

Five Outstanding Young Houstonians

Recognizing Houston's Finest for 76 Years

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Houston, Texas – Five Outstanding Young Houstonians Honored. Each year the Houston Junior Chamber and Houston Junior Chamber Foundation solicit nominations for outstanding Houstonians between the ages of 21 and 39 for their contributions in various areas including community service, business, the arts, politics and athletics. The applications are submitted on behalf of the nominees, which are then reviewed by the committee and five are selected and honored at a banquet. The Emcee of the banquet this year is Ms. Miya Shay from KTRK ABC 13.

We are very proud to announce that this year's winners are: Mr. John Boettiger, Justice Jeff Brown, Ms. Jane Cummins, Mrs. Melissa King, and Council Member James Rodriguez.

John Boettiger is the Principal for Deloitte Financial Advisory Services, LLP. John serves the Houston community through his altruistic activities outside the office. In his professional life, John concentrates his practice in the health care, energy and real estate sectors. He joined Deloitte after he graduated from the University of Texas with his MBA. His commitment to his clients is matched only by service to his community, as evidenced by this recent election to president of The Texas Lyceum, a statewide leadership organization, as well as his local leadership roles with the Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts, Project SEARCH, which serves Houston's homeless community and the Houston Area Immunization Partnership. John and his wife Michele have three children, Amelia, Amber, and Ava.

Jeff Brown is a Justice on the 14th Court of Appeals, and was appointed by Gov. Rick Perry in December 2007. Jeff is a graduate of the University of Texas and the University of Houston Law Center. In 2006 he was named Outstanding Young Lawyer of Texas by the Texas Young Lawyers Association, and the Woodrow B. Seals Outstanding Young Lawyer of Houston by the Houston Young Lawyers Association. For six years he was one of the highest rated civil district judges in Harris County according to the Houston Bar Association. In addition to his professional accomplishments, he serves on several boards of directors for non-profit organizations in the Houston community and is a Cub Scout leader. Jeff and his wife Susannah have three children, Kathleen, Rob, and Gus.

Jane Cummins is the Founder and Executive Director of the 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation Educational Programs Inspiring Communities, Inc., dedicated to serving adults with developmental disabilities. Together with Dr. Ross Castillo, she created the innovative H.E.A.R.T. Program in 2005. In 2006, she obtained the dba for H.E.A.R.T. Vending and Concessions, an affiliate business of the nonprofit agency whose employees are 100% people with disabilities. Recently, she was named one of America's "Most Extraordinary, Entrepreneurial Women" in a nation-wide search, conducted by Balance Bar, a subsidiary of Kraft Foods North America. Committed to international volunteerism, she has represented Houston as a delegate on international trade missions to Greece, The Netherlands, Peru and Thailand and currently sits on the board of directors of Hashoo Foundation, an NGO headquartered in Pakistan. Every Friday morning, Jane hosts a weekly radio show on 90.1FM in Houston.

Melissa King sits on many boards and committees; she is someone who goes the extra mile taking on leadership roles within organizations and working diligently to make a profound difference every time she gets involved. Melissa has chaired the Advocacy Committee and has been a driving force on the Alzheimer's Association board. She has spearheaded a public awareness campaign for the Alzheimer's Association that will reach millions of Houston area residents over the next 12 months. Her other community services include American Diabetes Association – Houston Chapter, where she and her husband Bill will be Honorary Co-Chairs for the ADA Walk in November; Boys and Girls Harbor; Neighborhood Centers Inc. where she serves on the Agency Development and Choices in Education Committees; Theatre Under the Stars where she served on the Tommy Tunes Scholarship Committee; American Cancer Society Gulf Coast Region Development Council and the Education Committee for the Houston Zoo. Melissa and Bill will also serve as Honorary Chairs for the Ensemble Theatre gala this August and Melissa will chair the 2008 luncheon for the H.E.A.R.T. Program, co-chair the 2009 University of Houston Women's Studies Table Talk and serve on committee for the 2009 Houston Zoo Family Party and 2009 Heart of Gold Luncheon for NCI. Melissa is currently a student at the University of Houston and lives with Bill and 12 year old daughter, Faith.

James Rodriguez is a native Houstonian who has dedicated his career and his life to the service of others. A public servant by career choice, he was elected to Houston's City Council while barely thirty years old and is currently the youngest member of Houston's governing body. James became involved in public service because of his desire to give back to his community and to make a difference. He brings capital improvement projects such as mobility enhancement projects to the district, and is introducing initiatives for safer neighborhoods and parks that will attract families. He works with neighborhood leaders for ordinances and laws that preserve our neighborhoods. James wants an aggressive health department that will reach out to make sure all of our children are immunized, and he is seeking the funding we need to have responsive police and fire departments. Most importantly, he is making sure our civic clubs and neighborhood associations continue to have a strong voice at city hall. In addition to his career, James and his wife Wendy are active members of their church and are co-chairs of the 2008 American Diabetes Association Walk for the Cure, among many other humanitarian and community based projects.

Please join us in congratulating all our nominees and winners.

