KEEP YOUR EMPLOYEES HEALTHY AND HAPPY

The TGMC Wellness for Life team will work with you to keep your greatest asset, your employees, healthy and happy! Our Corporate Wellness Program will help control rising healthcare costs by improving your employees overall health, which leads to a more productive workforce and a boost in morale. Having a wellness program in place has also been proven to reduce absenteeism, injury and illness. Onsite wellness screenings could be covered by your health insurance at 100% with NO OUT OF POCKET EXPENSE! Think differently about employee health and happiness.

Call 985.850.6208 or visit TGMC.com
Calendar

JUNE 2020:

6/2  Chamber Development Committee Meeting
    Chamber Office | Noon

6/4  Virtual Pitch Your Niche
    www.houmachamber.com | 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

6/10 Chamber Finance Committee Meeting
    Chamber Office | 7:30 a.m.

6/10 Chamber Executive Committee Meeting
    Chamber Office | 8:00 a.m.

6/10 First Day of Summer!

6/16 Chamber Board of Directors Meeting
    Chamber Office | 8:00 a.m.

6/21 Happy Father’s Day

6/23 General Membership Luncheon: Local Delegation
    Courtyard by Marriott | 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

For more information about Chamber Events call (985) 876-5600 or Email: info@houmachamber.com
Events in red denotes Chamber events

On the Cover:
How can your Chamber help? While phase one recently started, we want to ask you, where does your business stand? We want to know how we can assist you in the recovery process. Read in this issue about the Chamber’s role and let’s grow together!

Contact Us!

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Interested in becoming a member?
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EmpowHERed
Tonya Harris

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Broad Scope of Benefits to Chamber Members – Join Today!

NICOL BLANCHARD
CEO

By joining the Houma-Terrebonne Chamber, your company’s reputation will grow through increased exposure. Our online and offline membership directories strengthen your community presence! Access to our Online Membership Directory is through the Chamber’s website at www.houmachamber.com. Our website received averages 1727 users each month.

The Chamber also provides an outlet for the opinions and needs of businesses in the community to be heard in order to influence projects and programs that support our community’s growth. Issues such as the economy, health and wellness, education, and infrastructure become Chamber business issues because they are a significant part of our overall business climate. As a collective voice, we can have a greater impact on issues that transform our community.

The Houma-Terrebonne Chamber is an event-driven organization. With a network of over 600 member businesses representing over 23,000 employees the Chamber is a driving force in our community. Through its continuous contact, the Chamber provides businesses and individuals with opportunities to develop business relationships and generate leads. Building and strengthening relationships are a big part of the Chamber. Once we are safe from the current situation, we will offer monthly Business After-Hours, the Pitch Your Niche – 5-minute Sales Pitch, the monthly General Membership Luncheons, the golf tournament, and the annual banquet.

The Chamber also provides an outlet for the opinions and needs of businesses in the community to be heard in order to influence projects and programs that support our community’s growth. Issues such as the economy, health and wellness, education, and infrastructure become Chamber business issues because they are a significant part of our overall business climate. As a collective voice, we can have a greater impact on issues that transform our community.

There are numerous sponsorship and hosting opportunities as well as unique and cost-effective marketing and advertising outlets for Chamber members to take advantage of that will heighten your visibility and credibility in the community through:

- sponsorship of events
- advertising and listings in the Business & Community Guide
- Chamber website advertising with direct link to your website
- articles and advertising in our monthly newsletter the Focus
- advertising of your events and programs in electronic newsletter the eFocus
- flyers in our monthly Focus newsletter mailed to members
- Grand Openings and Ribbon Cuttings
- mailing labels of members

The Chamber helps to build a strong community by connecting its members to people and issues that are important to business success. Through Chamber programming, you and your business have opportunities to be engaged in activities that move Terrebonne toward a successful future. On behalf of its diverse membership, the Chamber works to create a climate of growth and success that benefits all business. Your membership investment allows your business and our community to prosper.

At the Chamber, we know times are hard, and we are here to help by offering members an opportunity to set-up a personalized installment plan for their membership dues. We customize a plan that suits your budget and keep you an active member of the Chamber. If you are interested in this opportunity, please feel free to contact the Chamber at 985-876-5600 to take advantage of this opportunity.

The Houma-Terrebonne Chamber of Commerce is a member-driven, volunteer organization dedicated to improving the quality of life by building a strong economy through promotion of services to members, partnerships and alliances, legislative advocacy, economic development, and programs of action and value to sustain a prosperous and vibrant community. The Houma-Terrebonne Chamber of Commerce missions is “Uniting Community and building a stronger Terrebonne.”

Virtual Pitch Your Niche
Thursday, June 4th
11:30 am - 1:00 PM
ONLINE

Visit www.houmachamber.com for more information. See you then!
It’s June – Father’s Day. Thinking about Father’s Day has given me the opportunity to reflect on what has shaped me… what has inspired me to become the kind of father that I am. It’s only natural for me to think of my own Papa as the key architect of that job.

I realize that being a father means that you are a very important teacher to your children. They will follow your lead, consider your opinions and learn from your example. Knowing this, I am much more aware of what I teach my sons. I must be an example today that will help prepare them for tomorrow.

I have learned a great deal from my Papa who provided examples of what it means to be a father. Beyond all of the usual roles of provider, caregiver, confidant and sometimes even family peacekeeper, I believe that the father-figures in my life have helped me to understand that one of the most important things that I must strive to be is a good role model. As a good father, I must put selfish interests aside and make a sincere effort to do the right thing. To make intelligent and thoughtful decisions that will benefit all who may be affected. I have learned that fathers unconditionally love those who need the strong support of someone who sincerely cares.

One thing that my Papa did not prepare me for was all the things that being a father would wind-up teaching me! I have learned how to be a better listener, to be compassionate and patient. However, the most important thing that I may have learned from being a father is to be respectful. I believe being a father has helped me to better respect the gift of life, our natural resources and our environment. I respect the value and rewards that come from honest, hard work. I respect my mother, my wife and all the other women in my life who have helped support my role as a father. I respect my Papa, and the many lessons that he has taught me. He taught me to respect our military men and women, and the freedom and rights that they honorably defend. And of course, I respect our Heavenly Father, who has given us these blessings and many more.

For many people, it seems that being respectful can be a challenge. When I was a young, I would sometimes find myself at odds with my Papa. However, over time I learned that disagreeing with my Papa did not mean that I could not respect him, to appreciate where he was coming from. As I have gotten older, this experience with my Papa has helped me to contend with the challenges of our fast-paced, self-centered, lives. I have grown wiser and my faith has grown stronger. I hope that Father’s Day is a reminder for all of us to respect and appreciate our father figures, especially God our Father. Happy Father’s Day.

“YOU DON’T RAISE HEROES, YOU RAISE SONS. AND IF YOU TREAT THEM LIKE SONS, THEY’LL TURN OUT TO BE HEROES, EVEN IF IT’S JUST IN YOUR OWN EYES.”

Walter M. Schirra, Sr.
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LaPorte-Elephant 10.125”x9.875” .indd   1/21/20   12:06 PM
As we move into Phase 1 after a nearly 2-month stay-at-home order, it's time to look at the recovery process for our businesses. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Louisiana had the highest rate of unemployment in the country (6.9%) in March. This is crushing to our economy as our oil industry struggles as well. What does this mean for our Louisiana way of life? As a Chamber of Commerce, we are passionate about our community as a whole because a thriving community means a thriving way of life. We have been constantly releasing resources on our website as we receive them and helping our Chamber members with questions regarding loans to help get by until businesses can open again; but what else can we do to help? What is the role of the Chamber in the recovery process from months of being shut down?

To start off with, we will continue to convey information to you. We have been here from the beginning and do not plan to stop because Phase 1 has started. Be on the lookout for stories that unite our business community and to create motivation to push forward even harder than ever before. We know what it’s like to push through natural disaster emergencies; let’s band together like we always do to exceed our goals as a community.

We also want to remind our Chamber members of our job board on our website. You can find out how to post job positions through your member login by viewing a how-to-video on our YouTube Channel (houmachamber) or email info@houmachamber.com for more information. Let’s unite in one place to provide for those in need.

Speaking of those in need, we are always looking ways to help out through our Chamber Cares initiative. Our members are passionate to help out with the community, so please let us know if there is anything you need help with. We will come together to help you out with smiles on our faces!

Networking is more powerful than before. We have been called the Chamber of events before, but that’s only because we know that networking is instrumental in building up business, and now more than ever, we’re huge believers in it. We know events are on pause for the moment, but we are creating virtual networking events such as the June 4th Pitch Your Niche event where you can pitch your 5-minute elevator speech about your business, products, and/or services. It’s not only about pitching your services but think of it as coming together and creating relationships with the other attendees. Moving forward, turn to the Chamber to be a part of an integral network to come together for a stronger community.

During this time, remember you are not alone. We all need a voice for legislature so we can have a smoother recovery process. Our Chamber is here to translate legislative efforts to keep you aware of what is in the pipeline to become available. We can also help research grants, loans, and other assistance programs, making the application process painless and easy. Remember the Chamber has numerous committees you can join to be a voice as well. Let us help you!

Education is so important right now! We recently had a webinar with LSBDC on how to manage your business remotely in times of uncertainty and we act as an outlet to spread the word about other education opportunities. Do you need help with something specific? Contact us and we can help steer you in the right direction and create educational opportunities for our business community as a whole.

We want to hear from you: how can we help during this unprecedented time? We will be sending out a survey via email and would appreciate your feedback. Let’s talk: call 985.876.5600 or email info@houmachamber.com!

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Let me help you rest easy knowing your family is protected.
New Member Spotlight — EmpowHERed

We love our members that strive to make a more positive community with passion! We got to know new member EmpowHERed by talking to Founder/Owner Tonya Scott Harris. For more information, visit EmpowHERed.org!

Tonya S. Harris was born and raised in Houma, LA. She is a Registered Nurse and LSU Medical Center School of Nursing graduate. EmpowHERed is extremely new to the business spectrum, however, Tonya has been in corporate, community and organizational leadership for over 15 years. It was this leadership experience and passion that led to the foundation of EmpowHERed.

EmpowHERed was established in March 2020 on the principle that it is essential that women have the necessary tools needed to lead effectively and efficiently in leadership, however; its services are not limited to only women. EmpowHERed's aim is to build a network of women leaders who desire to empower, engage and strengthen their leadership abilities and influence in the workplace and community. EmpowHERed specializes in Leadership Development, Behavioral Analysis, Youth Leadership, Team and Individual Coaching and Consultation who is a proud member of the John Maxwell Leadership Team. Tonya S. Harris says the best part of being the founder of EmpowHERed is the opportunity to connect with outstanding, motivating and enthusiastic leaders, and on the contrary, the most challenging part for her is prioritizing her time to get it all done. She loves running EmpowHERed because it allows her to see people flourish in their passion. Her clients appreciate the opportunities to learn, grow and develop both their personal and professional developmental goals, connections, and networks gained through mutual collaborations. They love the profound takeaway of EmpowHERment.

Tonya says the aim is to strengthen the influence of women and young girls (but not limited) in leadership. She hopes to partner with the Houma/Terrebonne Chamber of Commerce to broaden its reach to those that would like to grow in leadership and in doing so, strengthening our communities. EmpowHERed is eager to connect with other businesses in the local area to strengthen community resources that are right at our fingertips. Tonya looks forward to supporting and connecting with innovative, collaborative, and super-motivated business owners that are making an impact in our local area. The company is a change agent and plans to bring a level on influence and leadership to the Houma/Terrebonne area by hosting events, sharing information, and providing leadership guidance to women and young girls, but not limited to, in our local area.

Thank you for joining the Chamber family! We can’t wait to work with you to spread positivity and influence throughout our area!
Stratify CEO Named as Market Expert

CEO of Stratify, LLC, Jason W. Bergeron, was named as a Business.com Market Expert and part of their Contributor Program. He was recently featured in an article that discussed Desktop as a Service (DaaS). Desktop as a Service (DaaS) is a cloud computing offering that enables businesses to deliver cloud-hosted virtual desktops to any device, from anywhere. DaaS solutions provide complete hosted desktops for applications and email securely delivered over the web. They’re simple to buy and easy to manage, with no software for IT to maintain.

The Business.com mission is to provide instructional, highly actionable content that also entertains and engages our audience, better enabling people to run and grow their businesses and careers. Fueling this mission is the belief that business people today are far more interested in learning how to do something, than in simply reading about something. Backed by a community of experts, the business.com platform is designed to connect small business owners, industry experts and vendors through a wide array of services, tools and insights. They pride themselves on featuring relevant content, proven strategies and information you can trust. Jason W. Bergeron stated, “It is very humbling to be recognized as a comprehensive resource for entrepreneurs who want to start, run or grow a small or medium-sized business. I look forward to being able to assist companies on a national platform.”

Submit Your Articles for Member News

Our Member News section of the Focus is a great way for Chamber members to promote your event or project, and to announce special awards or certifications. Word Document articles of 250 words or less may be submitted to info@houmachamber.com by the 1st of each month for publication in the following month’s newsletter, space permitting.

CIS Urges Patients to Keep Appointments and Assures Safety Concerns

Cardiovascular Institute of the South (CIS) urges patients to keep appointments and remains focused on providing quality cardiovascular care in a safe environment. At this time, CIS assures patients that it is not only safe, but important to stay alert to symptoms of cardiovascular disease and not delay care.

CIS is keeping the following precautions in place for the continued safety of patients:
- CIS screens all patients and visitors for COVID-19 symptoms prior to their appointment and again upon arrival.
- Visitors are limited to one per patient.
- Patients can check into their appointment from a mobile device in their car and will be notified when their provider is ready, avoiding the need to sit in the lobby.
- CIS continues to practice social distancing in the clinic.
- CIS requires all guests to wear a face mask when visiting a clinic and will furnish them as needed.
- CIS staff members conduct rigorous cleaning after each patient in exam rooms, diagnostic testing areas, bathrooms and labs—following all CDC guidelines.
- CIS staff members continue to wear Personal Protective Equipment and always wash their hands before and after every patient interaction. All employees are screened before work each day.
- Door handles, countertops, telephones and other clinic equipment are cleaned frequently throughout the day.

The CIS care team remains available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week through the CIS Virtual Care Center to respond to patient questions and concerns. CIS also continues to offer virtual video visits for patients who are unable to come into the clinic. However, in most cases, an in-person appointment is still necessary to properly evaluate and treat a condition. For more information or to schedule an appointment, please visit www.cardio.com.

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Fletcher Selected to Participate in Second Chance Pell Experiment

Fletcher Technical Community College has been chosen to be one of 67 schools across the United States to participate in the second cohort of the U.S. Department of Education’s Second Chance Pell Experiment. For the second round, the Department received more than 180 letters of interest. Fletcher and Northshore Technical Community College in Hammond are the only Louisiana schools in the second cohort.

Originally created in 2015, the Second Chance Pell Grant provides need-based Federal Pell Grants to individuals incarcerated in federal and state prisons. The grants allow incarcerated individuals to receive Federal funding to enroll in postsecondary programs offered by local colleges and universities or distance learning providers. In the first two years of the experiment, institutions were awarded approximately $36.2 million in Federal Pell Grants. According to Federal Student Aid records, nearly 5,000 incarcerated students received Federal Pell Grants in the 2016–17 award year, and 6,750 incarcerated students received Federal Pell Grants in the 2017–2018 award years. And according to a recent study by the Vera Institute of Justice, more than 4,000 credentials—including postsecondary certificates, associate degrees, and bachelor’s degrees—have been awarded to Second Chance Pell students over the past three years.

Additionally, according to the Rand Corporation, individuals who participate in correctional education programs are 43% less likely to return to prison than those who do not.

“Fletcher Technical Community College is pleased to have been recognized for the work of our institution in providing opportunities to reduce recidivism,” commented Fletcher Chancellor, Dr. Kristine Strickland. “We are honored to be selected from a large pool of applicants and to be one of only two community colleges in the State to be selected for this opportunity. The designation as an experimental site allows our institution to be one of the first in the nation to participate in this federal program and we are proud to lead in this effort.”

With 63 schools in the first cohort, there are now 130 schools in 42 states and the District of Columbia participating in this program.

Nicholls STEM Professor Named BioTAP Scholar

Nicholls State University Assistant Professor of STEM Education Dr. Aimee Hollander has been selected to participate in the fourth cohort of the National Science Foundation-sponsored BioTAP Scholars Program.

The year-long program engages a group of biology instructors and professors in research on the advancement of biology teaching assistants. The cohort will work together for the next year to establish and advance research projects for graduate assistants. This fulfills one of the stated missions of the program to create and expand a network of professors, researchers and collaborative partners within the BioTAP community.

Dr. Hollander says the program will help improve Nicholls teacher assistant training in STEM. This will help with retention and professional development of graduate students.

“Creating a teaching assistant training program will benefit our undergraduate students in that they will be receiving even better instruction not only from their professors but also from the teaching assistants that instruct our Freshmen science labs,” Dr. Hollander says. “Additionally, this is a terrific collaboration between the science departments and department of teacher education in that we can collaborate and share our expertise with one and other in best practices for science education.”

Dr. Hollander will take part in workshops to establish research objectives and meet virtually with other BioTAP scholars to develop research skills and collaborate on plans for teaching assistants. She will also participate in a virtual conference for BioTAP scholars on May 27-29.
Terrebonne Churches United on the Frontlines Every Day Serving the People

While many of the region’s foodbanks have suspended operations the TCU Foodbank still stands strong serving Terrebonne Parish in this time of Crisis. Here are the numbers of what the TCU Foodbank has done just this past month.

During this emergency we have gone to a “Drive-By” distribution program for the safety of all concerned. We are providing a package of food that is designed to last a family of 3 for 3 weeks. This package has a weight of approximately 150 pounds, and includes, meat, bread, produce, eggs, flour, sugar, can goods, box meals and personal hygiene products. We make baby diapers, wipes, adult diapers, and feminine hygiene products available upon request.

Food Supplies
- Last year we processed a total of 1,200,000 pounds of food for the year. That averages to 100,000 pounds a month.
- For April we averaged 78,000 pounds a week (versus 25,000 pounds per week last year) with a total pounds for the month of 312,000. (versus 100,000 last year).
- Our food purchase budget is $2,500 a month. For April we spent $11,952.81. That is an increase of $9,452.81 or in increase of 209%. The reason is that our traditional pick up donations have been reduced by approximately 50% so we have to purchase from 3 different sources to fill the gaps of items that are needed but not donated.

To make sure that the TCU Foodbank meets the assistance from the Louisiana National Guard to make sure that this necessary Foodbank does not falter. They are here to assist, and we have taken steps to cross train them so if any of our key staff goes down, this facility can still operate.

We at the TCU Foodbank wants to thank everyone for the love and support to us at this difficult time. May God bless and keep all in Terrebonne Parish and get us through this terrible ordeal.

Yours in Respectfully,

Lawrence DeHart
Executive Director
Terrebonne Churches United Foodbank

CASA Names Spotlight of the Month

The mission of a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) of Terrebonne is to be an independent and objective presence in the courts to speak for the best interest of abused and neglected children of Terrebonne Parish. CASAs are trained volunteers who are appointed by a judge to provide one-on-one advocacy for a child who has been placed in State’s custody because of neglect and/or abuse.

Our ‘Spotlight’ for May is on Priscilla Callais. She was sworn in as a CASA on October 24, 2019. Since she was assigned to her case, she has made herself available for all court hearings and meetings. Despite the stay-at-home order, she has found a way to remain in contact with her CASA child and associated parties to the case. Priscilla’s commitment is not only to her CASA child but also to the CASA organization. She demonstrates an open mind and a heart for service and CASA is fortunate to have her advocating for the best interest of her CASA child.

If you are interested in making a difference in the life of an abused or neglected child from Terrebonne Parish, fill out the online application at www.casafterrebonne.org.


Danos Wins Work in Delaware Basin

Danos has been awarded a major contract with a leading, Texas-based natural gas and oil production company for the installation of a tank battery and satellite facility. Located outside of Loving, New Mexico, project work began in March and is expected to be completed by the end of August 2020.

“Providing excellent service on projects of this scope aligns with Danos’ steady growth in the Delaware Basin,” said owner Mark Danos. “We look forward to continuing to increase our project portfolio and customer base in the area.”

Approximately 50 Danos employees will be assigned to complete the project, which will utilize several of Danos’ service lines including coatings, construction, fabrication, instrumentation and electrical and production workforce.

Founded in 1947, Danos has been providing services in the Permian and Delaware basins since 2012. The company offers a total of 13 different service lines, including: automation, coatings, construction, fabrication, instrumentation and electrical, mechanical maintenance, production workforce, project management, regulatory compliance, scaffolding, shorebase and logistics, specialized consultants and valve wellhead.

Business First Bancshares, Inc. Completes Acquisition of Pedestal Bancshares, Inc.

Business First Bancshares, Inc. (NASDAQ:BFST), the holding company for b1BANK, has completed its acquisition of Pedestal Bancshares, Inc. (Pedestal) and its wholly owned bank subsidiary, Pedestal Bank. The acquisition became effective May 1, 2020, in accordance with the terms of the previously announced agreement.

“We are committed to being our regions’ bank of choice, come good times or bad!” said Jude Melville, President and CEO of b1BANK.

“This merger is a significant step towards that goal. We’re excited about the team growing and look forward to delivering to clients the same level of expertise and service they are accustomed to receiving from their bank, service that we know is particularly meaningful in this period of stree we together find ourselves making our way through.”

With the completion of the acquisition, b1BANK has approximately $4.1 billion in assets, $3.0 billion in loans and $3.3 billion in deposits (estimates include $0.4 billion of loans and deposits associated with the Small Business Administration Paycheck Protection Program). The bank’s locations will increase to 48 full-service banking centers across Louisiana and in the Dallas, Texas area. Mark Folse, the former president and CEO of Pedestal and Pedestal Bank, will relocate to Baton Rouge to join b1BANK’s executive team.

Raymond James & Associates, Inc. acted as financial advisor to Business First and Alston & Bird, LLP acted as legal advisor to Business First. Stephens Inc. acted as financial advisor to Pedestal and Fenimore, Kay, Harrison & Ford, LLP acted as legal advisor to Pedestal.

Dr. Cibelli’s Research Featured in International Book

A Nicholls State University art professor has been published in an international collection of scholarship.

Dr. Deborah Cibelli wrote the chapter “Beardsley’s ‘Strife for Love in a Dream’” in the book in “Anxiety, Angst, Anguish in Fin de Siècle Art and Literature.”

“The study of the Renaissance printed book as a source for Beardsley’s art allowed me to discuss the continued relevance of classical sources for modern art,” Cibelli said. “I hope that including scholarship by a Nicholls faculty member in the volume of international scholarship has the potential to enhance the reputation and prestige of the art program.”

Aubrey Beardsley contributed to the development of the Art Nouveau and poster styles. He had been influenced by the popularity of Japanese woodcuts in Paris in the 1890s, but also in many other sources. Cibelli studied how the Renaissance book “Poliphilo’s Strife of Love in a Dream” influenced the English artist. The book features refined woodcut illustrations that reference architectural and garden settings designed in an early Renaissance style.

This text Cibelli is featured in includes papers from a symposium on the topic of angst and the Symbolism and Decadence movements. Sorbonne Université in France hosted the symposium.

Chevron Grant to Boost Hands-On STEM Learning in Terrebonne Parish Schools

Thanks to a generous donation from Chevron, the Terrebonne Foundation for Academic Excellence (TFAE) has given $50,000 in grants to 11 Terrebonne Parish schools to implement hands-on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) programs in their libraries and science labs.

“The Terrebonne Foundation for Academic Excellence is excited for the teachers and students who will benefit from these grants,” Katie Portier, TFAE Executive Director, said. “We are also grateful to have a community partner like Chevron who continues to invest in our local schools and provide meaningful STEM programs and opportunities.”

Each awarded elementary and middle school will receive $3,000 to implement a Makerspace Library. This is a shared area that provides students with tools and resources for hands-on intellectual learning such as 3D printers, arts and craft supplies, STEM activities, and more. A Makerspace Library can also utilize textile items to enhance learning of literature. Additionally, two junior high and one high school will receive $8,500-$9,000 to upgrade their science lab equipment. Items such as digital scales, working sinks, Chromebooks, digital microscopes, chemicals, probes, goggles, and much more will be purchased to increase the ability to safely conduct STEM experiments and projects.

“Hands-on opportunities make learning so much more fun and impactful for students,” said Leah Brown, Public Affairs Manager for Chevron’s Gulf of Mexico Business Unit. “If you ask anyone working in STEM where their passion for the field began, you will likely hear stories of a special teacher or experience that sparked their interest early on. That’s why we’re committed to providing students and teachers with the tools they need to explore STEM and cultivate passions that will last a lifetime.”

The following schools will receive the $3,000 TFAE/Chevron Makerspace Library Grants:

- Acadian Elementary
- Pointe Aux Chenes Elementary
- Honduras Elementary
- Coteau Bayou Blue Elementary
- Village East Elementary
- Broadmoor Elementary
- Grand Caillou Middle
- Caldwell Middle

The following schools will receive the TFAE/Chevron Science Lab Grants:

- Houma Junior High; $8,500
- Evergreen Junior High; $8,500
- H. L. Bourgeois High School; $9,000

To select the schools, TFAE first reached out to all Terrebonne Parish public schools regarding the grant opportunity to see who would be interested. All of those who responded were awarded the grant after submitting a short application and budget explaining how they would use the funds. Librarians and science teachers will utilize the funds over the summer to purchase their supplies and resources to implement them in the 2020-2021 school year.

Mother Teresa Women’s Giving Circle Grants $83,000 to Six Local Nonprofits Amid Pandemic

Members of the Mother Teresa Women’s Giving Circle, an initiative of the Catholic Foundation of South Louisiana, continued their efforts to benefit our local nonprofits despite the unprecedented pandemic. Although the pandemic required the giving circle to cancel several of their spring events, the members creatively brought their efforts to a virtual environment. Over the course of one week, over 115 members viewed presentations from ten nonprofits and took part in a virtual voting process selecting six nonprofits to receive grant funding.

On Monday, May 11th, Bishop Shelton Fabre along with the members of the Mother Teresa Women’s Giving Circle came together via ZOOM and made presentations of $83,000 in grants to these local nonprofits, all with the direct intent of making a difference in the lives of women, children and families within the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux:

- Individual and Family Assistance ($20,500 to assist in bringing awareness to the community regarding child abuse and neglect in order to recruit additional child advocates as well as updating necessary equipment)
- CASA of Terrebonne ($12,500 to assist in bringing awareness to the community regarding child abuse and neglect in order to recruit additional child advocates as well as for a traveling tutor program)
- Catholic Community Center ($5,000 to assist in purchasing a generator to aid in becoming a Second Harvest distribution site ensuring the people of lower Lafourche are able to get the food needed at the food bank)
- Children’s Advocacy Center ($12,500 to assist with ensuring that victims and families have one place to go for their forensic interviews to reduce trauma to children)
- CASA of Lafourche ($12,500 to assist in bringing awareness to the community regarding child abuse and neglect in order to recruit additional child advocates as well as for a traveling tutor program)
- CASA of Lafourche ($12,500 to assist in bringing awareness to the community regarding child abuse and neglect in order to recruit additional child advocates as well as for a traveling tutor program)

“Unprecedented times call for extraordinary measures, and the members of our Mother Teresa Women’s Giving Circle knew we needed to step up during this difficult time,” said Any Ponson, executive director of the Catholic Foundation of South Louisiana. “Rather than postponing our events, our steering committee worked together to bring everything in a virtual environment to push forward. Due to their innovative ideas, our members’ contributions grew substantially, and we were able to select six amazing local nonprofits to support this year. We knew that during these difficult times the women, children and families in our local community needed support now more than ever. We are thrilled to be able to make these grants this year and look forward to growing our support in years to come.”
University of Holy Cross and Fletcher Technical Community College Add New Credit Transfer Agreements for Criminal Justice and Cardiopulmonary Care

Fletcher students who complete criminal justice or cardiopulmonary care associate degrees can now transfer credits toward bachelor’s degree at UHC

In a virtual signing ceremony today, The University of Holy Cross (UHC) and Fletcher Technical Community College (Fletcher) signed articulation agreements between their social sciences and health sciences programs making it easier for students to transfer credits from Fletcher to UHC.

In the first agreement signed today, Fletcher students will now be able to complete the Associate of Science degree in Criminal Justice and transfer credit hours earned in the various concentrations within that degree and apply them toward completion of the Bachelor of Social Sciences with a Concentration in Criminal Justice at UHC.

The second signed agreement today will allow Fletcher students to complete their Associate of Science degree in Cardiopulmonary Care Science and transfer credit hours earned toward completion of the Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences Curriculum for Cardiopulmonary Care Science technologists at UHC.

The two agreements were announced and signed today by UHC President Dr. Stanton F. McNeely III, and Fletcher Technical Community College Chancellor Dr. Kristine Strickland.

The new articulation agreements between UHC and Fletcher mark the second round of agreements signed between the two schools this year. The two schools signed agreements for nursing and business in January.

“We’re excited to sign two new articulation agreements with Fletcher Technical Community College. These new agreements in Criminal Justice and Cardiopulmonary Care give students even more options for completing their two-year degrees and putting those credits to a full four-year bachelor’s degree,” said UHC President McNeely. “As always, we’re committed to helping students transfer to our New Orleans campus as seamlessly as possible.”

“We are excited to sign our next agreement with University of Holy Cross in the area of criminal justice. It is through these agreements that we continue to provide pathways for students to continue their educational journey,” said Fletcher Chancellor Dr. Kristine Strickland.

“Opportunities in the fields of criminal justice and cardiopulmonary care are expanding and we appreciate the University’s desire to assist our community in getting the absolute best training and education they can in the fields.”

SBA Releases Additional Guidance on PPP Loan Forgiveness

On Wednesday, May 13th, the SBA released additional guidance on PPP loan forgiveness.

In this update, we will provide information on the newly issued FAQ-46 as well as information on a LaPorte webinar on the PPP loan forgiveness application.

FAQ-46

This FAQ provides guidance as to how the SBA will review a borrower’s request for a PPP loan to make sure the borrower meets the good-faith certification requirements. The guidance provides that essentially any borrower who received less than $2 million from the fund will automatically fall under a safe-harbor and not be subject to review. For those that received loans in excess of $2 million, they will be subject to review. If the SBA finds the borrower was not eligible for the loan, then that borrower will not be eligible for forgiveness, and the SBA will seek immediate repayment of the loan. Here is the FAQ as drafted:

46. Question: How will SBA review borrowers’ required good-faith certification concerning the necessity of their loan request?

Answer: When submitting a PPP application, all borrowers must certify in good faith that “[c]urrent economic uncertainty makes this loan request necessary to support the ongoing operations of the Applicant.” SBA, in consultation with the Department of the Treasury, has determined that the following safe harbor will apply to SBA’s review of PPP loans with respect to this issue: Any borrower that, together with its affiliates²⁰, received PPP loans with an original principal amount of less than $2 million will be deemed to have made the required certification concerning the necessity of the loan request in good faith.

SBA has determined that this safe harbor is appropriate because borrowers with loans below this threshold are generally less likely to have had access to adequate sources of liquidity in the current economic environment than borrowers that obtained larger loans. This safe harbor will also promote economic certainty as PPP borrowers with more limited resources endeavor to retain and rehire employees. In addition, given the large volume of PPP loans, this approach will enable SBA to conserve its finite audit resources and focus its reviews on larger loans, where the compliance effort may yield higher returns.

Importantly, borrowers with loans greater than $2 million that do not satisfy this safe harbor may still have an adequate basis for making the required good-faith certification based on their individual circumstances in light of the language of the certification and SBA guidance. SBA has previously stated that all PPP loans in excess of $2 million, and other PPP loans as appropriate, will be subject to review by SBA for compliance with program requirements set forth in the PPP Interim Final Rules and in the Borrower Application Form. If SBA determines in the course of its review that a borrower lacked an adequate basis for the required certification concerning the necessity of the loan request, SBA will seek repayment of the outstanding PPP loan balance and will inform the lender that the borrower is not eligible for loan forgiveness. If the borrower repays the loan after receiving notification from SBA, SBA will not pursue administrative enforcement or referrals to other agencies based on its determination with respect to the certification concerning necessity of the loan request. SBA’s determination concerning the certification regarding the necessity of the loan request will not affect SBA’s loan guarantee.

For purposes of this safe harbor, a borrower must include its affiliates to the extent required under the interim final rule on affiliates, 85 FR 20817 (April 15, 2020).

Nicholls and Chevron Award $40,000 to Small Businesses During Virtual Pitch Competition

The Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at Nicholls State University and Chevron partnered to create a virtual pitch competition to help with COVID-19 recovery in Lafourche, St. Mary, Assumption and Terrebonne parishes. As part of the competition, each small business submitted a statement on how COVID-19 has affected them and how the funds will be utilized if selected as a winner.

The SBDC has now awarded eight Bayou Region small businesses $5,000 each to go toward recovery efforts.


“Chevron believes in contributing to the areas where we live and work and, especially during this challenging time, supporting Louisiana small businesses,” said Leah Brown, Public Affairs Manager for Chevron’s Gulf of Mexico Business Unit. “We’re proud to partner with Nicholls to help a diverse group of local companies. Through these funds and the incredible work of Nicholls’ Small Business Development Center, we hope to see these businesses recover and thrive.”

“When the COVID-19 pandemic occurred, it created a dark cloud of uncertainty over the Bayou Region and its future,” said Jimmy Nguyen, Assistant Director of SBDC. “Nicholls and SBDC established this contest to provide hope for these businesses to progress forward. With Chevron’s generous donation, it provided not only financial relief but a boost of human energy to help the region overcome these challenges and become stronger.”

As mentioned, Country Kids Learning Academy was one of the eight winners chosen by a panel of SBDC consultants. Owners Bonnie and Casey Soulet said that the pandemic caused reno-

vations to their facility to fall five weeks behind schedule. The academy plans to use the funds to purchase technology to support student learning.

“It means a lot to us that our company was a winner in the competition because it will directly benefit the students of Country Kids Learning Academy by funding a mobile computer lab and learning tablets. It will also fund activities for students to explore and experiment with force and motion, magnetism, engineering, roller-coasters, ramps, chain reactions and more,” said Bonnie Soulet. “We look forward to providing these valuable opportunities for our students. This says a lot about our company and the fact that people believe in our business idea, our determination and our knowledge in the childcare and early childhood education industry.”
Local Foundation Goes Above and Beyond During Pandemic

The Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux recently received a generous gift of $50,000 from the Lorio Foundation to support Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux. In addition, the Lorio Foundation has helped to purchase additional technology for our local Thibodaux Catholic schools to support distance learning with their students during the pandemic.

“This generous gift from the Lorio Foundation will help us to relieve some of the financial impact brought about by these unprecedented times. The funds from this gift will support our efforts to provide housing and utility assistance to the people of the Thibodaux area who have been impacted by COVID-19,” said Dr. Nicole Bourgeois, executive director of Catholic Charities. “While we continue to work to ensure the safety of the people of our community, we are excited about the opportunity to relieve some of the burden and uncertainty that many are experiencing at this time.”

“The Lorio Foundation has been in existence for twenty-four years, with a primary mission of promoting education in our community. I, along with the other three original board members, Chris Terracina, Rita Dickie and Ann Boudreaux, have been dedicated to that goal, along with helping numerous other organizations and public bodies to make Thibodaux a productive and safe community to live and raise our families,” said Cam Morvant, Lorio’s executive director. “The Lorio Foundation is proud to be a part of Catholic Charities and the Catholic school system in such a time of need. Our foundation has also reached out to many other organizations and provided much needed funds to stay within our mission of helping others in our community during this difficult time.”

“The Lorio Foundation has been an incredible partner to our diocese and local nonprofits for many years. Their generosity to Catholic Charities in support of the great people of Thibodaux during this unprecedented time is one that is commendable,” said Most. Rev. Shelton Fabre, Bishop of the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux. “Our community needs to come together in support of one another, and Lorio is answering the Lord’s call for help. Their support of our students in our Catholic schools is also a huge help to ensure distance learning, and we are incredibly grateful. I want to personally thank the board of the Lorio Foundation for their great generosity.”

Hurricane Season 2020: Be Prepared!

Do not let the COVID-19 pandemic shadow over hurricane season preparation. June 1st - November 30th is hurricane season for 2020, and living in South Louisiana, we know how to prepare for one. Create a family evacuation plan, build a hurricane supply box, and keep up to date on weather patterns.

Don’t forget to check out Terrebonne Parish Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Preparedness website at www.tohsep.com to download the Emergency Preparedness Guide on more information on preparing for storms and other natural disasters. Be safe, be smart, and let’s be prepared for hurricane season 2020!

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These are unprecedented times — at home, school and work. But one thing remains constant and that is our commitment to the safety and well-being of patients and staff.

While we have always adhered to the strictest safety protocols, as we move toward once again fully providing all healthcare services, we have put extra safety precautions in place.

If you have had to delay your medical care due to COVID-19, we encourage you to speak with your healthcare provider so that something routine doesn’t become something serious.

And when you need us, we are here.

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