



**News release**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **BAHEP, ERAU, industry and academic partners meet to discuss future workforce needs**

**BAY AREA HOUSTON, TEXAS** – Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University – Worldwide recently announced that it selected Houston as the city to offer new master’s degrees in the fall of 2012. It will relocate to a new facility in Houston at Ellington Airport in the first phase of a multi-year expansion program. The new degrees include:

- Master of Systems Engineering
- Master of Science in Logistics and Supply Chain Management
- Master of Science in Project Management.

For the past year, the Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership has been engaged with the City of Houston, the Houston Airport System, and other economic development organizations to land ERAU. BAHEP collectively met many times with ERAU administrators, including their president, Dr. John P. Johnson, along with Mario Diaz, director of Aviation for the Houston Airport System, Governor Rick Perry, and Congressman Pete Olson.

Bob Mitchell, BAHEP president, stated, “This is a major win for us and for regional growth. The ERAU expansion will create additional jobs, and many of the programs Embry-Riddle is offering are in high demand career fields with some increasing in the coming years by 20 percent. Such a highly-trained workforce is also a great drawing card for new businesses.”

BAHEP will provide on-going support to ERAU by assisting in coordinating plans to continue growing the student body, while expanding the degree programs offered by Embry-Riddle.

On Dec. 8, BAHEP hosted a focused meeting between regional business leaders, many of BAHEP’s academic partners, and ERAU top management to discuss trends and future workforce needs to assist ERAU in planning its future curriculum offerings to make this expansion a mutual success for the university, for regional businesses, and for students.

Dan Seal, BAHEP executive director of Special Initiatives, gave opening remarks while Harv Hartman, chairman of BAHEP’s Education and Workforce Development Committee, moderated

the event. During the meeting, Dr. John Watret gave an overview of the university's expansion. Watret is executive vice president and chief academic officer of ERAU's worldwide campus.

Workforce needs that were discussed included the following representatives and industries: Mario Diaz, aviation; Paul Diggins, aerospace; Veronica Reyes, energy; Dr. Dave Strome, medical/life sciences; Mark Conrad, specialty chemicals/safety; and Captain Tom Tray, transportation/logistics/maritime. Education partnerships included; Dr. Oscar Criner, Texas Southern University; Dr. Sallie Kay Janes, San Jacinto College; Paul Quinn, Houston Community College; Dr. Rami Shafiee, Lone Star College System; Dr. Alex Torrez, Clear Creek ISD; Dr. Kirk Lewis, Pasadena ISD; and Dr. Aaron Spence, Houston ISD.

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*Harv Hartman, standing, welcomes Dr. John Watret to the meeting held Dec. 8 at the Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership. Watret is executive vice president and chief academic officer of Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University – Worldwide. Hartman is chairman of BAHEP's Education and Workforce Development Committee. The meeting was held to discuss trends and future workforce needs to assist ERAU in planning its future curriculum offerings.*

**The Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership** is a member-driven organization that provides the leadership to stimulate regional economic development and employment in southeast Texas. Its members include more than 265 investor companies, business professionals, local governments, and educational institutions encompassing 13 cities, Galveston and Harris counties, and the Port of Houston Authority. Visit [www.bayareahouston.com](http://www.bayareahouston.com).