremely creative, natural entrepreneurial minds prime to soak up knowledge that results in a success path that makes sense for them. By the end of the program, students have the theoretical and practical experience for exemplifying leadership, teamwork and citizenship.

YEA selection criteria includes: the desire to pursue an entrepreneurial path; community and/or civic involvement, financial need and application completeness.

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Candidates interested in YEA Class IV are encouraged to complete an application early for the program beginning March 2013. The qualifying application and official application may be requested by calling 713.738.7578 or emailing info@texasbusinessalliance.org . Additional YEA Partners and sponsors include Comerica Bank, AT&T, Hewlett-Packard, Shell Oil Company, H-E-B, CenterPoint Energy, Empowered Entrepreneurs, Imagine Excellence, Inc., Love In Abundance, Newswire Houston, Crystal Washington, John Whaley and edOpps.

REGISTER TODAY!

Awards will also be given to corporate professionals and small businesses from the Texas Business Alliance and also from the State of Texas.

Registration for One Woman® is open and participants are encouraged to register TODAY! To get more information about the Governor's Small Business Forum and the 4th Annual One Woman® National Business Conference, please visit www.onewomanconference.com. Again, the General Sessions and ALL workshops are FREE, so you have no excuse not to be there.

We hope to see you there!