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# THE LEADER.

Covering the Heights, Garden Oaks, Oak Forest & the neighborhoods of North Houston

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**INSIDE.**



**The Art of Clay:** Artist Doni Langlois will be showcasing her clay art at the Bayou City Art Festival Downtown this Sunday, Oct. 15 at 901 Bagby St.

**Page 10A**

**FIND IT.**

**POSTER SALE:** Military, Firemen, Police, Vets – 30% off. Movie, Military, Black History, Women's History, miscellaneous art and frames. 334 Harvard, Oct. 14-15, 9 a.m.

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**Page 7B**

**THE INDEX.**

## Vote to repeal Heights booze laws nears

By Landan Kuhlmann  
landan@theleadernews.com

Last November's general election partially repealed the Heights' Dry Laws. On Nov. 7, voters can remove the "partial" label.

Last year, voters elected to remove a law that said businesses could not sell alcohol for off-premise consumption. That opened the door for businesses, namely a future H-E-B, to sell beer and wine.

This year, voters will be asked to ba-

sically eliminate all alcohol restrictions in the Heights.

Currently, businesses serving alcohol in the Heights "dry zone" are required to operate as private clubs, meaning they must create a non-profit arm, charge membership fees, and patrons must join that "private club" if they wish to drink at local watering holes. Back in June, however, a group of citizens formed the Houston Heights Restaurant Coalition and called for an election to support "hospitality businesses" in the Heights and overturn

that section of the Heights remaining dry ordinance.

The group hired Texas Petition Strategies – who local residents are familiar with following H-E-B's push to repeal an initial portion of the dry laws last year and build in the Heights – to circulate the petition, which eventually gained enough steam to be placed on the ballot. According to documents from the city, the Houston Heights Restaurant Coalition (with assistance from Texas Petition Strategies) collected 1,765 signatures verified by the city secretary

as being courtesy of registered voters within the dry zone, far exceeding the minimum of 1,511 required for placement.

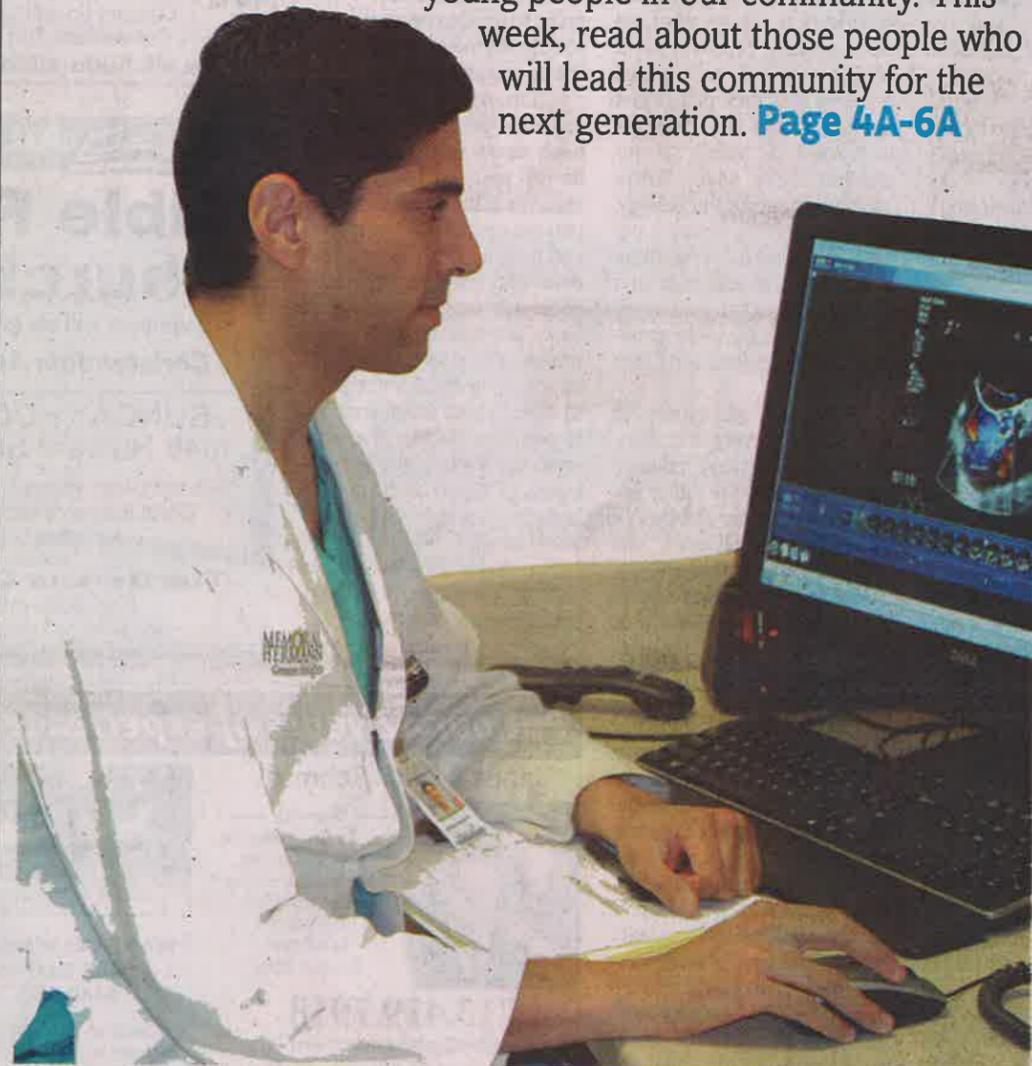
Per the Texas Restaurant Association, operating as a private club can cost restaurants anywhere from \$3,000 to more than \$20,000 per year in administrative costs, higher insurance premiums and more scrutiny from alcohol regulators. The PAC wishes to overturn the remaining portion of

See **Booze** P. 2A



## Area's Top Young Leaders Named

For 3 months, *The Leader* has accepted nominations for some of the brightest young people in our community. This week, read about those people who will lead this community for the next generation. **Page 4A-6A**



Dr. Shahid Rahman, 38, is an interventional cardiologist at Memorial Hermann Greater Heights. He, along with 29 others have been named to *The Leader's* Inaugural 30 Under 40 list. (Photo by Landan Kuhlmann)

## Three vie for HISD open seat

By Landan Kuhlmann  
landan@theleadernews.com

As outgoing Trustee Anna Eastman's seat has become available, there are three candidates battling to represent our local schools in District 1 – Gretchen Himsl, Monica Flores-Richart and Elizabeth Santos. From bringing district-wide equity to taking aim at standardized testing culture and more, all three candidates are bringing a wide variety of perceived issues to the forefront.



Himsl



Flores-Richart



Santos

**Gretchen Himsl**

Himsl stressed a push for equity across the district as front and center to her campaign.

"Some schools just a couple miles apart can be completely different in both the resources and outcomes and environments they have," she said. "I want to look at those inequities and see what we can do to make sure every school is a good school."

To get the ball rolling, Himsl says she would push to see the magnet system evalu-

See **HISD** P. 2A

## Preschool unveils tribute to former director

By Betsy Denson  
For The Leader

Nearly two years ago, the community at St. Matthew's Child Development Center lost one of their most beloved members. Last Sunday, they dedicated a tribute to her at the school – a special archway, affectionately named "Miss Mary-Lane."

Mary Bordelon passed away in November of 2015. For the preceding 25 years she had been the director of St. Matthew's, growing it from a two day a week Mother's Day Out program to



"The past few years, children painted quilt squares that our teachers and a few parents sewed for the end-of-year silent auction," said Pitzer. "Since the quilts were always so beautiful, and our teachers were so incredibly creative, I thought we could each make one square and have one quilt sewn as a retirement gift for her. However, her unexpected passing changed everything."

As the community brainstormed a suitable memorial, an idea to transition the quilt squares to tiles began to take

# 30 UNDER 40

## Cassandra (Cassie) Lopez, 28

Lopez is a dynamic, engaged, well-educated and successful professional woman holding an environmental leadership role in a complex technical environment within a major Oil and Gas multinational. She serves as President of the Downtown Houston Toastmasters Club (club #2972), and received her undergraduate and Masters degree in Environmental Sciences and Analysis from Rice University. Currently a Health, Safety and Environment (HES) Specialist for Chevron Corporation Deepwater Gulf of Mexico (GOM), Lopez was recently featured guest speaker at the Federation of Houston Professional Women. She is associated with Rice University's Professional Science Masters Program as advisor and mentor. She is active member of St. Teresa Catholic Church participating in various mission trips to South Texas and ACTS women's retreats. Lopez is married and expecting her first child.



## Joanna Laufer, 32

Joanna is an active member of her community. She is always able to connect with people wherever they come from and originate from. She has a heart for helping others and wanting them to strive to their potential and the communities' potential. She sees the good in others and wants for that good to be shared and spread through their environment. She is a hard worker, loving mother and supportive activist. She is very caring and passionate about going out of her way and I mean doing whatever it takes, to better another person's life. She is the true definition of a leader, always looking for ways she can help spread more unity & support amongst our society. Joanna is also a very powerful person, she has so many connections with diverse businesses & people to helping youths & people with big dreams make their visions into reality. If the world had more people like Joanna around, it would be a much happier place. So that's why I would like to nominate Joanna Laufer.



Laufer is an independent, smart, street savvy, effective, real estate professional who gets things done. Joanna is a young woman that has so many talents she worked hard in the community to make a difference in helping young people and seniors she helped feed seniors she helps getting school supplies for the children she has a heart of gold anytime that you need something or somebody needs something she's always there to give a helping hand we need more young people in the world that can do these things. What a wonderful young woman and I think she needs to be recognized for all the positive things that she's doing out here in our community.

For the past few years, Ms. Laufer has contributed her time, talents, passion, and resources to Houston residents, business owners, organizations and an array of individuals throughout the City.

Ms. Laufer participates in several community endeavors including an event earlier this year feeding homeless families and children in North Houston, wherein over 100 families received free produce and groceries within a 2-hour period on the day of the event. She is always willing to volunteer her time and efforts without any hesitation. Ms. Laufer works as project manager and urban planning consultant for the White Oak Bayou Village retail shopping center located at Antoine and W. Little York. She has brought tremendous positive change to the center and as a result changed the attitudes and perceptions of the surrounding neighborhoods: Oak Forest, Greater Inwood, and Acres Homes. Joanna has played a key role in turning around the center while working to revitalize and empower all of the surrounding neighborhoods. She works towards aligning the center's plans and efforts with area issues and needs. She strives to see the Acres Homes community benefit from, and be a part of the fabric of the commercial real estate changes happening in this area.

## Justin Engle, 33

Justin is the owner of Town In City Brewing Co. and Houston Cider Co., both located in the Heights. He's a relentless hard worker who cares about making the highest quality product he can for the Houston Craft beverage market. As a Heights resident of eight years, he also cares a great deal about the local Heights and Houston community and through countless donations and fund raisers he helps support Heights' staples, such as the Opera In The Heights and the First Saturday Arts Market. The Heights is his home, and you'll never meet a person more deeply passionate about the well-being and the goings on in his community.



## Kendra Penry-Clutter, 35

Penry-Clutter yoga instructor at the Harriet Foster YMCA on 34th Street. Not only is she an excellent yoga teacher but she is most reliable, dedicated to her job and often substitutes for other teachers. Kendra teaches various levels of yoga to all ages of adults as well as a children's class

She is a volunteer coach for "kids triathlon" and is scheduled to coach "Girls on the Run" this fall for an inner city middle school. Kendra also volunteers her time teaching yoga to veterans' families at Fisher House. Her husband is enlisted in the armed forces and she has a real connection with veterans and their families.

Kendra works at Heifer International as a community engagement coordinator. Heifer International works with communities to end hunger and poverty and care for the Earth. She is responsible for the states of Texas to Florida; whereby, she educates and engages with the community to support this non-profit organization. Her passions in life and her dedication of time to help so many in a multitude of ways is an inspiration to others. Kendra is an incredible top young leader in our community.



## Mark C. Austin, 40

In the recent devastation that hit Houston that was Harvey, Mark did not sleep for what seemed to be a month. As water crept close to Mark's house, he left his personal belonging worries behind and went to work to help others. He started by helping pull neighbors out of high water. He used his social media as a powerful tool to let people know help was needed, where help was needed and how others could help. He eventually started filling his band van - he manages Houston bands like such as The Suffers, The Tontons, Matthew Logan Vasquez, Say Girl Say, Wrestlers, -Us., Kay Weathers and Romina Von Mohr - with donations and hauling them to wherever donations were needed. The countless hours of time, effort and probably blood, sweat and tears didn't stop days after Harvey. The efforts continued well passed the tragedy and even to today.

Austin is the owner of The Convoy Group, an artist management and promotions company. Beyond his work, Marc is a proponent of everything local and everything Houston. I don't think there is a better person that represents Houston and the city's hustle.



## Madyson Christine Chavez, 29

Madyson is an extraordinary citizen. She is an outstanding young leader who utilizes her free time to give back to the community and promote the greater good. She generously gives her time, energy, enthusiasm and knowledge to various causes in a truly humble manner, with no expectation of reciprocity or recognition. Madyson is a proud and productive Houstonian who provides a positive impact with her peers and her community. She works full time as a Business Development Representative at BMC Software. In addition, here are her extracurricular activities she is passionate about and is an active participant in and co-founder of the Latino Texas PAC and serves on the Board of Directors. She is a member of the Duchesne Academy Alumnae Association Board of Directors, Greater Houston Partnership HYPE Leadership Team and the Houston Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Emerging Leader Institute. Chavez is also a part of Leadership Houston - Class XXXV, United Way of Greater Houston Project Blueprint - Class XXXII, the inaugural class of Center for Houston's Future Leadership NEXT. Additional community roles include serving as the Volunteer coordinator for various environmental and local organizations and on the Citizens Environmental Coalition Board of Directors.



## Marc Eichenbaum, 35

Marc constantly strives to better not only his local community, but also the entire city of Houston. In his role as Special Assistant to the Mayor for Homeless Initiatives, he and his team have reduced Houston's chronically homeless population by over 60 percent over the last four years. Even more, Marc led Houston to becoming one of the only major cities in the United States to effectively end veteran homelessness. He always looks for ways to help and has a knack for seeing and understanding the situation from all perspectives - from the neighboring residents' views, to understanding the needs of those who find themselves without a place to call home. Marc also serves his community by engaging in numerous organizations throughout the city. He has served on the board of Urban Green (the Hermann Park young professionals' organization), the steering committee of Scene (the Alley Theatre group), the board of advisors for the Holocaust Museum Houston, chair of the Young Adults Division of the Houston Jewish Federation, as well as many more. Marc is also a proud alumni of South Texas College of Law, and he remains active in continuing to support the school. And, on top of all of these things, Marc is an avid Heights enthusiast! From hosting White Linen Night parties, to supporting the local restaurants and businesses (and encouraging his friends to do the same!), he loves this community and the people and places in it! Overall, Marc is extremely dedicated to making the world a better place; though he's already done so much, he is truly committed to doing even more to make this already amazing city even better!



## Juvie Cruz, 38

Juvie Cruz Cardenas, an Associate at the law firm of Galloway, Johnson, Tompkins, Burr & Smith, APLC, has represented small and large clients including Fortune 500 companies. She understands the importance of evaluating a case early as well as identifying a client's concerns and goals in preparing a cost-effective strategy to achieve an optimal outcome. She believes that the keystones to effective and efficient case management are maintaining an astute knowledge of the facts and law; working closely and communicating timely with the client; and being prepared. As a result, Juvie has frequently achieved favorable outcomes for her clients.

Juvie has extensive experience litigating first and third-party insurance and self-insured disputes. Her practice areas include premises liability; personal injury; wind/hail property damage (residential and commercial); insurance defense; Jones Act and general maritime law; commercial litigation; construction disputes; and general civil litigation matters.

Outside of law, Juvie enjoys volunteering with local and international non-profit organizations. She has a specific interest in organizations that empower those living in poverty or provide mentorship, education and career opportunities to youth and women. Under her two-year tenure as President of the Filipino Young Professionals of Houston ("FYP"), she led a team of professionals and community leaders towards accomplishing many goals such as raising funds for academic scholarships for students, to provide international natural disaster relief, and to build homes for families living in poverty. FYP received approval of its 501(c)3 non-profit status and was recognized on numerous occasions by the U.S. Congress and the Texas Senate during her administration.

Her outstanding performance and character have been commemorated with several awards and nominations. Moreover, she has earned a reputation of being a loyal and avid supporter of her mentors, mentees, friends and colleagues.

Juvie is fluent in conversational Tagalog (a Filipino dialect).

