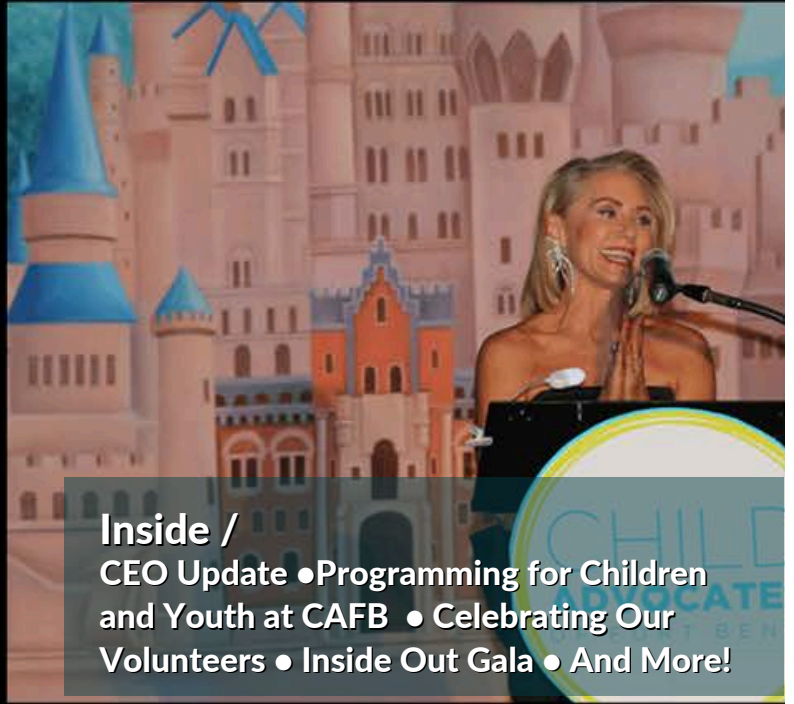


The VOICES of

CHILD **ADVOCATES** OF FORT BEND™



Inside /
CEO Update • Programming for Children
and Youth at CAFB • Celebrating Our
Volunteers • Inside Out Gala • And More!



[Click here to view gala 2024 video](#)



March 2025

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Keeping you informed on our mission:

Strengthen the Child's Voice, Heal the Hurt, and Break the Cycle of Abuse and Neglect for Children and Families in Fort Bend and surrounding counties.

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NEEDS + OPPORTUNITIES



5403 AVENUE N
ROSENBERG, TX 77471
281-344-5100



WWW.CAFB.ORG



from the ceo

Happy Spring...

Spring officially begins March 20 and is a time of rebirth, renewal and awakening. Things are coming to life at Child Advocates of Fort Bend where it's a time of growth, development and new beginnings.

March is Social Workers Month and we have many social workers on staff who are dedicated to helping children and families improve the quality of their lives through counseling, advocacy and reporting. Our social workers are committed to helping our clients solve and cope with the challenges in their lives and change their lives for the better. We applaud the hard work that our social worker staff does every day in strengthening the voice of children who have been abused or neglected, helping them on their journey to healing and ultimately breaking the cycle of abuse.

We are advancing our Child Abuse Prevention Collaborative (CAP-C) by reaching out to the Medical community with information and education. We will be launching the first prototype at Access Health and are working on a community campaign targeting patients (children) and

their caregivers, pediatricians, OB/GYN's and Medical Assistants.

In March, we are hosting our NEST and WINGS children and youth in a Spring Break event focused on giving back to others which builds empathy and perspective that despite what a person may have experienced, as traumatic as it might be, there are others in our community who are also suffering from challenges. We can help these children grow and develop by realizing they are part of a larger community of reciprocal care and gratitude.

Thank you for all you do to advocate and support Child Advocates of Fort Bend and the thousands of children who have been abused and neglect that help to grow, develop and have the chance for a new beginning. I hope to see you at our Sip & Stroll on March 25 and our "Inside Out Gala" On April 26.

For the Children's Sake,

Ruthanne

Ruthanne Mefford, CEO



BUILDING RESILIENT **AND** TRAUMA INFORMED COMMUNITIES



Featuring



Gregory Williams, PhD

Williams shares life-changing lessons learned from his years of abuse along with insight to survivors who are dealing with their own inner pain and doubts. He teaches survivors the keys to overcoming past abuses, traumatic events, and major setbacks.

His story will inspire you and help you discover the secret to conquering your own personal darkness and begin turning your negative into a positive!



The Karyn Purvis Institute of Child Development is a program of the Department of Psychology in the TCU College of Science & Engineering in Fort Worth, Texas. Their mission is: to improve the lives of children through research, education, and outreach that addresses the impact of early abuse, neglect, and trauma. Their research and interventions are empowering parents, professionals, and students with trauma-informed strategies that improve outcomes for children and youth.



Erin Merry

Erin is an internationally recognized author, speaker, and child abuse advocate and activist. For six years of her childhood she was sexually abused, keeping her secret locked away in her childhood diary. Before graduating high school Erin published her diary into a book called [Stolen Innocence](#).

In 2013 she had Erin's Law passed in her home state of Illinois. The law requires personal body safety taught in public schools every year. She has made it her mission to have it passed in all 50 states. Currently Erin's Law is in 38 states, Kerala, India and Ontario, Canada.

MAY 8 + 9

MAY 8 9AM - 4PM

MAY 9 9AM - 1PM

**UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON
at SUGAR LAND**

BRAZOS HALL-103

14000 UNIVERSITY BLVD.
SUGAR LAND, TX 77479



REGISTER NOW



Programming for Children and Youth at CAFB

By Makayleigh Adams

Child Advocates of Fort Bend seeks innovative methods to provide opportunities for our youth that they may not otherwise encounter. Our specialized programming occurs on a seasonal schedule and the events correspond with school calendar breaks.

The NEST program serves youth ages six to thirteen, focusing on education, health, hygiene, and social interaction. At the end of each school semester, incentive parties are hosted to celebrate our youth's academic and behavioral accomplishments. The NEST Back-to-School program aims to prepare our youth for their return to the classroom with interactive learning experiences and positive social interaction.

The WINGS program serves youth, fourteen and above, with a focus on education, career planning, and daily life skills. Graduation Event

celebrates our high school graduates' resilience and all-encompassing achievement. Campus Crawl provides our youth with the opportunity to tour college campuses and meet with advisors who can help actualize their collegiate experience. LifeSkills provides interactive learning modules on financial literacy, job readiness, nutrition, and future living options.

Our WINGS and NEST youth come together for two events each year. Every Spring and Fall Break, we host a joint community service event to encourage our youth to give back to the community that has invested in them.

At the core, our specialized programming exists as an opportunity for healthy connection. We seek to heal the hurt by meeting our youth where they're at and empowering them with the possibility of what could be.





FEATURE STORY

Celebrating Social Work Month: The Heart of Advocacy

By Jheri Walters, LCSW-S

March is Social Work Month—a time to recognize and celebrate the dedication, passion, and resilience of social workers. At Child Advocates of Fort Bend, our social workers stand on the front lines, ensuring the safety and well-being of children and families in our community. This year, we want to share how our team lives out the five core themes of social work every day.

Service

More Than a Job, It's a Calling

For our team, social work is not just a career; it's a deep commitment to service. When a child walks through our doors, scared and unsure, we provide comfort and guidance. We listen, we believe, and we stand beside them as they navigate difficult circumstances. Service is in every late-night phone call, every appointment, and every extra effort to ensure no child feels alone.

Social Justice

Being a Voice for the Vulnerable

Every child deserves safety, dignity, and a future filled with hope. Our social workers advocate fiercely for children who have been abused or neglected, ensuring their voices are heard. We challenge systems that fail them and advocate for policies that protect them. Social justice is not just an idea, it's the work we do every day to create lasting change.

Dignity and Worth of the Person

Seeing the Strength in Every Child

Trauma does not define a child. Our team recognizes each child's unique strengths and potential, no matter what they've been through. We create a space where they feel valued, where their stories matter, and where they are empowered to heal. We also extend this belief to families, meeting them with compassion and

cont'd



without judgment, helping them find the support they need.

Importance of Human Relationships

Healing Through Connection

A child's journey to healing is never walked alone. Relationships—with caregivers, teachers, friends, and volunteers—are essential. We work to strengthen these connections, helping children rebuild trust and find supportive networks. Whether it's a foster parent stepping in or a volunteer offering extra patience, these relationships are lifelines, and we do everything we can to help nurture them.

Integrity

Doing What's Right, Even When It's Hard

Our work often requires making tough decisions in difficult situations. Integrity means standing firm in our values, even when faced with challenges. It means being transparent with families, honest with colleagues, and always prioritizing a child's well-being above all else. It's in the small, everyday choices we make—showing up, speaking up, and never giving up. This Social Work Month, we celebrate our team's unwavering commitment to these values. And we thank you, our community, for supporting our mission. Together, we can ensure every child has the chance to grow, thrive, and feel safe.

Happy Social Work Month!

JOIN US

Friends is an auxiliary committee for Child Advocates of Fort Bend. For more than 30 years, Friends has been helping the children served by Child Advocates of Fort Bend directly through a Special Needs Fund for items and services that these children need but are unable to afford. Membership dues help to fund these special needs.



LEARN MORE



FRIENDS

OF CHILD ADVOCATES OF FORT BEND

SPRING FLING

THURSDAY, APRIL 10
6PM - 8PM

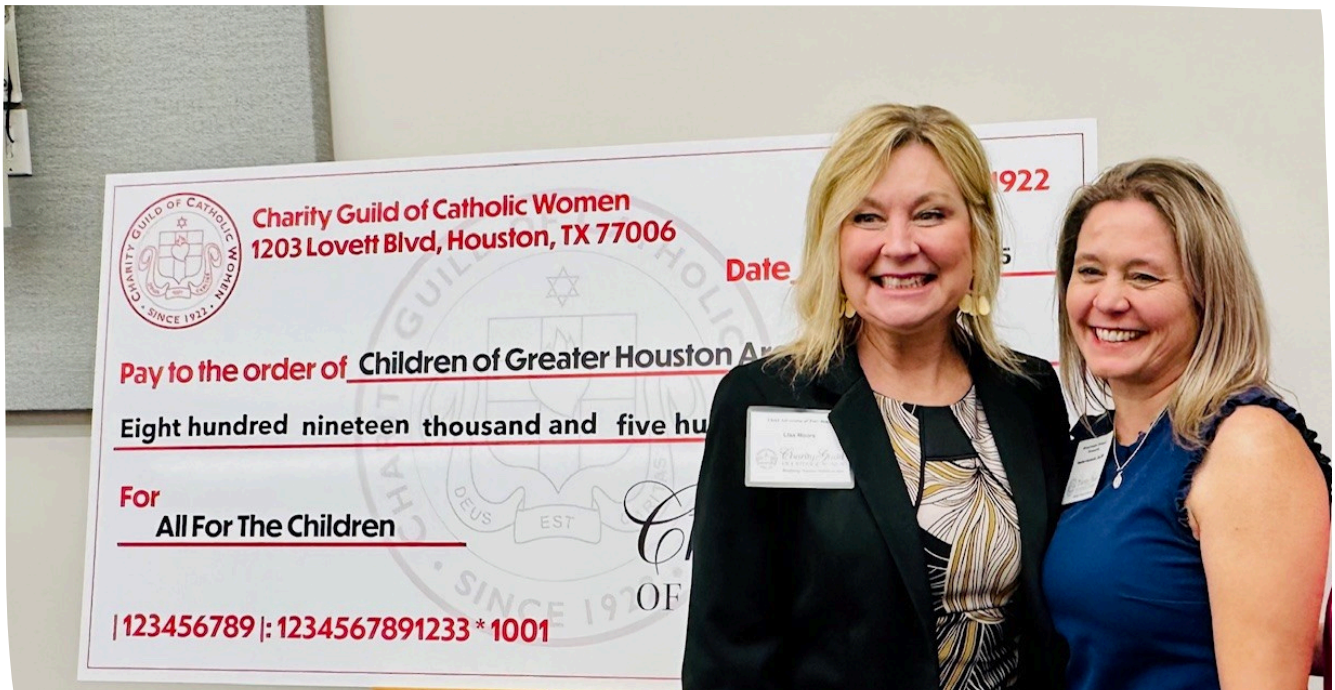
at the home of
Pat & Brad Somers
834 Bel Mar St
Sugar Land, Tx 77478

Please bring a guest and join us to socialize with new and old FRIENDS. Bites and sips will be served.

*Please bring a bottle of wine or spirits with a value of \$35 or greater for our auction at Child Advocates of Fort Bend's *Inside Out Gala*.

To RSVP or for more information
contact Judy Maddison at
713-516-2043 or jbm951@icloud.com

DONOR SPOTLIGHT



Since 2020 Child Advocates of Fort Bend's CASA and CAC programs have benefitted from \$92,500 in grant funding from the Charity Guild of Catholic Women. This generous group of women have supported the expansion of our agency services, our Forensic Interviewers, Therapy and Family Advocates, and CASA Advocate training and counseling. The mission of the Charity Guild of Catholic Women is to benefit children's charities all over the greater Houston area.

For over 100 years proceeds from their Charity Guild Shop have helped over 153 unique charitable organizations. We are grateful for their support and partnership and highly recommend a visit to their shop to discover all the unique finds they have to offer. From kitchenware to apparel, you won't be able to walk away empty-handed!

Learn more at <https://charityguildshop.org/>

“Let the Good Times Roll” Celebration of our Volunteers

By Jennifer Brown

Joseph Addison once said, “No one is more cherished in this world than someone who lightens the burden of another.” We couldn’t agree more and are grateful to each of our volunteers at Child Advocates of Fort Bend who do more than they have to, because they consider our cause worthy and the children and families we serve important.

On February 27nd, CAFB staff gathered with partners and board members to celebrate and honor our wonderful volunteers. The evening kicked off with Ruthanne Mefford, CAFB CEO, saying “In our world where children’s hearts have been broken and their trust shattered, YOU, the volunteers in this room, have opened your hearts to support them, fought tirelessly for their best interests, gone the extra mile to mend their fractured lives and given them hope. The impact you have had on these children will help them grow and thrive, knowing that there are caring adults in this world who believe in their worth.”

Every act of service, no matter how seemingly small, makes a profound difference. Our volunteers are the heart of CAFB, providing invaluable support in countless ways. They advocate for children in court, offering comfort and guidance during their foster care journey. They create positive experiences for kids awaiting appointments, sharing games and laughter in our playrooms. They power our events, from galas to community outreach, ensuring their success. They greet guests, support our staff, and maintain our facility,





creating a welcoming environment for all. And they contribute their insights and ideas, helping us shape a brighter future for CAFB. From holding a hand to sharing a vision, every contribution matters. Our volunteers bring joy, show compassion, and consistently choose to show up for others, making a truly immeasurable impact.

We are grateful to every volunteer and proud to honor them.

These are our 2024 honorees:

Child Advocate of the Year
Vickie Looney

Unsung Hero
Darrell Roth

Lifetime Hero
Pat Somers

Helping Heart
Stefanie Pride

Outreach Volunteer of the Year
LCISD Student Services Team

Development Volunteer of the Year
Irfan Motawala

Community Volunteer of the Year
Victoria Benedettini

Mariel Barrera Champion for Children
Chief Henry Garcia, LCISD PD

CASA Volunteer of the Year
Erin Curtis & Jane Russe

CASA Rookie of the Year
Kiersten Frierson

CAC Volunteer of the Year
Arlene & Wayne Murray- Lexi & Tucker

CAC Rookie of the Year
Kelli Grubbs



[see more photos](#)



It was a great evening. So many laughs, hugs, and appreciation were overflowing. Our volunteers at CAFB really do keep the good times rolling!





April 26, 2025

SAVE THE DATE and make plans to join us for our Inside Out Gala for the Children. We are hard at work planning an amazing evening. Start thinking about festive dress and ALL THE FEELINGS!

Want to be a part of this fun event?

Please see the following for our current needs:

1) LIVE & VIP ITEMS

- Destination trips to include second homes, time shares, hotel contacts, airline points
- Tickets to Sporting Events or the Theater
- Exclusive and rare liquor or wine, single or collections

2) SILENT AUCTION ITEMS

- Memorabilia, Spa items, golf green fees, golf lessons
- Themed baskets such as gardening, movie night, summer, wine/liquor with specialty food
- Think NEW items that you would like to donate to a good cause - we will build a basket!

3) SPONSORSHIP/TICKETS

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT, Share with your friends

Check out our website [here](#) for Sponsorship information

Round up your friends and purchase tickets starting March 1

Contact **Tarina Sheridan**, TSheridan@cafb.org for more information or to sign up today!



[Click here to view gala 2024](#)



HOW CAN YOU HELP?



AUCTION ITEMS

Do you know someone who has some-thing to donate OR do you like asking for things in-person/online? It feels like winning when they say yes! We have all the information you need to be a winner!



EVENT COMMITTEE

Do you have an eye for attention to detail? Help us with the auction during the day or evening of the event. Many hands make light work!



SPIRITS

Donations of spirits valued at \$35 and up are needed for our Spirit Pull. You can buy at \$50 chance to win a bottle valued at up to \$125 Pull until your arm hurts!



GIFT CARDS

Donations of restaurant or retail gift cards valued at \$25 or more are needed. At our Mystery Gift Card Pull for \$50 you could win a gift card up to \$200. Think "re-gifting" - we won't tell!



WINE

Donations of red or white wine valued at \$35 or more are needed for our annual Wine Pull. You can buy a \$50 chance to win a bottle valued at up to \$150. Try your luck!



JUST WANT TO HELP

Contact Tarina at TSheridan@cafb.org. She will encourage you and share how you can help and have fun at the same time. It's a win - win!



Maybe your stocks have appreciated greatly since you purchased them? Or maybe a surge in the value of one of your holdings over the last year has thrown your portfolio off balance? If this scenario applies to you, it may be an effective and tax-smart opportunity for you to support CAFB and be named as a "Forever Angel" legacy donor.

Most investors are unaware that donating a stock directly to charity is one of the most tax-smart ways to give. By donating a stock that has appreciated more than a year, you are actually giving 20% more to the cause you care about than if you sold the stock and then made a cash donation. The reason-avoiding capital gains taxes.

Donate a stock directly to charity and there's no capital gains tax to pay. Even more good news- you are still eligible to deduct the full fair-market value of the asset you donated from your income taxes.

Additionally, appreciated assets can also include assets that are not publicly traded, like restricted stock or Bitcoin.

Financial portfolios, like our health, need a balanced diet. It's a good exercise to periodically consult a financial expert to check to see if it's time to rebalance your portfolio to maximize its performance and optimize for risk. This can be especially important coming off a year of sizeable gains. Implementing a donation strategy can put your capital gains to work funding the philanthropies that are important to you and your family.

Child Advocates of Fort Bend honors all donors who make a planned gift with membership in the "Forever Angels Legacy Society." If you would like more information or assistance in determining a gift that would be meaningful to you and your family, please contact plannedgiving@cafb.org



DONOR SPOTLIGHT: Brigit Engleman

Bridgit Engleman has donated her time, talent and treasures to CAFB for over twenty years. She recently joined the "Forever Angels Legacy Society" because she believes strongly that "to whom much is given, much will be required." Engleman says, "I strive to live this message by actively serving others. The opportunity to become a legacy donor felt like a profound way to extend that service."

Interfaith Community Gathering:

ALL HANDS FOR ALL HEARTS

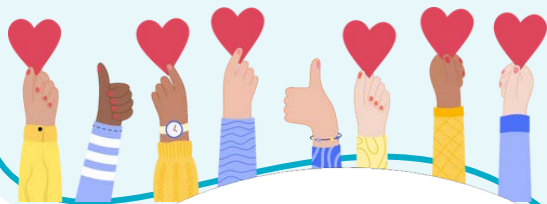
Thursday, March 20, 2025

10am to noon

Child Advocates of Fort Bend

5403 Avenue N, Rosenberg, TX 77471

in partnership with



All faith leaders and members of the faith-based community are warmly invite to join us!

Join us to explore ways to strengthen partnerships between Child Advocates of Fort Bend, community organizations and the Faith-Based Community. We'll discuss how to increase awareness of child abuse and neglect in Fort Bend and surrounding areas and equip faith communities with resources and tools to support children and families. Share how your organization will "lend a hand" in protecting children and RSVP by March 14th.

Please RSVP by March 14

[Yes, I'll be attending!](#)



Questions or for more information contact Casey at CDavis@cafb.org

our needs

This month, we have immediate need for:

- **Snack bags:** individual serving bags of goldfish, teddy grahams, and fruit snacks in sandwich baggies
- **Fast food gift cards, any amount**
(for children in court hearings)
- **Gas gift cards and UBER gift cards.**
Walmart, Target and VISA are best.



Did you know that you can donate cars, airplanes, boats, motorcycles or trucks and select Child Advocates of Fort Bend to receive the proceeds?

Visit [HERE](#) for questions or contact
Lisa at lmoore@cafb.org





Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI®) Training

June 10 - 12, 2025

10am until 4pm

**Child Advocates of Fort Bend Training Room
5403 Avenue N, Rosenberg, TX 77471**

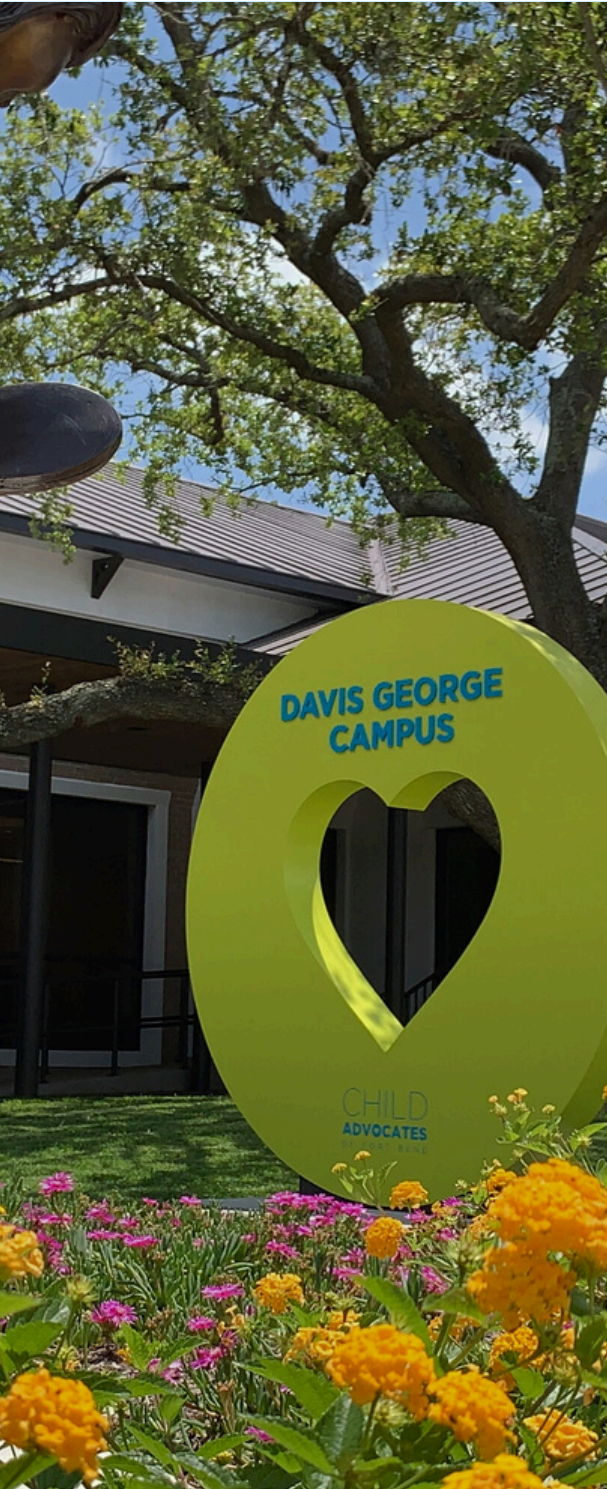
This two day training is specifically designed for those working with children who come from 'hard places,' such as maltreatment, abuse, neglect, multiple home placements, and violence, but can be used with all children. TBRI® offers practical tools for parents, caregivers, teachers, or anyone who works with children, to see the "whole child" in their care and help that child reach his highest potential.

TBRI® is an attachment-based, trauma-informed intervention that is designed to meet the complex needs of vulnerable children. The Fort Bend County TBRI Collaborative offers free training for professionals and caregivers who work with children who have experienced trauma.

For more information, contact [Alli Waterwall](mailto:AWaterwall@cafb.org) at AWaterwall@cafb.org



save these dates



March 3, 2025

Interfaith Community Gathering
10:00am - noon
RSVP [here](#) to reserve your spot

March 25, 2025

Sip & Stroll
5:30pm - 7:00pm
Contact [Lisa](#) at LMoore@cafb.org to reserve your spot

April 10, 2025

FRIENDS Spring Fling
6:00pm - 8:00pm
Contact [Judy](#) at Jbm951@icloud.com to RSVP

April 26, 2025

Inside Out Gala
Sponsor or Reserve your seat TODAY!
Contact [Tarina](#) at TSheridan@cafb.org.

May 8-9, 2025

Building Resilient and Trauma-Informed Communities
RSVP [here](#) to reserve your spot

June 10-12, 2025

Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI) Training
10:00am - 4:00pm
CAFB Training Room
Contact [Alli](#) at AWaterwall@cafb.org to reserve your spot



Sugar Land
Rotary
Club



COMMUNITY AWARENESS NIGHT

Creating a great time for important causes!

Saturday, March 22, 2025
Safari Texas Ranch - Magnolia Room
6:00 pm - 10:00 pm

Live Auctions: Lunch or Golf with Celebrities

Photo Shots with Celebrities

Fun Casino Activities

Open Bar, Music & Dancing

Sponsorship Levels Available

**Join us to fight human trafficking and
homelessness with:**



Safari Texas Ranch
11627 FM 1464, Richmond, TX 77407
Cocktail Attire
Adults Only

Sugar Land
Rotary
Club



Sponsorship Opportunities

Presenting Sponsor

\$15,000 with 150 casino chips included
Reserved table for 10 includes celebrity and spouse

Supporting Sponsors

\$10,000 with 100 casino chips included
Reserved table for 10 includes celebrity and spouse

Platinum Sponsors

\$5,000 with 50 casino chips included
Reserved table for 10 includes celebrity and spouse

Gold Sponsors

\$2,500 with 25 casino chips included
Reserved table for 10

Silver Sponsors

\$1,000
4 seats at open table

Bronze Sponsors

\$500
2 seats at open table

Individual Tickets

\$125 per person or \$200 per couple

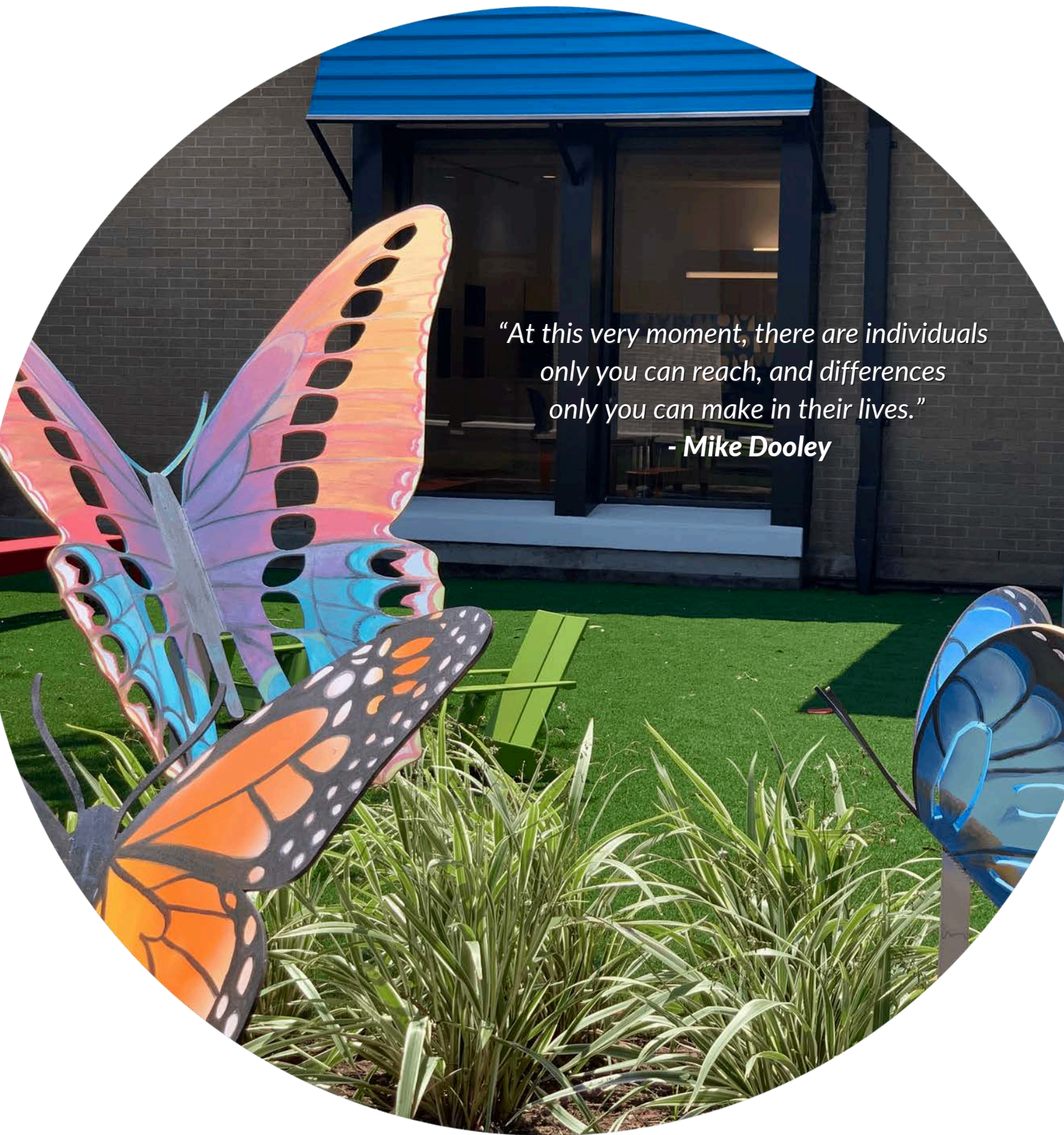


Buy tickets!

Contact us at (832) 987-4193 or by email:

sugarlandrotaryclub5890@gmail.com

www.SLRotaryFundraiser.com



*"At this very moment, there are individuals
only you can reach, and differences
only you can make in their lives."*

- Mike Dooley