

Fall 2021

The Official Publication of the Texas Association of Health Underwriters

Vol. 31, No. 1

# TAHU Magazine



*2021 Hollis Roberson Recipient*

**Ed Oleksiak**



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**RON BYRD**  
KANSAS CITY LIFE  
STAHU CHAPTER

Enjoy this awards  
issue of the  
TAHU 2021  
Convention

It's a new year for TAHU, and things couldn't be better for this Association.

We've turned the corner — somewhat, anyway — on this COVID battle; at the 2021 TAHU State Convention, most in attendance had been fully vaccinated, and everyone seemed to fare better because of that. We've heard of no outbreaks as a result of our gathering, and we are grateful.

With a convention attendance of more than 300 and all 57 vendors spots filled, you might wonder: What's next?

Well, the 2022 Conference Committee has begun its task of creating the agenda and groundwork for our Fort Worth meeting. (You'll recall that was the scheduled location for our 2020 convention, which was canceled due to COVID.)

As for me, post-convention began with a phone call to the company that prints our magazine to ask why the photo of President Nedra

Clingan on the front cover was so bleached out and discolored that she resembled a "Pink Lady" from the movie Grease! (Needless to say, we had those reprinted.) Then, a reader noticed a typo on Nedra's feature article. It was not a great time for this (volunteer) editor!

I don't like mistakes, especially when they are mine. But now it's time to "shake it off," as they say, and prepare for a great 2022.

Nedra has hit the ground running and our membership is looking to rebound as more employees are heading back to work. Face-to-face meetings are back in play, finally!



Also: The first-in-the-NAHU-nation virtual membership chapter is in full swing and growing — and the best news is, it's here in Texas! Thanks to all who have had a hand in giving these smaller chapters a place to call home. Learn more on our website, [www.tahu.org](http://www.tahu.org).

I'll wrap this up with a reminder that now is the time to get back in the saddle and see what TAHU has to offer at your local-chapter level. Things are on the move once again!

Enjoy this fall issue of TAHU Magazine, especially the images of our get-together in Austin this past July and don't miss our Hollis Roberson Award winner on page 10.

I was thinking, maybe TAHU should bolt from Region 6 and move to Region 5; what do you think? Nah, not going to happen.

Thanks to all of you for your readership and your comments. Keep them coming! I'm honored to work alongside all of you to make this publication the best it can be.



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## NEDRA CLINGAN - TAHU PRESIDENT



We wrapped up a very successful conference in Austin, where more than 300 people came together to hear great speakers, network in an exhibit hall packed with sponsors and vendors, and catch up with friends they hadn't seen for 18 months. And we're already hard at work on next year's conference in Fort Worth! Please make sure you save the date: April 27 - 29, 2022. More information will come in the months ahead.

Fall is in the air, and people are going crazy over pumpkin spice once again! Kids are back in school, and Q4 craziness is upon us. Your TAHU board is hard at work on your behalf, making sure all our actions benefit each member to the fullest.

Day at the Capitol will be here before we know it as well! We'll be back in Austin January 26 with another agenda packed full of great speakers you don't want to miss. Even though the legislative and

special sessions just ended, our Legislative Council is already hard at work on proposed legislation for the next session. Be on the lookout for more details coming soon.

Want to be a part of the action? Make sure you've registered for the Key Contacts program. This program allows you to contact your legislators directly on initiatives integral to our success. We provide all the messaging and guidance to get you started, so sign up today!

Danielle Roberts and her committee are hard at work on the Second Annual Medicare Summit, scheduled for February 11. The summit will be virtual for another year, and will include great speakers from around the country. So again, mark your calendars!



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Each of our local chapters is also offering some great programs, both virtually and in person.

Check them out one of two ways:

- Through the TAHU online calendar at [www.tahu.org](http://www.tahu.org)
- With ENews, which is sent bi-monthly and includes programs around the state you might be interested in attending. (Especially if you need a CE, a sister chapter would be happy to have you join them!)

I look forward to seeing everyone in Austin in January at DATC!

## WELCOME TAHU MEMBERS



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Dillon Tucker - DALLAS  
Nikolai Kachura - LONESTAR



**PATRIOT DAY**  
**SEPTEMBER 11**

# MERONEY MEMO / FALL 2021



**SHANNON & MIKE MERONEY,**  
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 Texas Lobbyists for TAHU

Happy fall, TAHU members! The kids have returned to school, the weather is starting to cool down, and football is back! We had a very busy legislative session earlier this year, and lawmakers have been called back twice this summer for special sessions on mostly partisan issues. And as we write this update, Gov. Greg Abbott has announced a third 30-day special session to begin on September 20 to handle redistricting (delayed because of census data delays), federal pandemic relief appropriations, and a few other partisan items.

### **New Commissioner of Insurance**

On the regulatory front, we finally have a commissioner of insurance! Cassie Brown has been appointed by Gov. Abbott for a term set to expire on February 1, 2023. Brown has served as the commissioner of workers' compensation since June 2018. The insurance-commissioner position has been vacant for nearly a year since Kent Sullivan returned to private legal practice last September.

Previously, Commissioner Brown served as deputy commissioner for regulatory policy at the Texas Department of Insurance. In addition, she served as policy advisor to Governor Rick Perry. Brown received a Bache-

lor of Arts degree in political science from St. Edward's University and attended the Governor's Executive Development Program at The University of Texas LBJ School of Public Affairs. Once the special session convenes, she must be confirmed by the Texas Senate.



### **Third Called Special Session**

Gov. Greg Abbott issued a proclamation announcing that he will convene a third special legislative session at 10 a.m. on Monday, September 20, 2021. The proclamation identifies five agenda items for the third special session:

- Redistricting: Legislation relating to the apportionment of the state of Texas into districts used to elect members of the Texas House of Representatives, the Texas Senate, the State Board of Education, and the United States House of Representatives.

- Federal Appropriations: Legislation providing appropriations from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA).

- Protecting Girls' Sports: Legislation identical to Senate Bill 29 as passed by the Texas Senate in the 87th Legislature, Regular Session, disallowing a student from competing in University Interscholastic League athletic competitions designated for the sex opposite to the student's sex at birth.

- Unlawful Restraint of a Dog: Legislation similar to Senate Bill 474 as passed by the 87th Legislature, Regular Session, but that addresses the concerns expressed in the governor's veto statement.

- Banning Local Governments from Vaccine Mandates: Legislation regarding whether any state or local governmental entities in Texas can mandate that an individual receive a COVID-19 vaccine and, if so, what exemptions should apply to such mandate.

### **COVID-19 Vaccines**

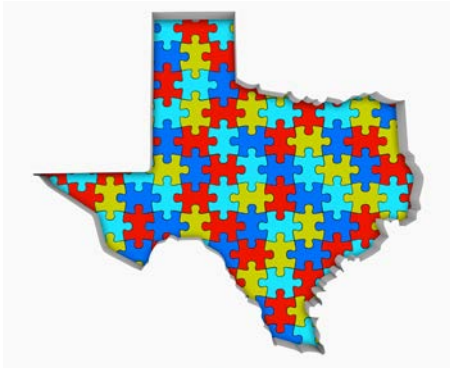
Soon after Abbott's proclamation, President Joe Biden announced sweeping new vaccine mandates that will affect tens of millions of Americans, ordering all businesses with more than 100 employees to require their workers to be inoculated or face weekly testing.

Biden also will require all health facilities that accept Medicare or Medicaid funding to vaccinate their workforces. The White House believes this directive will impact 50,000 locations.

And the president said he plans to sign an executive order that would require all federal employees to be vaccinated against the coronavirus — without an option for those who prefer to be regularly tested instead — hoping to create a model that state governments and private companies will adopt.

Gov. Abbott, who has resisted making vaccinations mandatory in

any form in Texas (going as far as to bar local governments and school districts from enacting their own vaccine mandates), blasted Biden's move as a federal "power grab" because the sweeping order would cover an estimated 80 million American workers. Abbott has encouraged Texans to be vaccinated but insists that they shouldn't be forced to do so.



### Redistricting

In advance of the next special session, committee hearings on redistricting continued at the Texas Capitol. The Texas House and Texas Senate held several days of hearings, as lawmakers will redraw maps for the Texas House, Texas Senate, State Board of Education, and 38 Congressional seats (up from 36 due to Texas' population growth over the last decade).

### Special Election Set for HD 118 (Pacheco)

Gov. Abbott has picked Sept. 28 as the date of the special election to replace former state Rep. Leo Pacheco (D-San Antonio). Pacheco resigned effective Aug. 19 to take a job with San Antonio College. House District 118 is anchored in San Antonio and covers parts of Bexar County south and east of the city. It is a Democratic-friendly district, though Republicans have

already made clear they are eyeing it in the special election.

John Lujan, a Republican who previously held the seat for a brief period, has announced a campaign, as has the 2020 GOP nominee for the seat, Adam Salyer. On the Democratic side of the special election, at least two candidates have emerged: Katie Farias, a member of the Southside Independent School District Board of Managers, and Frank Ramirez, a former legislative staffer who most recently was zoning and planning director for the city of San Antonio. Pacheco has endorsed Ramirez to fill his seat.

### HD 10 Special Election Goes to Run-off

Former state Rep. John Wray (R-Waxahachie) is advancing to a runoff against fellow Republican Brian Harrison in Wray's bid to reclaim his old seat. With all precincts reporting, Wray finished with 36 percent of the vote, 5 percentage points behind Harrison, who won 41 percent, according to unofficial results. Harrison is the former chief of staff at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under President Donald Trump. Harrison rode late momentum after being endorsed Saturday by U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz. The sole Democratic candidate, Pierina Otiniano, finished a distant third with 11 percent. None of the five other candidates broke double digits. The run-off election date has not been set.

Finally, we have begun returning to in-person chapter meetings across the state, and we look forward to seeing you soon. As always, call or e-mail with questions or comments.



# AND THE AWARD GOES TO...

## ED OLEKSIAK

### 2021 Hollis Roberson Recipient

By Ron Byrd  
& Reid Rassmen

Your 2021 TAHU Hollis Roberson Award Winner: Ed Oleksiak.

Some brokers are known for their resumes: “She started ABC Company, or “He built a huge book of business at XYZ.” But a person’s professional accomplishments are only a part of his or her success.

Ed Oleksiak, the recipient of this year’s TAHU Hollis Roberson Award stands out first for who he is: generous, quietly passionate, faith-filled, and dignified.

Here’s the way one colleague described Ed:

“When he talks, others listen. He has worked tirelessly for creative solutions to the cost of health care that will benefit many American consumers, both with his company and through his NAHU work. And he continues to pursue his circle of influence — which is vast! — to help ensure that the private health care system will endure and thrive.”

Another colleague had this to say about Ed:

“He’s a truly good person through and through, and he uses everything he has for the benefit of others.”



Back to that resume, though: It’s nothing to sneeze at.

Ed was one of four children raised by a single mother. Through his track-and-field talents, he was able to attend college and earn an undergraduate degree in math and computer science. He went on to add an MBA and a corporate law degree — both while working full-time.

His first job involved managing benefit plans for an organization with more than 10,000 employees. Next, he served as vice president of human resources for a \$400 million retailer with more than 100 locations nationwide.

After nearly two decades on the employer side, Ed made the decision to

join the very brokerage that supported one of his previous employers. He’s remained in that space for 19 years, using his rich background to relate to those he serves.

In 2010, Ed was introduced to our association, and immediately started serving in the local chapter, eventually assuming the position of chapter president. While serving on the local board, he also joined NAHU’s



National Legislative Council, serving five years and chairing the group. Next, he served three years as our Region 6 RVP.

When asked about Ed’s work at that time, Janet Trautwein recalls, “He was one of our very best NAHU

Legislative Council chairs, bringing the council forward in many ways to work on important innovations that will make a difference to people all over the United States.”

Ed has been published numerous times over; in recent years, he has been especially willing to share his wisdom online.

More about our recipient: He is married to his college sweetheart, and together, they raised three daughters. In his greater community, Ed has lived a life of faith and service as a member of the Knights of Columbus as well as Legatus, an organization of Catholic laymen and laywomen.

Ed has served on the North Texas Board of Directors of the National Kidney Foundation and a mentor at El Cristo Rey College Preparatory School, helping students bridge tuition gaps.

And his commitment to athletics continues: Ed is an avid runner and cyclist, competing in the Dallas White Rock Marathon and the Hotter ‘n Hell 100, and on multiple teams to raise funds for the charity Bike MS.

On June 30 of this year, Ed retired from his role as vice president of Holmes Murphy, but we fully intend to continue to seek and rely on his wisdom and guidance.

Here are a few words Ed shared upon learning he had been named recipient of the award:

“The Hollis is an honor to receive. Every year I have attended a Hollis



Award dinner, I have been in awe of the winners. It’s a very impressive group to be part of. I was very surprised to learn I had been chosen — and even more surprised when I learned my wife had kept the secret for over a year, as the pandemic caused the postponement of last year’s meeting!

“It was very special to receive this award at one of the first live events since the start of the pandemic. My family members, friends, and fellow members have been so instrumental to my successes in my career. Without them, none of this would have been possible.”




Heartfelt congratulations, Ed — you are most deserving of this award, and each one of us is honored to learn from you!



*Pictured below*

Ed poses with other Hollis Robertson Award winners. L to R: Linda New, Rusty Rice, Mike Smith, Reid Rasmussen, Elizabeth Ashmore, Ed Oleksiak, Ron Buffum, C. Louanne Trebing, Michael A. Rivera, Janet Trautwein, Trei Wild



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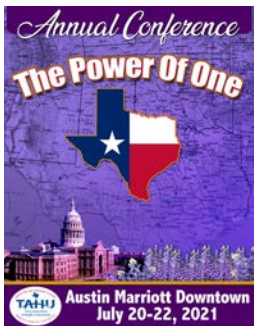
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*INDV2015-BRK-6/21*



# TAHU's Annual Conference in Review

By Ron Byrd - Editor

The July 2021 Texas Association of Health Underwriters State Convention was the first held since the pandemic became a part of our lives. It was a great event -- and most importantly, everyone stayed healthy. The theme of the event was "The Power of One," but truly, it focused on the power of many! More than 300 attendees -- 330, to be exact! -- enjoyed the gathering at the new Austin Marriott Downtown.

The Conference Committee planned a packed and informative three days! Hats off to:

- Convention Chair Fred Cartier
- President Audra Sullivan
- EC Chair Nedra Clingan
- Sponsor Chair Amy Perry
- Speakers/CE Chairs Jennifer Pleasants & Linda Behrens
- Entertainment & Local Chapter Representative Chair Linda New
- Hollis Roberson Chair Reid Rasmussen
- Vanguard Chair Taylor Kirkhart
- Master of Ceremonies Rusty Rice

... and everyone else who had a hand in organizing this stellar event.

The convention opened with a legislative luncheon for TAHUPAC contributors that featured special guest Matt Dale, CEO of Point Health, and Matt Mackowiak, Travis County GOP Chair.

Next up that afternoon were three general sessions, each one loaded with representatives from our industry. Our Diamond sponsor, Summus Global, got things started, with Nick Razzi, vice president and Head of National Accounts, presenting. Up next was NAHU president Eugene Starks, who provided an update from Washington.

Compliance was next on the agen-



da, with a panel discussion that included Misty Baker of BenefitMall; and Gunnar Qualset of Premier Marketing. The discussion was moderated by Krista Palmer, Vice President of Compliance for 90 Degree Benefits.

The TAHU State Convention offered five hours of continuing-education credit. TAHU Lobbyists Mike and Shannon Meroney of Meroney Public Affairs presented *Snowidpocalypse 2021: Health Insurance Changes from the Texas Legislature & Congress*, a first-class session.

The first day wrapped up a provider panel featuring Kevin Moore of Aetna, Teresa Canales of Friday Health Plans, Brock Purslow of Humana, Meredith Duncan of Bright Health Care, and Rusty Rice of Avesis to discuss the current employee-benefits marketplace and field questions and then ended with exhibitors visits and the Vanguard rooftop reception.

The second day saw tremendous interest and participation from those interested in receiving CE credits, or both.

TAHU's very own Mike Smith taught his CE class to a standing-room-only crowd! Attendees  
*Continued Page 15*

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# TDI News

## Governor names Cassie Brown Insurance Commissioner

*See Meroney's Memo for more information*

The Texas Department of Insurance (TDI) reminds health maintenance organizations, health insurers, workers' compensation insurance carriers, and utilization review agents (URAs) that an adverse determination, or a workers' compensation utilization review determination, based on a health care service being experimental or investigational is subject to the utilization review requirements in Texas law. See Texas Insurance Code [Chapters 4201](#) and [4202](#) and Title 28, Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 19, Subchapters [R](#) and [U](#).

Health plan issuers, workers' compensation insurance carriers, and URAs should review and ensure compliance with the requirements by:

- Using appropriate personnel, screening criteria, and procedures;
- Issuing adverse determination notices in the time allowed; and
- Providing the information required in adverse determination notices.

TDI will continue to monitor compliance with utilization review requirements.

Failure to comply with these requirements may result in disciplinary action and administrative penalties as provided in the Insurance Code and TDI rules.



*Continued from Page 13*

were able to choose between 12 classes, with a third of those offering credits.

The highlight of the convention, the Hollis Roberson Award dinner, was held the second evening. Hollis Roberson spent his career in the insurance industry and was named First Vice President of NAHU in 1988. Hollis passed away in December 1989, and his namesake award was established in remembrance of his accomplishments. Read more in this magazine about this year's award recipient, Ed Oleksiak.

The last day of the event featured breakfast with exhibitors and the remaining General Session, and much-anticipated vendor door prizes closed out the convention.

The 2022 TAHU Convention is scheduled for April 27 – April 29, 2022, in Fort Worth. Our goal for next year is to hit the 400-attendees mark, so make sure the date is on your calendar.

Thank you again to everyone who made this year's event so special. I look forward to seeing you all next year!

# TAHU Chapters - State Convention 2021





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Friday Health Plans will serve the following counties in 2022:

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- Collin
- Denton
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- Fort Bend
- Grayson
- Hidalgo
- Montgomery
- Nueces
- Starr
- Williamson
- Webb

Open enrollment for 2022 plans starts November 1.

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To Get Appointed:  
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# TAHU Honorees Corporation Ken Martin Scholarship

The Ken Martin Scholarship is awarded to students who are majoring in communications, journalism, or related fields. This award was established in his honor and memory because of his years of service as editor for the TAHU News and the “Voice of TAHU “ as our Emcee at TAHU functions, and because of his unwavering attitude of excellence.

This years recipients are: Saydie Bradberry and Sebastian Treviño Lopez.

## Saydie Bradberry

My name is Saydie Bradberry. I am the only daughter of Cherrie Bradberry, the best mother a girl could ask for. She made me into the person I am today. I do not know where I would be without her. Sully is my four-legged son. I rescued him from a local animal shelter when he was 3 months old. Having him certified as my emotional support animal has allowed me to have him at college with me.

Currently, I am a first-generation student at Texas Tech University, where I am a junior. My major is history with minors in Spanish and political science. After I earn my bachelor's degree, I hope to go to law school to become either a family lawyer or a criminal prosecution lawyer.

While here at Texas Tech, I have been a member of the Goin' Band from Raiderland, and I have loved every second of it. This will be my third year playing my saxophone to “Fight Raiders Fight” and performing in many different halftime shows. Being a part of something bigger than myself has taught me



so many different life lessons: the importance of teamwork, integrity, commitment, and personal responsibility, to name just a few.

Growing up, I had a fascination with history and a passionate love for music. That love helped me achieve numerous honors in high school. I served in leadership positions with the Mean Green Marching Machine at Iowa Park High School and was promoted to drum major my junior and senior years. With dedication, hard work, and God-given talent, I earned my way to State Solo and Ensemble three times, where I received the highest ratings in a saxophone quartet as well as in vocal solos.

I also earned the highest ratings in UIL visual arts all four years of high school for various paintings and drawings. Several of my pieces have been submitted at the Texas/Oklahoma Fair and have won blue ribbons and People's Choice awards. During my freshman and sophomore years of high school, I was on the varsity tennis team, and I won first and second place in various UIL tournaments. Academically, I was an honor-roll student and mastered three state standardized tests.

While I truly enjoyed my extra-curricular activities, I decided to decrease the number of commitments I had been trying to juggle and participate only in the Goin' Band so that I can remain focused on academics.

I would like to extend my sincerest thanks to the TAHU organization and the TAHU Honorees Board members for awarding me this scholarship. Because of this award, I will be able to finish my college career within four years and receive my bachelor's degree. This award truly means a great deal to me. I am honored to have been selected to receive it. Thank you again for your generosity, and as we say here at Tech...

Wreck Em'!



## Sebastian Treviño Lopez

My name is Sebastian Treviño Lopez. I am 18 years old and a 2021 graduate from the Liberal Arts and Science Academy in Austin. I am an Eagle Scout with Troop 9. I love to spend time outdoors, hiking and fishing. It's also my passion to write and play music.

I am enrolled in the Music Business and Performance Technology program at Austin Community College. After two years at ACC, it's my plan to transfer to the University of Texas to major in communications.

Thank you so much to the Texas Association of Health Underwriters for this scholarship award. I sincerely appreciate the recognition from the TAHU Honorees Corporation.



# AUSTIN

Victoria Trevino  
President  
[austinhuh.org](http://austinhuh.org)



After 17 long months, Austin AHU hosted its first in-person event in August at the III Forks Restaurant in downtown Austin and presented an CE course on ethics.

On October 21, Austin will host *DON'T Press Your Luck*,

# Chapter Talkin'

a 60-minute continuing education program that will provide key insurance concepts and strategies for level-funded plans in the small to mid-market space.

This class is presented in game format with audience participation in teams and hosted by current TAHU President Nedra Clingan, LPRT.





# Fort Worth

Wayne Grogan - President  
[fwahu.org](http://fwahu.org)



Thursday, September 9 - Annual Sales Symposium

Please join FWAHU for our 2021 Sales Symposium at Lone Star Park in Grand Prairie for a full day of CEs covering everything from group, Medicare, individual, and ancillary product sales!

Registration will begin at 8:15 a.m. and first CE at 8:45 a.m.

Morning Sessions (8:45 a.m. – 12 p.m.):

The morning session will include breakfast along with 3 hours of CE!

Lunch (12 p.m. - 1:30p.m.):

During lunch, Mike and Shannon Meroney, the current TAHU lobbyists, will present a one-hour CE to update us on legislative matters in Austin. We will also hear from our Triple Crown sponsor and have time to visit with each exhibitor.

Afternoon Session (1:45pm – 4:15pm):

After lunch, we will come back with two more hours of CE.

After the afternoon CEs, we will recognize our exhibitors and hold prize drawings, so make sure to stick around all day.



San Antonio  
Kathy Ferfusion - President  
[sanantonioahu.org](http://sanantonioahu.org)

*and What Have We Learned Since Its Inception*

Attendance: Members 10,  
Non-Members 7

August CE Monthly Event:

Date: August 18, 2021 : Location:  
Stonewerks

Presenter: Carla Adams, TASC

Provider: 32408 TAHU: CE:

111028

Course Title: *ACA for 2021 and Beyond*

July Highlights:

July TAHU board meeting - submitted report

Attended NAHU Leadership

Academy Webinar - Board Meeting

Structure, Awards Committee

Promoted board contribution in the

TAHU PAC

July Virtual Event:

Date: July 28, 2021

Presenter: James Douglas, Friday Health Plans

Provider: 32408 TAHU: CE:

126615

Course Title: *ICHRA Education*

September CE Monthly Event:

Date: September 15, 2021: Location:

Stonewerks

Presenter: Laura Schrutka, Ameritas

Provider: 36770 Ameritas: CE:

121482

Course Title: *What's on Your Dental*



COASTAL BEND  
Val Ybarra - President  
[cbahu.org](http://cbahu.org)



September 2021

Course Title: Legislative Update (1 hour CE)

Presenter: Mike & Shannon Meroney

Location: House of Rock, 511 Starr St, Corpus Christi, TX 78401

Date & Time: September 15, 2021 & time TBD

Future Events – We are in the middle of planning a membership drive. Our mayor, who is a former insurance agent, will be the featured speaker. We will also be reviewing the benefits of becoming a full member. More details to come!

# Chapter Talkin'

LoneStar  
Denise Villagran- President  
[lonestarahu.org](http://lonestarahu.org)



The Board of the Lone Star Virtual Chapter remains busy developing programs for our members, planning for a road show, and initiating a recruitment strategy. During the third quarter, we hosted our regularly scheduled monthly programs:

- A Washington update by Marcy Buckner
- An ICHRA presentation by James Douglas of Friday Health Plans
- Medicare trends and updates by Mike Smith with The Brokerage
- A Texas legislative update, *Snovidpocalyse*, featuring our lobbyists, Shannon and Mike Meroney

The fourth quarter's offerings include Danielle Kunkle-Roberts' presentation on Medicare enrollment periods. A CE presentation, *Zooming into a New Era* by Amerflex and Krista Palmer Crisher, will finish off the year.

We strive to offer timely topics to our membership. Our program offerings in 2022 will be enhanced with professional development opportunities as well

as presentations by speakers from across the nation on varied and unique topics. Stay tuned for programs related to finances, agency management, selling in a COVID world, hunger and its effect on a health plan, and many more.

Virtual programs present some challenges to the status quo, but offer significant advantages as well. For example, no drive time is required! You can participate from your desktop, laptop, iPad, or phone from any location that offers an internet connection. And by far one of the best advantages of virtual programming is access to speakers and topics from around the state and the country! The board is making every effort to find the right mix of topics for our members and present meaningful content at least once a month.

As a somewhat novice chapter, we have experienced some growing pains -- a reality for any start-up. But we're up to the task of fine-tuning the virtual chapter to provide members with a first-class resource for material, industry information, and TAHU and NAHU updates. It is our goal to maintain and enhance a chapter of which our state and members will be proud.

We certainly hope you consider tuning in to our programs!





**STAHU President  
Hector Garcia**  
[stahu.org](http://stahu.org)

On September 16 and 17, STAHU hosted our fourth annual Medicare, Legislation and Employee Benefits Summit on South Padre Island, offering five hours of CE credit.

Our event began on the 16th with our Sunset Bay cruise, and our attendance necessitated our chartering a second boat -- what a great problem to have! Music, drinks, and great weather provided for a wonderful time for all.

With more than 120 registered attendees, our Summit began on the 17th with my receiving a humorous citation from the mayor of South Padre Island. With a police escort, the mayor summoned me to the front of the room, where my dress-tie was cut in half to jokingly cite me for violating South Padre Island's attire regulations.

To set the pace for our event, we began by honoring our country with the Pledge of Allegiance. Robert Ruiz sang our national anthem, and we prayed for the blessing of our guests and the day's activities.

Together with my awards chair,



Ron Byrd, and our immediate past president, Lisa A. Gracia, we started a new STAHU tradition: We honored three distinguished association members in an awards ceremony:

- Denise S. Villagran, for her efforts in establishing our prestigious local chapter
- Marisa Rivera as Member of the Year, for her volunteer efforts
- Pete Jaramillo, founder and past president, for his exemplary work ethic and his stellar achievements and contributions to the Rio Grande Valley

September 17, 2021, will mark the beginning of our association's official institution of the Pete Jaramillo Award. Each year, STAHU will honor another deserving recipient for his or her contributions to society.

Thanks to Carla Adams, Angela Theesfeld, Krista Palmer, and Andy Laudenslager, who presented CEs for everyone. Our day wrapped up with an array of door prizes including Yetis, TVs, an assortment of handheld gifts, and a variety of tasty libations.

We added 11 new members, and STAHU was proud to welcome them to our chapter. Thanks to our guests, sponsors, and my STAHU board, who made this summit the most successful one to date.

We look forward to seeing everyone in February 2022 at our Day of Education, where we will again present five hours of CE credit. Keep an eye out for your invitation.

More of STAHUs Summit





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[asims@brighthealthcare.com](mailto:asims@brighthealthcare.com)

# TAHU'S 2021 Legislative Fund and TAHUPAC Contributors

Member	Chapter	Level	Member	Chapter	Level	Member	Chapter	Level
Barrera, Rolando	Coastal Bend	Diamond	Bowers, Alicia	San Antonio	Gold	New, Linda	Austin	Gold
Booth, Tonya	Fort Worth	Diamond	Brown, Jesse	Houston	Gold	Oleksiak, Ed	Dallas	Gold
McMillan Tracy	Fort Worth	Diamond	Budinsky, Marty	Houston	Gold	Ott, Rick	Coastal Bend	Gold
Rivera, Michael	Houston	Diamond	Burgess, Robbie	Coastal Bend	Gold	Crisher, Krista Palmer	Fort Worth	Gold
Sexton Durr	Houston	Diamond	Burkholder Karen	Dallas	Gold	Pancerz Claire	Dallas	Gold
Ashmore, Elizabeth	Lubbock	Ruby	Byrd, Ron	South Texas	Gold	Parkey, Sarah	Coastal Bend	Gold
Bellman, Mark	Austin	Ruby	Campos, Blake	Houston	Gold	Perry, Amy (Adams)	Fort Worth	Gold
Cartier, Fred	San Antonio	Ruby	Castillo, Iris	South Texas	Gold	Perryman, Melissa	Austin	Gold
Harris, Polly	Coastal Bend	Ruby	Chavez Crystal	San Antonio	Gold	Phifer, Joe	Dallas	Gold
Kilpatrick, Scott	Houston	Ruby	Christensen, Elizabeth	Fort Worth	Gold	Pipoly, Esther	San Antonio	Gold
Robinson, Judith	East TX	Ruby	Clark, Cheryl	Lubbock	Gold	Potter, Amanda	LoneStar	Gold
Shappell, Trace	East TX	Ruby	Clark, Eirk	NM	Gold	Price, Dorthy	LoneStar	Gold
Southan, Tamela	Dallas	Ruby	Clingan, Nedra	San Antonio	Gold	Raymond, Garrin	Houston	Gold
Villagran, Denise	Coastal Bend	Ruby	DePaoli, Allison	San Antonio	Gold	Reynolds, Caleb	Austin	Gold
Waller, Doris	Dallas	Ruby	Douglas, Paul	East TX	Gold	Richiuso, Christine	Dallas	Gold
Wilson, Tom	Texoma	Ruby	Douglas Sandy	East TX	Gold	Rivera, Marisa	South Texas	Gold
Alt, Sharon	Fort Worth	Platinum	Dytrich, Nancy	Austin	Gold	Roberts, Danielle	Fort Worth	Gold
Avery, Wendy	Dallas	Platinum	Dumont Nick	Fort Worth	Gold	Roosth, Michael	Houston	Gold
Berry, Ernest	Lubbock	Platinum	Elliott-Harmon, Patti	Coastal Bend	Gold	Rosen, Charles	Fort Worth	Gold
Blair, Mary Ann	East TX	Platinum	Eller, Darla	LoneStar	Gold	Smith, Craig	East TX	Gold
Bolden, Michael	West Texas	Platinum	Ellis, Tom	El Paso	Gold	Smith, Judy	Coastal Bend	Gold
Bradberry, Cherrie	Texoma	Platinum	Evans, Mike	Lubbock	Gold	Snyder, Stephen	Dallas	Gold
Brooks, Isha	Texoma	Platinum	Farabee, David	Texoma	Gold	Stair, B. Gene	Austin	Gold
Buffum, Ron	Austin	Platinum	Ferfuson Kathy	San Antonio	Gold	Stanley, Jennifer	Dallas	Gold
Butler, Allison	Panhandle	Platinum	Ford, Holley	Austin	Gold	Stockstill, Beckie	Houston	Gold
Chalif, Yun	Dallas	Platinum	Foster Christal	Dallas	Gold	Stubbs, Clifton	Fort Worth	Gold
Cochran, Stacy	Fort Worth	Platinum	Frances, Laura	Dallas	Gold	Sullivan, Audra	Fort Worth	Gold
Cook, David	Texoma	Platinum	Gilbert Debra	Dallas	Gold	Swanson, Cynthia	East TX	Gold
Cottar, Tom	Houston	Platinum	Gonzales, Theresa	South Texas	Gold	Sypert, Steve	Lubbock	Gold
Debler, John	Coastal Bend	Platinum	Gonzalez, Carlos	South Texas	Gold	Theesfeld Angela	South Texas	Gold
DeLeon, Rachelle	N/M	Platinum	Goodman, Cindy	Dallas	Gold	Thorne, Roblyn	Austin	Gold
Fristoe, Kelly	Texoma	Platinum	Garcia, Hector	South Texas	Gold	Tolle, Kathy	Dallas	Gold
Hayes Judith	West Texas	Platinum	Grogan, Wayne	Fort Worth	Gold	Trevino, Siboney	Houston	Gold
Jaramillo, Pete	South Texas	Platinum	Hamilton, Leawhine	Fort Worth	Gold	Trevino, Lisa	South Texas	Gold
Johnson, Eric	Fort Worth	Platinum	Hamm, Phillip	Houston	Gold	Trevino, Victoria	Austin	Gold
Johnson, Sandy	San Antonio	Platinum	Hansen, Shannon	Dallas	Gold	Vasquez Ramirez, Vale	San Antonio	Gold
Keel, Ben	Houston	Platinum	Hebert, Laura	Coastal Bend	Gold	Waldron, Gary	Dallas	Gold
Kelly, Renee	Austin	Platinum	Hedberg, Eric	Houston	Gold	Wallace, Kasey	Houston	Gold
Ledgerwood, Michael	Houston	Platinum	Helms, Scott	Fort Worth	Gold	Wallin, Johnny	Fort Worth	Gold
Lee, Susan	Houston	Platinum	Herrington Phyllis	Coastal Bend	Gold	Wild Trei	Dallas	Gold
Morrow, Todd	Austin	Platinum	Hoffman, Crystal	Houston	Gold	Willingham, Sean	San Antonio	Gold
Petit, Jan	San Angelo	Platinum	Holloway, Ryan	Fort Worth	Gold	Wilson, Garland	Houston	Gold
Pleasant, Jennifer	Coastal Bend	Platinum	Irwin, Maria	Austin	Gold	Ybarra, Valeria	Coastal Bend	Gold
Rios-Carl, Elizabeth	El Paso	Platinum	Jaques, Kevin	Austin	Gold	York, Melanie	Fort Worth	Gold
Rolf, Rita	Dallas	Platinum	Jones, Jamie	Houston	Gold	Young, Peter	Dallas	Gold
Scott, Nicole	San Antonio	Platinum	Keathley, Bryan	Fort Worth	Gold	Zeithler, Kelly	San Antonio	Gold
Seibel, Ron	Austin	Platinum	Kirkhart, Taylor	Dallas	Gold	Zesch, Bobby	West Texas	Gold
Simmang, Michael	Austin	Platinum	Knight, Jack	Panhandle	Gold	Barrera, Leo	Coastal Bend	Silver
Smith, Mike	Fort Worth	Platinum	Lawlis, Rita	Lubbock	Gold	Brattelli Wendy	East TX	Silver
Splawn, W. Craig	Houston	Platinum	Le, Duong	Fort Worth	Gold	Grossman Michael	San Antonio	Silver
Spragins, Jackie	Texoma	Platinum	Leal, Gary	Houston	Gold	Lowery Katie	Coastal Bend	Silver
C. Trebing, Louanne	Dallas	Platinum	Lee, Diane	Coastal Bend	Gold	Meroney, Shannon	NM	Silver
Watts, Jessica	Austin	Platinum	Long, Scott	Houston	Gold	Opgenorth Stephanie	Austin	Silver
Walker, Kenneth	Austin	Platinum	Lopez, Melissa	San Antonio	Gold	Rasmussen, Reid	Austin	Silver
Adams, Carla	San Antonio	Gold	Martin, Patricia	Houston	Gold	Skinner, Patrick	Austin	Other
Ahluquist, Neldia	Houston	Gold	Meason, Toby	Panhandle	Gold	Diamond	\$1,200 +	\$100 Mo
Antongiovanni, Joanna	San Antonio	Gold	Miller, D'Ann	East TX	Gold	Ruby	\$600+	\$50 Mo
Avery, Mike	LoneStar	Gold	Muir, Don	Houston	Gold	Platinum	\$300+	\$25 Mo
Bentley, Beau	East TX	Gold	Naylor, Candice	Panhandle	Gold	Gold	\$150+	\$12.50 Mo
Boggs Mary Ann	Dallas	Gold	Neuner Steve	Dallas	Gold	Silver	<\$150	
Boucher, Eva	Dallas	Gold						

# GET ON BOARD



## What is LPRT?

NAHU's Leading Producer Round Table (LPRT) encourages excellence among its members by recognizing their sales achievements.

LPRT members demonstrate exceptional professional knowledge and outstanding client service. NAHU formed the Leading Producer Round Table in 1942 to recognize the successful underwriters of accident and health insurance. Today, NAHU and the LPRT Committee are committed to making LPRT the premier program for top health, disability, long-term care, and worksite

marketing insurance producers, carrier representatives, carrier management and general agency/agency managers.

To qualify for LPRT, you must be actively employed in the health insurance industry and make positive contributions in your professional endeavors. For more information visit [www.nahu.org](http://www.nahu.org).



## NAHU's Triple Crown Program

NAHU created the President's Triple Crown Program to recognize those members whose individual contributions to

NAHU help advance the association's mission. Like baseball's Triple Crown, it recognizes accomplishments in three key areas. However, although baseball's Triple Crown hasn't been won since 2012, NAHU's Triple Crown can be awarded to hundreds of our members. To qualify for the Triple Crown within a calendar year (01/01-12/31), a member must participate in:

- HUPAC: Participate in \$12 x 12 draft program or contribute \$150 total for the year
- Membership: Recruit two or more new members
- Advocacy: Use Operation Shout to send three or more messages

[Click HERE](#) for more information.

## NAHU Certification Courses

NAHU offers coursework to help members achieve certifications. [Click HERE](#) for a listing of available certifications

# IT'S UP TO YOU!

**STOP DON'T  
STOP ME NOW!**

PROSPECTUS



TAHU Annual Conference

**April 27-29, 2022**

Fort Worth Hilton



# JOIN TODAY

## TAHU: Now More Than Ever!

### YOUR VOICE FOR ADVOCACY

Your membership with TAHU helps ensure Texas agents have a strong and united voice in Austin. TAHU and its legislative team protect your interests at the Capitol by working closely with legislators and staff. Through TAHU, you will have the opportunity to participate in the organization's grassroots network, attend the annual "Day at the Capitol" and make a difference at critical points in the legislative process.

### YOUR LINK TO BREAKING INDUSTRY NEWS

During this time of transition, TAHU keeps its members current on breaking news on healthcare reform and other key insurance issues. Your membership also supports the association's media efforts to reinforce the value of agents and direct consumers to local TAHU members for assistance.

### YOUR PLACE TO NETWORK AND CONNECT

Your TAHU membership connects you to a network of other agents across Texas. Your membership also provides the opportunity to attend TAHU's annual conference that includes insightful presentations, speakers and educational courses. TAHU membership also allows you access to the TAHU café, a members-only online exchange for sharing best practices and resources.

### YOUR ASSOCIATION FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

With educational seminars planned throughout the year, TAHU provides access to outstanding speakers and seminars at the local chapter and state meetings, at little or no cost. Through TAHU, you can gain certification as an expert in the small group insurance market (SGS). TAHU's annual meeting provides members a variety of continuing education (CE) opportunities across a range of relevant topics.

### YOUR ACCESS TO EXCLUSIVE RESOURCES AND DISCOUNTS

As a TAHU member, you become part of exclusive state and national databases that allow consumers to search for agents in their area. TAHU membership also provides:

- Discounts on services, products, and information through the TAHU group purchasing program
- A subscription to TAHU News, the association's quarterly publication

*Texas Association of Health Underwriters (TAHU) is a state trade association representing licensed health insurance agents, brokers, consultants and benefit professionals who serve the health insurance needs of consumers and employers seeking health insurance coverage. TAHU is a state chapter of the National Association of Health Underwriters.*

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PROTECTING THE CONSUMER'S FUTURE  
**TAHU**  
Texas Association  
of Health Underwriters  
AMERICA'S BENEFITS SPECIALISTS

# TAHU DAY AT THE CAPITOL

Wednesday  
January 26, 2022

The graphic features a red border with white stars at the top and bottom. On the left is a photograph of the Texas State Capitol building. The text is centered on a light blue background with a subtle star pattern.