

## Mayor of Stavanger



February 1—Mayor Annise Parker met with the Mayor of Stavanger, the Honorable Leif Johan Sevland. Houston and Stavanger became Sister Cities in 1980, a relationship which was expanded in 1988 to also include the city of Galveston. A port city as well, Stavanger is the center of the Norwegian oil industry, due to its proximity to major oil finds in the North Sea.

## Student Delegation from Dalian, China



February 3—Mayor Annise Parker greeted a delegation of students and teachers from Dalian No. 24 High School, which became Sister Schools with Houston's Lamar High School in 2000. Since then exchanges of students and staff have taken place annually. Participants in the Sister Schools Program stay with host families, attend classes at the hosting institution and experience the cultural life in the host city.

## Minister of Housing and Urbanism of the Republic of Mali



February 16—The Minister of Housing and Urbanism for the Republic of Mali, Her Excellency Gakou Salimata Fofona, visited Houston to promote business ties. Minister Fofona's government has contracted a Houston company to build a federally funded shopping center and low-income housing in Mali.

## Delegation from Guangzhou, China



February 1—Mayor Pro Tem Ann Clutterbuck met with the Vice Chairman of the China Foreign Trade Center, Mr. Ren Xiangdong provided information on the Canton Fair. The Fair, which is held biannually in the city of Guangzhou, is China's largest merchandizing exhibition; Due to the sheer volume of materials to be displayed, the Fair is split into Spring and Fall showing. Mr. Ren invited the City of Houston to attend the 2010 Spring fair.

## Delegation from Beijing, China



February 8-25—A high-ranking education delegation from the Haidian District in Beijing, China, arrived in Houston to participate in a two-week training program with local counterparts in the field of education. The Houston Independent School District, (HISD) Cy-Fair Independent School District, Kincaid School, St. John's High School, Lamar High School, Bellaire High School, and Rice University all held meetings along with training sessions where they shared valuable insights into their teaching methods and State of Texas standards. HISD Board President Greg Meyers and State Representative Steve Hochberg also met with the delegation and gave an overview of the State of Texas's education policies. Haidian District is home to many of China's leading institutes of education of secondary and college-level.

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### **Delegation from Turkey**



February 25—The Vice President of the Confederation of Businessmen and Industrialists of Turkey (TUSKON), Mr. Ahmet Ciğer, led a delegation to Houston to promote awareness of Turkey's business potential, highlight Houston-Turkey trade ties and provide information on the Turkey-World Trade Bridge business conference, which will be held in June 2010. Mr. Ciğer met with City of Houston Controller Ron Green, Council Member James Rodriguez and Chief Development Officer Andy Icken who have all recognized the immense potential of doing business with Turkey.

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### **Delegation from Hangzhou, China**



February 25—City of Houston's Mayor's Office of International Affairs & Development welcomed a delegation from the city of Hangzhou, China, which was led by the Deputy Director of the Foreign Affairs Office, Mr. Xie Chongming. Mr. Xie discussed business opportunities in the areas of IT and healthcare, and expressed interest in collaborating with the Mayor's Office on sending delegations to Houston to further explore these opportunities.

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## **The Seven Mayor's International Affairs & Development Councils**

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### **Middle East / North Africa**

February 3—The second highest ranking official in the Houston FBI office assigned to Counterterrorism Branch, Mr. Steve Genty, who was the Council's featured speaker, briefed the Council on Houston-area citizen initiatives. The Council also identified future goals and projects, including increasing its membership, connecting with expats living in Houston and holding receptions to expand networking. The Council will also seek to expand contacts with members' countries of origin in an attempt to attract further business opportunities.

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### **Asia / Australia**

February 4—The Director of Marketing for the Houston Airport System (HAS), Mr. Genaro Pena, who was the Council's featured speaker, addressed developments in the Airport System. HAS's goals include increasing its overall passenger loads to 80 million annually by 2010, connecting Houston to major cities around the world and implementing its Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan. Vice Mayor Pro Tem Ed Gonzalez greeted the Council and discussed international initiatives. Members also provided updates on activities in their respective community organizations and shared news related to upcoming events.

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### **Africa**

February 5—A representative from the City of Houston's "Houston Counts: Census 2010" initiative, Mr. Carl Davis, who was the Council's featured speaker, provided updates on the ongoing efforts. The Council focused on the Texas-Africa 2010 Business Summit and its primary dual-objective of initiating public/private partnerships and promoting economic growth, integration, and free trade between Texas and Africa. Members also discussed progress made on the proposed Africa Trade Mission.

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### **Special note:**

The 150+ members of the seven regions of the City of Houston's Mayor's International Affairs & Development Council are united by a passion for public service. We are pleased to report that in 2009, several MIADC members have either run for higher office or declared their candidacy. We celebrate their efforts and thank them for their leadership and commitment!

## International Frontier

*Houston is home to many distinguished individuals who are dedicated to the promotion of Houston on the Global Stage. The featured Houstonian this month is Dr. Laura Murillo, President and CEO of the Houston Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.*



Within Harris County, there are an estimated 75,000 Hispanic-owned businesses. According to the “Houston Area” study produced by Dr. Stephen Klineberg of Rice University, 40% of Houston’s population is Hispanic. Of those, 70% are between ages 18-44. This means that the Hispanic community is young, vibrant, growing and “very entrepreneurial,” notes Dr. Laura Murillo, President and CEO of the Houston Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (HHCC).

“The individuals that just settled here to pursue a career usually have developed business skills. There is a broad spectrum of specialized individuals who come here to either start a business or take it to the next level.”

March 2, 2010 will be the 33<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the founding of the HHCC. The Chamber, which acts as a business resource to Houston’s thriving Hispanic community, has recently embarked on a stage of impressive growth and significantly enhanced visibility, having been recognized as a National Large Hispanic Chamber of Commerce by the United States Chamber of Commerce. “The HHCC is committed to bringing business here, and that’s why [some] businesses do come here as opposed to going to Miami or other parts of the country,” says Dr. Murillo.

Much of this success has come as a result of the dynamic leadership of Dr. Murillo. A native Houstonian whose parents were originally from Mexico, Dr. Murillo has always lived the values which were instilled in her at an early age: to work hard and educate oneself. As the youngest of nine children, Dr. Murillo learned early on how to distinguish herself: “To become a successful business leader today, you have to have a plan. You need to be persistent and passionate in executing it,” Dr. Murillo notes.

Three years ago Dr. Murillo, in consultation with the Chamber’s Board of Directors, established a road map for sustained and focused economic business

development for members of HHCC: the 10-year Strategic Plan. A source of personal pride to Dr. Murillo, the plan has a persistent focus on service and achievement, and, in her estimation, has propelled the HHCC to be the most influential Hispanic chamber in the city.

The Plan highlights the following objectives: “creating local, national and international business opportunities for newcomers and members; assisting members with procurement opportunities; organizing and sponsoring educational seminars; developing dialogue with elected officials and corporations to advocate on behalf of our members and serving as mentors to Hispanic professionals and business owners.” Another facet is to provide business education to companies and individuals and assist small business owners with any certifications they might need to obtain. In order to stay focused on the goals, the Chamber’s international committee targets specific markets, and connects individuals that have interest in business.

The HHCC is currently working on an upcoming International Summit, which will be held at the Renaissance Houston Greenway Plaza Hotel on March 24. The event will be the first international summit hosted by the HHCC. The summit’s purpose is to promote more comprehensive understanding of import/exports developments to members and gather various business people to Houston in order to exchange ideas and refer business to one another.

The biggest challenge faced by the HHCC today, is to keep up with the exponential growth within such short period of time. There are many opportunities to partner individuals and organizations and help them to keep focus on business and their problems. “We are pleased to have such growth expansion; it is a good problem to have,” admits Dr. Murillo.

-- Giorgi Gelovani

## Special Announcements

### **World Bank chooses Houston as home to its Private Sector Liaison Program**

In December 2009, after more than a year in planning, it was announced that Houston would become the third city in the United States to host a World Bank Group Private Sector Liaison Officer (PSLO) and join the PSLO Network of 100 business intermediary organizations in 81 countries. This coveted position is awarded to business intermediary organizations around the world that pledge to dedicate a minimum of 20 hours per week to educate and inform area companies about World Bank Group products and services.

Five area organizations, the U.S. Commercial Service – Houston Branch Office, City of Houston Mayor's Office, the Greater Houston Partnership, the World Affairs Council of Houston, and the University of Texas's Bureau of Economic Geology, collaborated to finalize the proposal, which was ultimately successful in bringing the PSLO Network to Houston. The Greater Houston Partnership and the World Bank Group signed a Memorandum of Agreement that outlines collaborative efforts to achieve common objectives to promote both trade and investment between the World Bank Group's developing member countries and Houston, Texas. The first PSLO for the city of Houston will be Ms. Jessie Tan.

### **Mayor appoints a Chief Development Officer**

Recognizing the importance of keeping Houston's economy growing and increasing the city's job base, Mayor Annise Parker appointed Andy Icken to be the first Chief Development Officer of the City of Houston. Mr. Icken's responsibilities will include economic development, the Houston Airport System and special projects.

Having accumulated extensive experience as the Deputy Director of the City's Public Works and Engineering Department, Senior Vice President of the Texas Medical Center and a high-ranking executive with ExxonMobil, in addition to serving on the boards of the Houston Minority Business Council and the Santa Maria Hostel, Mr. Icken has a wealth of expertise and connections to draw from.

### **City of Houston gets serious about Census**

The 2010 Census will arrive in mailboxes in March, 2010; the City of Houston is putting together a massive community-wide initiative to make sure that every Houstonian is counted.

The benefits of increasing Houston's response rate are many: A better count improves the possibility of increased funding for hundreds of critical programs serving youth, seniors and others in need, more funding from the Institutes of Health, the National Endowment of the Arts and a dozen other Federal agencies, better highways and more transit investment, another member of Congress and more representation in Austin, and a more accurate picture of our population to use when adding two new City Council Districts in 2011.

For more information or to volunteer, please visit [www.houstontx.gov/census2010](http://www.houstontx.gov/census2010).

### **Save the Date**

Every month, the Mayor's International Newsletter highlights numerous community events of interest to the Houston international community. This month, we would like our readers to keep in mind four very special events, which will occur outside the time frame presented in the following calendar:

- May 5—The Mayor's Office and the Bilateral U.S.-Arab Chamber of Commerce will host a major reception for energy delegations from the Middle East, China and Latin America.
- May 25—The Organization for African Union, the Mayor's Office, the National Committee for the Tanzanian Diaspora and Cilicorp will coordinate activities for celebrating "Africa Union Week" in Houston.

## International Event Calendar -- March 2010

Date	Time	Event	Venue	Contact
3/1	8:00 AM	U.S. Commercial Service: Roundtable Discussion on National Export Initiative	Mickey Leland Federal Building	(713) 209-3105
	6:00 PM	French-American Chamber of Commerce: Carnaval de Nice	Omni Riverway Hotel	www.facchouston.com
3/2	11:30 AM	Bilateral U.S.-Arab Chamber of Commerce: Ambassador Series	InterContinental Hotel	moh@bilateralchamber.org
	6:00 PM	German-American Chamber of Commerce-Texas Office: "After Hours" Business Networking	Sherlock's Baker Street Pub	www.gacctexas.com
	—	City of Houston: Delegation from Beijing, China (through March 11)	City of Houston	(832) 393-0851
	—	City of Houston: Delegation from Jining City, China (through March 14)	City of Houston	(832) 393-0851
3/3	11:30 AM	Asia Society Texas: Pakistan—Prospects for Stability	Junior League	(713) 439-0051 ext. 17
	4:30 PM	World Affairs Council of Houston: Can Democracy Reach the Poor	Junior League	www.wachouston.org
3/4	—	Houston Technology Center: Energy Technology Venture Capital Conference	Hilton Americas Hotel	www.houstontech.org
	8:3. AM	U.S. Trade and Development Agency: Underground Gas Storage Equipment and Service Export Opportunities	Greater Houston Partnership	www.mse-ov.com
	8:30 AM	Families in Global Transition: Conference (through March 6)	Houston Marriott Westchase Hotel	execdirector@figt.org
	3:45 PM	Asian Chamber of Commerce: Who's Hiring Now—Professional Careers	1811 Briar Oaks Ln.	(713) 782-7222
3/8	11:30 AM	Brazil-Texas Chamber of Commerce: Global Energy Trends	Houstonian Hotel	(832) 448-0190
	4:00 PM	Rice University Office of the President, James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy, Departments of History and Hispanic Studies: Mexico, Race, Blackness and Shared Borders—Reflections on Divergent and Common Histories	Rice University	bipprsvp@rice.edu
3/9	5:30 PM	The Netherlands-Texas Business Association and the British-American Business Council: The Ike Dike—Euro Chambers Presentation and Networking Event	InterContinental Hotel	(832) 351-3940
	6:00 PM	World Affairs Council of Houston: Understanding China	Junior League	www.wachouston.org

3/10	7:15 AM	Greater Houston Partnership: Thought Leader Series	Hotel Zaza	jreese@houston.org
	11:30 AM	French-American Chamber of Commerce: Oil and Gas Committee Featured Speaker Series	Simposio Ristorante	www.facchouston.com
	10:30 AM	Greater Houston Partnership, PROMEXICO and the Houston Hispanic Chamber of Commerce: Business Across Borders—Houston and Mexico	Federal Reserve Bank	mvelasquez@houston.org
3/11	9:30 AM	City of Houston: Delegation from PROMEXICO	City of Houston	(832) 393-0851
	6:00 PM	City of Houston's One Stop Business Center, the Service Corps of Retired Executives and the Houston Public Library: Small Business Workshop	McCrane-Kashmere Gardens Neighborhood Library	(832) 393-2450
	6:00 PM	City of Houston: Doing Business with the City of Houston	Sharpstown Community Center	districtf@houston.tx.gov
	7:30 PM	Asia Society Texas: South Asia Lecture Series presents Habir Singh	Junior League	(713) 439-0051 ext. 14
3/16	—	City of Houston: Delegation from Xi'an	City of Houston	(832) 393-0851
3/17	6:00 PM	Indo-American Chamber of Commerce of Greater Houston: Legal Seminar on Employment Law	India House	www.iaccgh.com
	6:00 PM	World Affairs Council of Houston: The World and American Leadership	Westin Galleria Hotel	www.wachouston.org
3/20	—	City of Houston: Economic Development Mission to China	Multiple venues throughout China	(832) 393-0851
3/22	—	Greater Houston Partnership, University of California-Berkeley, City of Houston: Delegation from Norway	City of Houston	dkhawaja@houston.org
3/24	7:30 AM	Houston Hispanic Chamber of Commerce: International Summit and Business Expo	Renaissance Houston Hotel	www.houstonhispanicchamber.com
	11:30 AM	Asia Society: The India Way—How India's Top Business Leaders are Revolutionizing Management	Junior League	(713) 439-0051 ext. 17
3/25	11:30 AM	Instituto Argentino del Petroleo y del Gas: Repsol's LNG Strategy—Addressing the increasing role of LNG in the World Gas Market (Lunch Meeting)	Renaissance Houston Hotel	www.iapghouston.org
	6:00 PM	World Affairs Council of Houston: Yemen Avoiding a Downward Spiral	Westin Galleria Hotel	www.wachouston.org
	—	Bilateral U.S.-Arab Chamber of Commerce: Business Development Mission to Oman, U.A.E. and Qatar (through April 2)	Oman, U.A.E. and Qatar	(713) 880-8168
3/29	11:30 AM	French-American Chamber of Commerce: Annual Meeting	TBD	www.facchouston.com
3/30	11:30 AM	German-American Chamber of Commerce-Southwest: Getting your Message Across—How to Win Over The Germans	Smith & Wollensky Restaurant	www.gacctexas.com

International Cultural Events in Houston:

3/5	7:30 PM	United Russian American Association: Spring of Zarechnoj Street Concert	Demers Banquet Hall	elena_philips@msn.com
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3/6	7:00 PM	Vietnamese Culture and Science Association: Fundraiser Night	9907 Hwy. 6 South	kvu@stafford.msd.esc4.net
3/6	7:00 PM	Fulbright Arts Festival—A Celebration of Music, Dance and Literature	University of Houston-Downtown	dykmanc@aol.com
3/7	3:00 PM	Russian Cultural Center "Our Texas": Russian Spring Celebration	The Volcano Bar	(713) 395-3301
3/10	7:30 PM	Center for Irish Studies: Traditional Irish Music Concert	University of St. Thomas	gallagl@stthom.edu
3/11	7:30 PM	Russian Cultural Center "Our Texas": St. Petersburg/Houston—Cities by Touch (through April 25)	CaviArt Gallery	(713) 395-3301
	7:30 PM	St. Thomas Episcopal School: Houston's 46th Annual Scottish Spectacular	Toyota Center	(832) 715-0452
3/13	8:00 PM	Indo-American Association: Bollywood Spectacle	Jones Hall	(832) 758-2844
3/16	7:00 PM	Australian-American Chamber of Commerce: Down Under Sounds	The Mink Bar	(713) 527-9688
3/21	3:00 PM	French-American Chamber of Commerce and French Alliance: A Guingette with Belgian and Swiss Style	French Alliance	www.facchouston.com
3/26	8:00 PM	Brazil-Texas Chamber of Commerce: String Concert featuring Jacques Morelenbaum and Bem Gil	Jones Hall	lee@spahouston.org
3/27	7:30 PM	Society for the Performing Arts: From Broadway to Hollywood	Jones Hall	(713) 227-4772

Events hosted by International Partner Cities of Houston:

3/2-4	ExpoManufactura 2010	Monterrey, Mexico	Www.ejkevents.com/embs/manufactura/manu_brochure.pdf
3/3-7	Philippine International Furniture Show	Pasay, Philippines	www.manilanow.ph
3/5-8	Cebu International Furniture and Furnishing Exhibition	Cebu City, Philippine	www.cebunext.com
3/7-12	U.S. Department of Commerce: Trade Mission to Senegal and South Africa	Senegal and South Africa	karen.dublin@mail.doc.gov
3/8-13	U.S. Department of Commerce: Medical Trade Mission to India	New Delhi, Chennai, and Mumbai, India	jetta.dened@mail.doc.gov
3/13-20	Texas Women's Empowerment Foundation: Sourcing Mission to China	Beijing and Shanghai, China	vthompson@houstontrade.org
3/17-21	U.S. Commercial Services: Display Your Product Literature at Worldbex '10	Manila, Philippines	www.buyusa.gov
3/18-20	Asia Society: 20th Asian Corporate Conference	New Delhi, India	www.asiasociety.org
3/22	American Chamber of Commerce-Israel: Cyber Security and Data Management—The U.S. Market, Opportunities and Challenges	Tel Aviv, Israel	tina.o@signalbd.com
3/22-23	2nd German-American Energy Conference	Berlin, Germany	www.gae-conference.com
3/22-24	2010 China International Petroleum & Petrochemical Technology and Equipment Exhibition	Beijing, China	www.cippe.com.cn

4/15-5/5	China Import and Export [Canton] Fair	Guangzhou, China	www.cantonfairusa.com
4/19-25	U.S. Department of Commerce: Bauma 2010 International Trade Fair	Munich, Germany	www.buyusa.gov
4/22-25	Manila F.A.M.E. Boutique Show	Pasay City, Philippine	www.citem.com.ph
4/25-27	Airport Show 2010	Dubai	www.theairportshow.com
4/25-28	U.S. Department of Commerce: Trade Winds—The Americas Business Forum	Sao Paolo, Brazil	www.buyusa.gov/northcarolina/tradewindsbrazil.html
5/1	World Expo 2010 (through October 31)	Shanghai, China	http://en.expo2010.cn
5/5-7	Renewable Energy and Clean Technology—Accessing Opportunities in Emerging Markets	New Delhi, India	Judyth.gilber@opic.gov
5/14-15	Powerful Women International: Breakthrough Summit	Paris, France	(415) 503-1184
5/27-28	13th China International Hi-Tech Forum	Beijing, China	www.expo-china.org
9/8	China International Fair for Investment and Trade	Xiamen, China	www.chinafair.org
9/13-16	Brazil-Texas Chamber of Commerce: Rio Oil And Gas 2010 Expo and Conference	Rio de Janeiro, Brazil	(+55 21) 2112-9077
9/30-10/1	U.S.-Mexico Border Energy Forum XVII	Chihuahua, Mexico	soll.sussman@glo.state.tx.us
10/7-16	International Mayors Fair	Hangzhou, China	www.1Hangzhou.com
11/16-17	Getenergy for GCC Countries	Bahrain	http://www.buyusa.gov/houston/gcccountries.html
11/16-20	U.S. Department of Commerce: Energy Efficiency Trade Mission to India	New Delhi, Chennai and Mumbai, India	http://www.buyusa.gov/houston/india.html
12/1-2	Getenergy for Libya	Tripoli, Libya	http://www.buyusa.gov/houston/getlibya.html

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