

Communities Working Together to Accomplish What One Community Cannot Do Alone

The E—Update



When all is said and done, the real citadel of strength of any community is in the hearts and minds and desires of those who dwell there.

Everett Dirksen, Former Senator from Illinois

Session I - Leadership TMCN Set for February 19th

We're looking for some energetic and passionate students who want to make difference in their communities and a community leader who is willing to work beside them to make it happen. Could that student or community leader be you?



2019 Leadership TMCN Class

On **Wednesday, February 19th**, we will begin our 7th Year of Leadership TMCN Program and we're excited to welcome back [Kevin Tutt & Michael Daggs](#) as facilitators with sessions again being hosted by TMCN Marketing Partner [Jacob & Martin](#) at their Conference Center in Abilene.

While you may not be familiar with the name "Leadership TMCN", how can you forget the incredible and impactful community projects we're seen over the years from renovated parks and community buildings to a new high school curriculum and mobile STEM bus. The Program

was created in response to one of the most common concerns among TMCN member communities - how to engage the younger members of our communities - both students and business owners/leaders. Leadership TMCN is designed to challenge participants in their current level of commitment and inspire them to maximize their potential impact on the lives of the communities they serve. Students are partnered with a local business leader/owner, in a mentoring role, to develop leadership skills and implement an impactful community project that addresses a specific community need. Each Program project will be recognized at the TMCN Annual Conference in October and participating students will be eligible for scholarships based on the quality and outcome of their specific project.

All TMCN member communities are eligible to participate in this Program. Students must be enrolled as a Junior at the local high school and be one who exemplifies leadership, character and desire to improve their community. The participation fee is \$150 per participant (students and business leader/owner). These fees are typically provided by local businesses, chambers and, in many cases, by economic development organizations as the sessions are focused on initiatives to promote economic sustainability.

The **2020 Class** begins this week. To learn more about the **Leadership TMCN Program** [click here](#) or give us a call at 325-795-8626.

Great Response to New Membership Meeting Format

You spoke, we listened! As a result of last quarter's Focus Group Meeting, we're redesigning our quarterly Membership Meetings this year to delve into some of the most pressing concerns/interests of you, our members - Code Enforcement, Housing, Quality of Life and Workforce.



At January's Meeting, Lauren Bush, Executive Director of the Seymour Economic Development Division, shared Seymour's success in developing enforceable ordinances - the order of operations for enforcement and the documents used for the process. Her presentation focused on Hazardous Building, Livestock and Public Nuisance Ordinances and concrete solutions to address these issues. Ensuing discussions confirmed a keen interest in additional code enforcement training which is being explored.

Raul Salazar, HOME Production Coordinator with the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs spoke about the various programs available through the Department including the new [Homebuyer Assistance with New Construction or Rehabilitation Program](#). This Program focuses on increasing the available affordable housing stock on a smaller scale. Raul proved to be a great resource for member communities and offered to provide follow up on a number of questions raised during the Q&A.

Jimi Coplen, Executive Director of the Development Corporation of Haskell and Christina Isbell, President of the Keep Haskell Beautiful, shared their successes as an affiliate of the Keep Texas Beautiful Program. [Keep Haskell Beautiful](#) meets on a monthly basis and

programs include a variety of community improvements, an annual fundraiser, scholarships for high school students, participation in the Great American Clean Up, and their Adopt a Highway initiative. Their engaging presentation helped attendees begin to identify needs and develop their own beautification programs which could lead to potential project funding through the Keep Texas Beautiful Program.



We also heard from Jay Hardaway, City of Abilene Census Representative, and Misti Hauger, U.S. Census Bureau Partnership Specialist, on the importance of an accurate count for [Census 2020](#) and [paid job opportunities](#) available to assist in the count.

Larissa Place and Lauren Hall, Field Representatives with the Texas Department of Agriculture, shared information on the [GOTexan Program](#) including marketing/trade opportunities available through the Program for businesses as well as local

communities.

As you can see, the meeting was packed full of timely and informative topics focused on the needs of our membership. If you are interested in handouts from any of the sessions, please send a request to tmcn@tmcn.org.

We encourage you to mark your calendar and make plans to attend the next Membership Meeting scheduled for April 30th. Again, the presentations will be focused in the areas of Code Enforcement (*TCEQ Landfill Options*), Housing (*Importance of Local Studies*), Quality of Life (*Community Mentoring Programs*) and Workforce (*Understanding Broadband*) as well as information on creatively marketing local restaurants. Watch for details coming soon!



TDA Opens Application for Family Land Heritage Recognition

Texas Department of Agriculture Press Release

AUSTIN - Agriculture Commissioner Sid Miller is proud to invite Texas farmers and ranchers to apply for the Texas Department of Agriculture's (TDA) Family Land Heritage (FLH) program, which pays tribute to families who have kept their land in continuous agricultural production for at least 100 years. As TDA continues this proud tradition of honoring true Lone Star pioneers, families are asked to submit their applications for recognition in the 2020 FLH registry by May 1, 2020.

"I can't brag on these hardworking Texas farmers and ranchers enough," Commissioner Miller said. "Farm and ranch families comprise less than 2% of the U.S. population and these folks have been able to keep their family land in continuous production for over 100 years. That takes a great deal of perseverance and commitment to Texas agriculture. Without them, our state's agriculture industry wouldn't be the powerhouse it has become, and they deserve to be recognized for that."

Eligible farms and ranches must be owned and operated by the descendants of the founder, either through blood, marriage or adoption. At least 10 acres of the land must have been in continuous agricultural production for the past 100 years or more.

This fall, Commissioner Miller will honor farms and ranches established in 1920 or earlier at the FLH ceremony at the Texas Capitol.

"I encourage those who are eligible to apply for the 45th Annual Family Land Heritage ceremony," Commissioner Miller said. "Farming and ranching isn't for the faint of heart; there is a great deal of hard work and sacrifice. As a longtime rancher myself, I am proud to pay tribute to the men and women who nurture our land and continue to keep the legacy going."

For more information or to apply for FLH recognition, [click here](#) .

Congressman Announces Academy Day by U.S. Representative Mike Conaway, District 11

U.S. Representative Conaway will be hosting a Military Service Academy Day on March 7th in San Angelo, assisted by the offices of U.S. Senators John Cornyn (R-TX) and Ted Cruz (R-TX).

This event provides students, parents, counselors, and educators the opportunity to learn about the Service Academy nomination process and meet with representatives from each of the service academies, Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC), and participating congressional offices. Attendance is highly encouraged for high school freshmen, sophomores, and juniors who are interested in applying for a service academy.



"I am honored to have one last opportunity to oversee the military academy nomination process as a Member of Congress. Over the years, Joanne Powell in my San Angelo office has been a champion for these students, and her mentorship has helped many of the 11th District's finest earn acceptance into academies of their choice. I am extremely proud of every one of the brave women and men who I have had the honor of nominating in the past, and I am looking forward to working with the applicants this year."

WHAT: Military Service Academy Day

WHEN: Saturday, March 7th from 1:00 to 4:30 p.m.

WHERE: Angelo State University, CJ Davidson Conference Center
1910 Rosemont Dr. San Angelo, TX

More information regarding the Academy nomination process can be found [here](#).



This Past Month's Most Engaging Texas Midwest Facebook Posts Motivates Community Pride

Last month we shared an announcement from Erin and Ben Napier, hosts of HGTV's popular series Home Town, who plan to launch an all-new concept series Home Town Takeover, a six-episode special event slated to air on HGTV in 2021. This new concept seeks to breath new life into an entire town that's struggling and in need of some TLC. Communities under 40,000 population were encouraged to submit an application showing, telling and selling HGTV on why theirs was the one town most deserving to be featured in the special series. The deadline to submit the application was Tuesday, February 4th.

According various social media channels, the response from the Texas Midwest was phenomenal as many citizens and community leaders challenged their peers to submit an application. While we don't know just how many TMCN communities followed through, we have found some amazing online video submissions for Bronte, Coleman, Comanche, Merkel, Seymour, Stamford and Spur. If your community submitted an application, we'd love to share it. Send the link to us at tmcn@tmcn.org.

We know there can only be one HGTV winner but each of these communities, and others who shared their local story with Erin and Ben, are already winners in the eyes of their citizenry. The hometown pride exhibited in the videos we found was incredibly uplifting and inspiring - kudos to the those involved in their creation.

According to the hgtvhometowntakeover.com website at the time of this printing, submissions were currently under review. We anxiously await the announcement and perhaps that winner will be somewhere in the Texas Midwest!

To see the videos created by the member communities noted above, go to our [Facebook Page](#).

Texas Rural Funders Collaborative Needs Your Help

by Cheryl Pekar, Stanzel Foundation

The TRFC, group of private foundations, community foundations, and health-conversion foundations working together to bring additional attention and resources to areas of rural Texas, is interested in supporting leadership development in rural communities of Texas. They are therefore seeking leaders who personally or professionally make a positive impact in their respective rural communities to provide insight on this leadership development initiative.



GREATER TEXAS FOUNDATION

You are invited to take a few moments to complete the survey at this [link](#). The survey will close on Tuesday, March 10. Although names and email addresses will be collected for follow-up as needed, answers will remain confidential. All survey responses will be summarized and reported anonymously to the TRFC. No responses will be published without permission.

If you have questions, you are encouraged to reach out to lesliegurrola@greatertexasfoundation.org for more information.

Broadband Coverage Maps Release - Input Sought

Connected Nation Texas (CN Texas) has released its initial updated broadband (high-speed internet) coverage maps. These maps provide details on internet speeds and coverage for all 254 counties across the Lone Star State.



"It's been over five years since we last updated broadband coverage maps for Texas, so it was so important for us to start there," said Jennifer Harris, State Program Director, CN Texas. "When you think about how quickly technology is changing and expanding, you can imagine how much the coverage maps have changed in that time. We want to empower our local and state leaders with good data so they can accurately identify where the need for broadband expansion is and where it isn't."

You can find your county map and review its updated information by heading to <https://connectednation.org/texas/mapping-analysis/> and provide feedback at <https://connectednation.org/texas/feedback>. You can also find an interactive map at <https://connectednation.org/texas/interactivemap>.

CN Texas is a local division of Connected Nation, a national nonprofit working to expand access, adoption, and use of broadband and its related technology to all people. Connected Nation has worked with individual communities across Texas since 2009, but in 2019, thanks to funding from the Texas Rural Funders Collaborative, a statewide effort was launched to connect all Texans.

"Rural communities are being left behind; lack of infrastructure and insufficient resources have seriously hampered broadband adoption - and the life-changing opportunities it provides," said Wynn Rosser, a member of the Texas Rural Funders Collaborative. "This first-ever funder-driven broadband initiative supports largely disconnected and unserved rural Texas communities by bringing digital expertise to rural communities and ensuring accurate and objective coverage data is available. We intend to provide better access to healthcare, education, the arts, training and commerce. Rural communities will benefit from greater

efficiencies in agriculture, resource management, disaster recovery, emergency response, social connections and much more."

CN Texas is taking a four-pronged approach to improving access for all Texans- working directly with broadband providers to obtain accurate broadband service coverage areas, focusing on getting good data in decision-makers' hands, helping people understand the benefits of broadband, and understanding how we can expand broadband access and use to rural Texans.

Upcoming Events & Application Deadlines

February 19 - Leadership TMCN, Session I, Jacob & Martin Conference Center

February 19 - Profit Mastery, ASU-SBDC, FMI [Click Here](#)

February 20 - 2020 Governor's Community Achievement Award (GCAA) application deadline, Keep Texas Beautiful, FMI [Click Here](#)

February 26 - Transient Noncommunity (TNC) Public Water Systems (PWS) Workshop, San Marcos, FMI [Click Here](#)

February 27 - THC Bringing Objects and Artifacts to Life Webinar, FMI [Click Here](#)

February 27-29 - Texas State Historical Association Annual Meeting, FMI [Click Here](#)

March 3 - How to Start a Small Business, Abilene SBDC, FMI [Click Here](#)

March 6 - Kids Art Contest Entry Deadline, Take Care of Texas, FMI [Click Here](#)

March 24 - THC Social Media and Your Cultural Organization Webinar, FMI [Click Here](#)

April 3 - Nonprofit Marketing Conference, Community Foundation of Abilene, FMI [Click Here](#)

April 3 - Deadline for TDA's "You Art What You Eat Student Art Contest", FMI [Click Here](#)

April 29-30 - Rural Hospital Symposium, Big Country AHEC & Texas Rural Health Association, FMI [Click Here](#)

April 30 - TMCN General Membership Meeting, Hendrick Health System, FMI [Click Here](#)

May 18-20 - Main Street Now Conference, Dallas, FMI [Click Here](#)

July 28-30 - Stand Up For Rural Conference, Charleston, West Virginia, FMI [Click Here](#)

Registration for TMCN events is available [here!](#)



Other Ways to Connect

Stay up to date on all the exciting events and activities going on in the region as well as upcoming educational opportunities by following us on [FACEBOOK](#).

Have a question of your peers within the region? Join and send your inquiries to the [TMCN Forum](#) for opportunities to learn from each other.

And finally, are you a recipient of our weekly "[Fun Things to Do This Weekend](#)" email blast? The blast provides a listing and links to all the TMCN community events found in the Texas Midwest Guide Calendar. If you'd like to be included in the weekly blast, simply go to our [website](#) and click the "[Fun Things to Do!](#)" tab in the top right corner and sign up. We'll be happy to include you!



Partner Highlight: Hendrick Health System

Reported by Abilene Reporter News

Hendrick Health System recently opened a new 6,500-square-foot dialysis center, the



health system's first foray into outpatient dialysis.

Hendrick has offered inpatient service for more than 40 years. "We serve 24 counties, and this is something that we're looking forward to as part of the Hendrick part of the Hendrick journey," said Brad Holland, the hospital system's chief executive officer said at the open house on Tuesday, January 28th.

The new facility, located at 820 N. 19th St., east of the main Hendrick campus, serves to

"reduce fragmentation in the market," Holland said. The facility offers both in-center and peritoneal, or in-home, dialysis. On-site perks include state-of-the-art machines and water purification, while also offering amenities designed to make patients comfortable.

Thank you Hendrick Health System for your continued support the Texas Midwest Community Network and your commitment to state-of-the-art healthcare in our region!

For more information on services provided by Patron Marketing Partner Hendrick Health System [Click Here](#) .

Thank You to Our Partners & Event Sponsors

The *Marketing & Promotions Opportunities Program* is one of the primary reasons for the continued success and sustainability of our organization. We proudly promote and recognize our partners' unwavering support given not only to our organization as a whole but the 50 communities who make up Texas Midwest Community Network. Please join us in offering our sincere gratitude for the longstanding and continued support of the following partners who have renewed for 2019 and, where possible, please demonstrate this appreciation by utilizing their services:



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Texas Midwest Community Network | 325-795-8626 | tmcn@tmcn.org | www.tmcn.org

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