

THE WOODLANDS AREA CHAMBER *of* COMMERCE



# BUSINESS TODAY

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The Chamber's Annual



**ECONOMIC OUTLOOK  
CONFERENCE**

*Achieving the Vision: Our Hometown & Beyond*

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# BUSINESS BRIEFS

## AWARDS & RECOGNITION

The Houston Business Journal has named **The Strong Firm P.C.** among its 2014 list of "Best Places To Work." After participating in a month-long employee engagement audit with Quantum Workplace, the Houston Business Journal ranked the firm as number 19 of 50 small companies in the Houston area. Founded in 2004 by Bret L. Strong, The Strong Firm P.C. is a locally owned and operated business law firm based in The Woodlands.

## NEW TO THE TEAM & PROMOTIONS

Roger Goertz, President of **Mr. Rooter Plumbing**, announced the addition of Natalie Saikowski as Executive Vice President. Saikowski will handle the marketing and business development aspect of Mr. Rooter Plumbing in Montgomery, Harris and Fort Bend Counties.



Natalie Saikowski

## PARTNERSHIPS & EXPANSIONS

**Memorial Hermann The Woodlands Hospital** has announced it will renovate and expand its hospital-based Emergency Department to better respond to the emergent needs of the greater Montgomery County area. The \$17.4 million project will include a renovation of the existing space and the addition of approximately 3,400 square feet, bringing the total footprint of the unit to 32,400 square feet.

**Byron W. Ellis, founder of Ellis & Ellis, LLC**, an advisory firm based in The Woodlands, Texas, has announced his firm has recently been acquired by United Capital Financial Advisors, LLC.



Byron W. Ellis

Under the partnership, Ellis & Ellis is now a division of United Capital, creating the national investment advisory company's 50th office nationwide and first in the Greater Houston Area. Ellis & Ellis was founded in 1989 and has more than \$500 mil-

lion in assets under management for more than 700 households.

Some high school students at **iSchool High at Montgomery** are also earning college credits at Lone Star College-Montgomery. iSchool High blends high school and college into one educational experience, allowing students the opportunity to earn their high school diploma, and up to two years of college credit, in four years – completely free.

Erin Maes an iSchool High junior, will have 32 college hours at the end of the spring 2015 semester, and the aspiring hopes of transferring to the University of Texas.



Erin Maes

## NEW SERVICES & DEVELOPMENT

**Woodforest** is moving development east of Woodforest Parkway South with the introduction of a new 64-acre neighborhood, Deerbourne Ridge. The neighborhood will feature more than 400 homesites with the first three sections comprising 155 homesites on wooded 60- and 70-foot properties. Homesites in the first two phases are available now and the remaining four sections will open in 2015 and 2016.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Lone Star College** opened its doors to more than 2,400 international students from 100 different countries for fall 2014 semester – ranking it fourth in the nation for the number of international students attending a community college. Students from Albania to Zambia and all points in between have chosen to attend LSC for their higher education.

"Having so many international

students attend Lone Star College provides an amazing benefit to the local students who have the opportunity to meet new friends and learn about new cultures," said Stephen Head, LSC president.

**Woodlands Fabrics & Interiors**, an award-winning retail store and interior design firm, is moving to a new location north of the Woodlands in January, 2015. After 15 years in their current location, Woodlands Fabrics & Interiors will soon open in the River Bend Station Shopping Center, just east of I-45 at exit #83.



**Lone Star College-Montgomery's** department of music is now a fully accredited member of the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM), an organization for post-secondary institutions offering degree and non-degree programs in music and music related disciplines. Out of 17 applicants, LSC-Montgomery was the only two-year college to receive institutional accreditation at NASM's 90th annual meeting in November.

The popular exhibit at **The Woodlands Children's Museum** has seen its fair share of wear and tear – and **RE/MAX The Woodlands & Spring** has offered to take care of the property. The real estate company has agreed to sponsor the museum's playhouse from 2015 to 2017. "With higher attendance comes more wear on the exhibits, and replacing and repairing them can be pricey. Last year, we had 86,000 guests," executive director Angela Colton said.



**The South Montgomery County YMCA** Early Childhood Development Center, which opened in 1986, has been refurbished. Many of the children cur-

rently enrolled are 2nd generation. The child care staff is experienced and constant with staff tenure ranging from 8 – 25 years.



It's official; **Mary Catherine Fletcher of The Woodlands Christian Academy** signs with Yale University where she will be continuing her exemplary career competing in gymnastics. Mary Catherine is a level 10 gymnast and trains at Aim Athletics Training Center in The Woodlands, Texas. She has been a gymnast since the age of 5, and currently trains 25 hours per week, 6 days a week. Her coaches are Debbie Kaitschuck, Deana Parish, and James Williams.



**Market Street Photo Booth** continues strengthening its high-end preferred vendor network with recent signature events at prestigious properties including the new **Blue Jack National Country Club** and **The Club at Carlton Woods**. "Referrals and repeat clients are our best advertising endorsement", said owner Adreana Betti.

**Kelsey-Seybold** is now accepting Community Health Choice Silver and Gold Copay plans on the Healthcare marketplace exchange. These are great plans that offer members no deductibles, affordable copays and low monthly payments – and the best part is patients have access to the great Kelsey-Seybold network of doctors and clinics.

Have a legal question? **The Woodlands Bar Association's** volunteer attorneys are on the line at 281-645-6344 on the first Monday of every month from 5 to 8 p.m. to provide general legal informa-