

BAHEP extends its sincere appreciation for the continued support of THE DAILY NEWS through this monthly supplement.

## BAHEP brings academia and industry experts together to discuss workforce dynamics and future trends in region's rapidly expanding healthcare sector

The mission statement of the Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership is straightforward. It states, "Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership provides leadership and engagement to stimulate regional economic development and employment that improves our quality of life."

What isn't so straightforward is how that mission gets accomplished when working within a highly complex region in support of the recruitment, expansion, and retention of jobs and wealth creation across the region's five core industries: a) aerospace and aviation, b) healthcare, c) maritime and logistics, d) specialty chemical, and e) tourism and recreation.

BAHEP's Education and Workforce Development Committee is hosting informal panel discussions over the next several months that will focus on these five core industries to gauge whether or not the region's educational institutions are turning out the kind of workforce that the business leaders and industries want and need. The panels, comprised of experts within each industry, will discuss current workforce dynamics and anticipated future needs.

### Healthcare panelists speak of workforce dynamics and trends

The first scheduled panel addressed the current workforce dynamics and trends in the healthcare sector. Panel members included Santiago Mendoza, Jr., and Brad Horst, Bay Area Regional Medical Center; Jennifer Moffett, Clear Lake Regional Medical Center; Kyle Price, Memorial Hermann Southeast Hospital; and Sherri Sampson, Houston Methodist St. John Hospital. Joining in the discussion were Brenda Hellyer, Ed.D., chancellor, San Jacinto College District; Warren R. Nichols, Ph.D., president, College of the Mainland; Thad Roher,

superintendent of schools, Friendswood Independent School District, Linda Wadleigh, Ed.D., deputy superintendent of schools, La Porte Independent School District; and other leaders from regional educational institutions who had a strong vested interest in the discussion.

Price spoke of the impact of growth saying, "We're still seeing growth in the Houston market, but we're seeing a different growth. Four years ago we would have seen more growth in the oil and gas sector. Now we're starting to see that growth in the retail / restaurant sector. That has made a pretty large impact on healthcare from a payer standpoint. Those jobs don't come with the same type of payers — the same type of insurance."

"There has been some growth in the uninsured, although Houston has always been a large uninsured pocket. There has been more growth in that area than we've seen over the past three years. It keeps your ERs very clogged up dealing with less acute care."

"The Medicare sector is continuing to expand in the 12-county area, as well. Outside of acute care, there is a heavy emphasis on sports medicine, physical therapy/rehabilitation, imaging centers, and convenient care centers to bring more into the community without beds. Healthcare is moving more into the outpatient sector trying to have 'care in the backyard.'"

Memorial Hermann partners with a lot of the colleges from which they recruit. Their imaging staff comes mainly from San Jacinto College. There is a big demand for cath lab techs (catheterization laboratory technicians). Houston does not have a cath lab tech program.

Memorial Hermann recently partnered with San Jacinto College and its imaging program. Memorial Hermann took accredited graduates of the imaging

program and put them into its own 12-month pilot cath lab program. There are many cath labs in the city which have a big demand.

### Houston Methodist growing in this market

Sampson reported that Houston Methodist is

growing in this market with inpatient and outpatient services. Houston Methodist St. John now has primary care physicians located in Clear Lake, Webster, Friendswood and soon to be in League City. She said, "Our hospital is one of the only 'A' rated hospitals in our area for quality. We have also recently obtained certification as a Primary Stroke Center, and we are recognized for nursing excellence with a Pathway to Excellence designation. We will be starting our journey for Magnet recognition in nursing soon."



BAHEP's Education and Workforce Development Committee is hosting informal panel discussions over the next several months that will focus on five core industries, their workforce dynamics and trends. The first scheduled panel addressed the healthcare sector. Shown above (l to r) are Harv Hartman, committee chair; Sherri Sampson, Houston Methodist St. John Hospital; Kyle Price, Memorial Hermann Southeast Hospital; Brad Horst, Bay Area Regional Medical Center; Santiago Mendoza, Jr., Bay Area Regional Medical Center; and Jennifer Moffett, Clear Lake Regional Medical Center.

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Houston Methodist St. John works with nursing students from San Jacinto College and the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston. The hospital works with several other programs for imaging technicians, as well.

Sampson noted that with the onset of health science

iting factor. There is far more interest than they have slots.

She said, "It is great to see that many top students are looking at careers in healthcare. Hospitals and schools and universities will need to work together closely in order to grow the upcoming talent."

### Panelists rate employees highly

When asked to assess the skills today's workers bring to the job, Moffett said that the nurses have great critical thinking skills. "The adaptability they have to go from a classroom setting to bedside nursing is phenomenal," she stated. Horst added, "The folks that we get locally have all been great. We have no concerns whatsoever." The other panelists agreed that the region's educational institutions produce excellent candidates for employment.

### Healthcare is in transition

The panelists were questioned in regard to the skills that tomorrow's healthcare workforce will need. Price replied that Memorial Hermann is still hiring RNs (registered nurses) saying, "They feel that there's still a

valuable place in the workforce for those nurses, especially since the cost of healthcare has got to come down."

Further discussion revealed that other hospitals in the region are seeking applicants with additional education. Beginning in 2018, Moffett reported that Clear Lake Regional Medical Center is only going to be accepting nurses with a BSN (Bachelor of Science in Nursing).

Sampson added that the St. John location is mostly hiring BSN candidates, as well.

Horst said that Bay Area Regional Medical Center doesn't have the infrastructure to bring in new grads and put them through an extended orientation period to teach them how to be bedside nurses. The hospital is only hiring nurses with previous acute care experience.

### Many healthcare careers in demand

The panelists spoke of nurse practitioners and physician assistants saying that quite a number of critical care and higher skilled BSNs are quite interested in furthering their education. Acute care nurse practitioners are in demand as are a number of less skilled positions.

Surgical technicians, cath lab technicians, medical lab technicians, phlebotomy technicians, and histo techs (histology technicians) are in demand. Although some of these jobs don't pay as well, they provide a foot in the door to further training and growth that will be provided by the hospitals. Moffett explained, "When we find people who live our values, we want them to grow and learn. We want to pay their way to do that and to keep them in our organization, because it is such a competitive market. They can work part time and take the training programs."

### Looking to the future

As the discussion drew to a close, the panelists were asked about additional skills they would like educational institutions to emphasize more.

Everyone on the panel agreed that "soft skills" would be near the top of the list. They felt if soft skills — leadership, communication, empathy, compassion, professionalism, teamwork — could be taught in the classroom, it would be a tremendous help. Others in attendance endorsed this critical need throughout today's workforce.

Cross-training across modalities is also of increasing importance as healthcare seeks to maintain quality care while also reducing costs. Price offered, "One thing that we need to start looking at in regard to an imaging program is how to have an imaging program become more aggressive across modalities. Convenient care centers are really hospitals without beds."

"There are certain times of the day I want my PT tech to run my MRI; I want my ultrasound tech to be able to do fluoroscopy. We always have to put these individuals back in training. We have to duplicate our workforce. If there were a pathway in that partnership where we could continue training across modalities, it would be huge. When these techs get out of school, they're licensed in multiple modalities and can run various modalities. That's where we need to go. We're doing it now, but we're doing it at our expense."

### Scheduled panels to address different workforce trends

Future panels on aerospace and aviation, maritime and logistics, specialty chemical, and tourism and recreation will also reflect current trends and future needs in the region's workforce as part of BAHEP's continuing efforts to facilitate these very important discussions between industry and academia.

## BAHEP Cares! awards grant to Air Force veteran for continuing education

BAHEP Cares!, Executive Mentoring 4 Veterans began in February 2012 as a working committee of BAHEP to investigate ways to lessen the transition issues confronting Texas veterans. The program assists veterans, guard, reservists, and their spouses by helping them to gain a rewarding career path and job through providing voluntary executive mentorship and career advancement services.

Through a grant application process, BAHEP Cares! also provides reimbursements to veterans who are in the organization's mentoring program for continuing education uncovered by either federal or state reimbursements.

A reimbursement check for nearly \$800 was presented to Air Force veteran

John "Spike" Garcia of League City, Texas, at the Jan. 25, 2018, meeting of BAHEP Cares! Garcia had successfully completed quality management and project management certification courses in order to improve his credentials which is key to his career development.

BAHEP Cares! is able to provide tuition reimbursements through proceeds it received as a result of Salute to Heroes II, a fundraising event that benefitted both Sentinels of Freedom Gulf Coast and BAHEP Cares! in April 2015.

BAHEP Cares! has continued to grow in support of the region's five military services located at and surrounding Southeast Texas' sole major joint forces military installation at



Tom Linklater of BAHEP Cares! presents a check to Air Force veteran John "Spike" Garcia as a grant reimbursement for continuing education courses which Garcia successfully completed.

Ellington Field Joint Reserve Base. Its work would not be possible without the efforts of pro-bono, highly qualified executive mentors who coach veterans for

months, if not years. Find out more information at [www.bayareahouston.com](http://www.bayareahouston.com) and click on the BAHEP Cares! button on the home page.

**BUSINESS to BUSINESS** is a monthly Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership publication in partnership with THE DAILY NEWS. BAHEP is a member-driven organization that provides the leadership to stimulate regional economic development and employment in southeastern Texas. Its members include more than 265 business partners encompassing 13 cities, Galveston and Harris counties, the Houston Airport System, and Port Houston. For membership information, contact Membership Director Harriet Pilgrim at 832.536.3250.

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