



WESTCHASE TODAY

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The Doctors Will See You Now

Urgent Doc Clinic, SignatureCare ER are District's latest medical care choices



Retail Medicine: *SignatureCare Emergency Center recently opened at Westheimer and Wilcrest in what was formerly a J. Alexander's restaurant. The ER joins Urgent Doc at Westheimer and Gessner as a second walk-in option for medical care in Westchase District. (Photo courtesy of Monee Fly, Fly Photography)*

Most of us don't enjoy seeing a doctor, but when we must, we want it to be affordable, quick and convenient. Consumer demand has driven a boom in recent years of healthcare facilities with extended hours that are located in or near high-traffic retail centers. Westchase District has two of them on Westheimer Road: one is an urgent care clinic within walking distance of a grocery store and the other is a new freestanding emergency room built on the site of what used to be a popular casual dining restaurant.

Urgent Doc

Urgent Doc is a walk-in urgent care clinic

located in the Woodlake Square Shopping Center at 9668 Westheimer, next to the Flagship Randalls supermarket. Seeing patients since 2013, Urgent Doc accepts patients without appointments from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m., 365 days a year. "The average visit, from walk in to walk out, lasts between 30 to 45 minutes, so you can be seen and treated over your lunch hour," said Don Battle, director of business development and marketing for Urgent Clinics of America, Urgent Doc's parent company.

Manned by either an M.D., physician's assistant or nurse practitioner, along with a nurse and front-desk assistant, staff are able to treat everything from infections to broken bones and administer

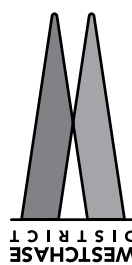
immunizations and vaccinations. "We can suture cuts and wounds, take digital x-rays, perform echocardiograms, run intravenous fluids - we've even once delivered a baby here at the clinic," Battle said.

Battle added that many area businesses use Urgent Doc to treat on-the-job injuries, perform employee physicals, and conduct drug screenings and breath alcohol testing. "We also do a lot of physicals and sports participation screenings for the local schools - they're only \$25," he said. For self-pay patients, Urgent Doc offers three tiers of discounted pricing - \$99, \$169 and \$249 - depending on whether X-rays or bloodwork are needed. "Because we don't have any facility fees or

(Continued on Page 8)



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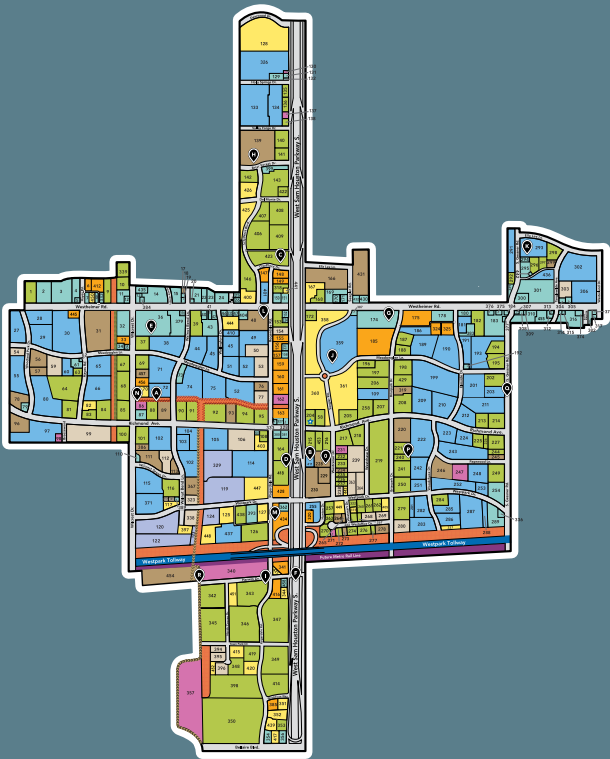


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WESTCHASE TODAY is published quarterly by Westchase District, a municipal management district funded by local property owners in a 4.2 square-mile area centered on the Sam Houston Tollway between I-10 and US-59 on the west side of Houston, Texas. We promote economic growth by enhancing mobility, beautification, public safety, planning and development of the District.



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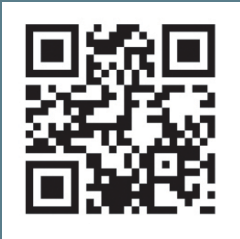
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Connecting the Dots

We’ve all seen a building project underway or maybe a piece of artwork taking shape. Sometimes, the finished product can’t be discerned until it is almost complete. Clearly, there is a plan behind all this and it is known to the creator even if it is a mystery to the rest of us.

Much of Westchase District’s work focuses on planning. We plan our activities and projects but also play a key role in helping other government entities plan their work for our area. This includes the City and County as well as TXDOT, METRO, AISD and HISD. Ensuring that the various projects are coordinated and complement one another means that we get the most out of all our tax dollars while meeting the area’s needs. Our plans run the gamut from a simple sidewalk project to a 30-year master plan for the entire area. Importantly, we focus or work on public spaces and public infrastructure. This both respects property rights and the free market. Our goal is establishing an environment that attracts and retains new residents, tenants, retailers, owners and investors.

Our long-range focus is both a strength and a challenge. Going 20-30 years into the cloudy future is definitely challenging, but, in a realm of unlimited and uncertain options, constantly coordinating the best options and highest priorities is our goal. We work toward a set of inter-related projects, each with its own merits but able to leverage others that are a part of the plan for a multiplier effect.

Trailside Park is a great example. Using utility corridors for trails was part of our 2006 Long-Range Plan (LRP). Then in 2013, legislation was passed to make these trails possible and the HCC Campus Trail was completed in 2017. Two other plans provided projects to complement it. Our Pedestrian/Transit Plan identified the strategic value of a sidewalk extending west to Hayes, and the Parks and Open Spaces Plan identified a parcel available adjacent to the trail and proposed sidewalk extension. Now we have a trail, connected to a sidewalk with safe and expanded access, and a wonderful green space that benefits trail users, tenants in the adjacent office building, and area residents.



Westchase District Board Chair Philip Schneidau

Woodchase Park is also a story of multiple complementary projects coming together. The 2006 LRP called for a number of parks and these were funded to a degree in the 2013 Westchase District 380 Area Agreement with the City. When the City was looking for sites in our area with its Open Space Fund, the District’s ability to pledge funds for park development and maintenance was a key factor in securing the City’s support. But the decision was made even easier by projects from two other plans: the Elmside/Woodchase side path that provides a landscaped pedestrian/ bicycle corridor linking the park to Westpark, Richmond and Westheimer as well as the Westpark Extension of the Westchase District Trail System connecting to Gessner and to METRO’s Gessner Park and Ride lot.

We are continuing our efforts to both implement the plans we have and to set new goals and initiatives to ensure the area’s growth and prosperity. Truly, as one plan concludes, another is already underway.

The Corporate Concierge Who’s into Classic Cars

New Board member Chris Ball revs up tenant interactions at CityWestPlace

Home to such companies as BMC Software, Equinor (formerly StatOil) and TechSpace, the four buildings that make up CityWest Place are some of Westchase District’s most outstanding, amenity-rich office spaces. Managing all four properties is Parkway Properties’ Chris Ball. Earlier this year, Ball became one of the newest members of the Westchase District Board of Directors. It’s a role for which he’s well-suited, given his vision for the 35-acre campus.

A lucky leprechaun

A Houston native, Ball graduated from Aldine High School and earned his bachelor’s degree in hotel management from the University of Houston. “Like all good students, I crammed my four-year degree into five years,” he said, laughing. Ball spent about 25 years in the hospitality industry, managing everything from hotels to a golf course to a retirement community before transitioning to commercial property management.

After a few years in the business, Ball joined Parkway in 2017, first managing four buildings at Houston’s Greenway Plaza before switching to CityWestPlace. Featuring such amenities as three first-class restaurants, multiple athletic facilities, an auto repair center, an on-campus dentist and a hair salon, CityWestPlace is one of the crown jewels of Westchase District’s office market. “This is an incredibly beautiful campus that offers its tenants world-class services and conveniences,” Ball said. “I feel like I work in the middle of a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.”

Ball is tasked with creating and nurturing relationships among tenants inside a campus that houses nearly 1.5 million square feet of office space. “People tend to be creatures of habit and insular; one of my roles is to open up our tenants’ peripheral vision to one another,” he said. “In addition to catering to our companies’ needs, we host events that develop tenant interaction, like our ‘Inks & Drinks’

Market Still Looking Good After Five Years

Skin care vendors rejuvenate customers’ appearances as well

This fall, the Westchase District Farmers Market celebrates its fifth anniversary. Featuring nearly 30 vendors each week and special monthly appearances from the Harris County Master Gardeners, the market is as lively as ever. So just how do we maintain our vibrant appearance? Well, besides eating healthy, locally-grown foods from our vendors, part of our secret lies in using the hand-crafted skin care products offered by several merchants.

Fighting the funk

“Skin is your largest organ and about 60 percent of whatever you put on your skin is ingested into your body, so it’s important to put quality, natural things on it,” said Karen Trekell owner of LatherMeUp Bath & Body Products (lathermeup.com). “My soaps are made with shea butter and olive oil, coconut oil, sweet almond oil, castor oil – all natural vegetable oils – and scented with various essential oils. Of course you want to be careful with anything you put near your mouth, so my lip balm consists simply of shea butter, sweet almond oil and beeswax.”

Trekell said many mass-produced, brand-name underarm deodorants contain aluminum and other synthetic antiperspirant ingredients that block pores. “There’s conflicting research about the relationship between antiperspirants, deodorants and breast cancer, but clogging up the ducts near lymph nodes around the armpits and breasts can’t be good, so a lot of my customers are looking for alternatives,” she said. Trekell makes her natural underarm deodorant with arrowroot powder, baking soda, coco butter, shea butter, coconut oil, tea tree oil and beeswax.

Some customers transitioning to natural deodorant may notice a temporary increase in sweating, odor or sensitivity as they go through what Trekell describes as “underarm detox.” “Depending on your chemical makeup, it takes from a few days to up to a week for your body to adjust as the aluminum leaves your body. At first, you may have a few sticky days, but they shouldn’t be stinky days,” she said.

Acting as the test case herself, Trekell said she went through a handful of iterations before settling on the right combination of ingredients for her lemon mint and lavender mint deodorants. “I smell my shirt at the end of every day just to make sure that my products are still working,” she said, laughing.

Everlasting flower power

Referred to as the Everlasting or Immortal Flower, helichrysum is a small perennial herb with yellow sunflowers used in anti-aging products for its rejuvenating benefits to the skin. Marlene Munday, owner of Float-A-Way Essential Oil Products (u-floataway.com), sells a Silky Scents cream and bath salts made with helichrysum and rose essential oils. “Both are healing to the skin,” Munday said. “Helichrysum has been known to heal wounds without leaving scars and rose is extremely moisturizing.”

Munday offers her products in various forms, including linen spray, diffuser oils and roll-ons. “I’m also a massage therapist, so all of my products

are designed to flow into the skin and be absorbed easily,” she said. “They are hormone-balancing and good for relieving anxiety, though I don’t recommend them for anyone who’s pregnant. I have to warn people to use the bath salts only before going to bed, because I promise you they will knock you out.”

Thinking pink

You only have to travel as far as the market to get healing that comes from the Himalayas. Pink Himalayan salt is a type of rock salt from the Punjab region of Pakistan near the foothills of the Himalaya mountain range famous for its pink color due to trace minerals such as potassium, magnesium and calcium.

“Pink salt has 84 of the 102 minerals our bodies need,” said Lucinda Deason, owner of Dr. Lucy’s Optimum Wellness Lifestyle (OWL) Club. “When the body gets the minerals it needs, it starts healing itself.”



Products for the Skin You’re In: (Clockwise from left) Marlene Munday sells a cream and bath salts featuring helichrysum oils; Karen Trekell makes natural deodorants; and Lucinda Deason sells an exfoliating scrub made from pink Himalayan salt.

Deason sells a Himalayan pink salt skin moisturizer and an exfoliant bath scrub. “You soak in the tub with the scrub for about 15 minutes a day and it helps draw toxins and heavy metals out of your body,” she said. “The pink salt detoxifies the body by balancing systemic pH, and it also improves skin hydration.” She added that benefits of regular pink salt soaks can include balanced blood sugar levels, lowered blood pressure and prevention of muscle cramps. “I feel proud to sell my products because I know they don’t harm anyone and I can share them with my customers,” she added.

Westchase District Farmers Market
Year-round, rain or shine, Thursdays @ 3 p.m.
St. Cyril of Alexandria Catholic Church
10503 Westheimer Road (at Rogerdale Road, one block west of Beltway 8)
www.westchasedistrictfarmersmarket.com

painting party and campus-wide sports tournaments. Parkway is committed to nurturing an inclusive corporate culture among companies to create the ideal, productive environment each of them wants.”

Spreading the word

Although he managed hotel properties throughout Houston, it was only recently Ball was exposed to Westchase District. “I first noticed the classy landscaping and unique signage and could tell immediately when I had left the District,” he said. “I later realized the role the District as an entity plays in creating and maintaining those features.” As a member of the District’s 380 Area Agreement and Public Safety committees, Ball is learning more about infrastructure projects and safety initiatives. “It’s been a lot of fun to drive around the District and say, ‘Oh yeah, we did that,’” he said.

“Being on the Board has been an invaluable resource for when people come to me with questions about the area,” Ball continued. “I feel comfortable approaching District staff members with those questions and being able to not only convey answers, but share news about all the positive things the District is doing.”

Family fun

Ball lives in Spring, Texas, with his wife of 22 years and their two high-school-aged sons. “My wife and I met at church in the sixth grade, though we didn’t date until college,” he said. “My older son and I enjoy working on classic trucks together, and he wants to pursue his college degree in automotive restoration. My younger son has opened my eyes to the world of robotics. We have an overwhelming amount of electronic components around the house. I have no idea what I’m doing, but we’re figuring it out together and having a lot of fun.”



Big Man on Campus: As senior property manager with Parkway Properties, Chris Ball manages all four buildings of the prestigious CityWestPlace office campus.

Exquisite Confections at Sugar Rush Too - Westchase

Cupcakes, cookies, pies and pudding are works of art at new cake gallery

Since the early 2000s, America has been caught up in a cupcake craze, with customers clamoring for gourmet versions of the frosted desserts. A new business recently opened in Westchase District that aims to help satiate shoppers’ sweet-tooth urges: Sugar Rush Too – Westchase, located at 10908 Westheimer Road. The store features a glass display case against a fuchsia wall, where rows of ornate cupcakes made fresh daily sit like works of art. The smell of gourmet coffee brewing fills the air and general manager Adam Magoti greets visitors with a smile.

From East Africa to West Houston

Born in Tanzania, Magoti immigrated to the United States in 2000 and moved to Houston in 2004. Before plunging into the world of pies and pudding, he worked in the oil and gas industry as a plant inspector, checking for gas pipe leaks. “A few years ago, my wife started bringing home these delicious cupcakes on Sundays after church,” he said. From there, the Magotis began frequenting the original Sugar Rush Cake Gallery, located near I-610 and Stella Link Road. “We got to know the founders and eventually began discussing opening a franchise location.”

Initially hesitant about changing careers, Magoti considered the venture for about two years before taking the plunge into the cake business in July, opening

in the Lakeside Village Shopping Center in the space formerly occupied by My Fit Foods. The Sugar Rush chain currently has eight locations in Greater Houston (all of the satellite locations are named Sugar Rush Too), with a central commercial kitchen from which most items are baked and distributed. “I place my order every evening, they bake everything overnight and deliver it the next morning,” Magoti said. “So whatever you choose will be fresh.”

Selection and location

Those fresh menu items include: bread pudding, banana pudding, blackberry or peach cobbler, tea cakes, a variety of cookies, cake pops, and layer and sheet cakes. There’s even a specialty cupcake called The Westchase – a vanilla cupcake with buttercream icing topped with sprinkles and a cherry. Magoti said he’s advertising via direct mail to the surrounding neighborhoods and he recently hosted a free wedding cake tasting at his store. “We can custom create whatever you want for holidays, birthdays, weddings, baby showers, you name it,” he said. “Plus we offer catering and delivery services.”

When scouting locations for his franchise, Magoti said the District was top of mind. “When I first moved to Houston, I spent a lot of time in Westchase District, eating out and shopping,” he said. “I think it’s a friendly area and the business traffic along Westheimer is really solid. This feels like home to me.”

Secret ingredient for success

While the owners, understandably, are highly protective of their recipes, Magoti said he has his own secret ingredient for success: outstanding customer service. “I want to make sure when you walk in my Sugar Rush location, you and your family feel comfortable sharing in the joy I feel selling these delicious sweets,” he said. “The customer is always right and will be treated well – that’s my recipe.”

Sugar Rush Too – Westchase is open from 11 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday, 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sundays and closed on Mondays.

Sugar Rush Too - Westchase

10908 Westheimer Road • 713-978-RUSH (7874) • www.sugarrushwestchase.com



Cupcake Namesake: *Sugar Rush Too offers “The Westchase,” a vanilla cupcake with buttercream icing topped with sprinkles and a cherry.*



Rushing to Serve You: *Adam Magoti, general manager of Sugar Rush Too – Westchase, is all about serving up customer service on a platter for his customers.*

Greenspace for Westchase

District moves forward with development of two parks

Everyone deserves a great park within a 10-minute walk from their home – so says the Trust for Public Land, a national nonprofit that advocates for park creation and land conservation. In 2017, TPL ranked Houston 77th in the country for park access, a number that leaves much room for progress. Westchase District is working to improve Houston’s ParkScore index number with the creation of two parks in the District during the next two years. One of them is well-underway, with visible results appearing this fall.

Trailside Park

First up is Trailside Park, a half-acre park located just north of Richmond Avenue that’s part of a 750-foot trail connecting the HCC Campus Trail with Hayes Road. “Because the HCC Campus Trail runs along a CenterPoint Energy powerline corridor, we’re not allowed to place any amenities along that trail,” said Louis Jullien, Westchase District projects director. “Fortunately, we were able to secure a parcel next to the CenterPoint corridor just behind 10200 Richmond that makes for a

perfect little recreation area.” This summer, workers cleared the area of brush and poured the park’s eight-foot-wide concrete trail. Later this fall, the park will feature a ZipKrooz playground zip line that allows children to safely and smoothly glide back and forth along a 30-foot track. “It’s good exercise and a lot of fun,” Jullien said. “Plus, there’s nothing like it in the area.” Jullien added that the District plans to install a picnic table, fixed seating area and a water fountain before the end of the

year, as well as trees and landscaping.

Also included in the park will be a memorial etching in the trail honoring Patrick Chang, a landscape architect with urban design firm Asakura Robinson, who passed away unexpectedly in 2017. “Patrick worked with the District for many years on various projects and he came up with the initial concept for Trailside Park,” said Irma Sanchez, Westchase District’s vice president of projects. “We wanted to acknowledge his contributions and honor his legacy in a meaningful way.”

Woodchase Park

Next to materialize is Woodchase Park, a two-acre parcel on Woodchase Drive just north of the Westpark Tollway. The park will connect to the Westpark Trail, which runs parallel to the Westpark Tollway between Briarpark Drive and Gessner Road. “This will place commuters at the METRO Gessner Park & Ride, as well as nearby residents, within a 10-minute walk to a beautiful neighborhood park,” Sanchez said.

The park is being designed by the Office of James Burnett, the award-winning firm responsible for Houston’s Levy Park and Klyde Warren Park in Dallas. Park elements will include a dog park, a children’s play area with a rock-climbing wall, a gathering lawn, walking paths, a pavilion with restrooms, parking for food trucks and a community garden.

Sanchez said she expects construction designs to be finalized this fall and for construction of the park to begin in Spring 2019. Construction of Woodchase Park should last about 12 months.



Coming Soon: *This conceptual rendering shows a children’s playspace to be included in the future Woodchase Park, expected to open in 2020.*



Noticing Something New: *Already, walkers and riders have discovered Trailside Park’s eight-foot-wide path that connects to the District’s HCC Campus Trail.*

Modern Technical Training for Area Students

Innovative Alief ISD Center for Advanced Careers begins first classes this fall

In August, the Alief Independent School District welcomed students, many of whom live in Westchase District, to its brand-new Center for Advanced Careers at 12160 Richmond Avenue. The 235,000 square-foot facility can accommodate up to 2,500 students and will house career and technical education programs such as advanced audio/video production, auto tech, culinary arts, health sciences, robotics, welding, engineering, HVAC training and more.

The center also will host events and professional learning opportunities for AISD employees and will host tours for intermediate and middle school students so they may see first-hand the opportunities that await them.

Pathways to profitable careers

Designed by PBK Architects, the center was made possible by voter approval of the \$341 million bond referendum in May 2015. This new center will give students a chance to earn certifications in many academic areas that were all made possible through the passage of HB5 by the Texas Legislature in 2015. The bill provides students a chance to choose an endorsement area of their choice for their high school years.

“For decades, high school students were all taught the same way, as if all of them were heading to a four-year university,” said HD Chambers, AISD superintendent. “Study after study shows that not all students are meant to attend a four-year university and that, through these endorsement areas, students may pursue a career of their choice and not just be conformed into a one-size-fits-all approach that was mandated by the state for decades. This facility will provide our students with even more opportunities for success after graduating high school.”

Some of the programs at the center will begin with sophomore students while others will start with juniors and seniors. All first level courses will still be housed on the district’s three traditional high school campuses (Elsik, Hastings and Taylor).

“I’m looking forward to watching our students learn advanced level skills using state-of-the-art equipment and materials while also having the opportunity

to put their knowledge to the test with the programs open to the community,” said Jennifer Baker, director of career and technical education. “Students in the automotive, veterinary tech and culinary arts programs will offer services to community members and be able to experience real world situations.”

High-tech, high-wage skills

Participating students take first- or second-level courses at their home campuses and then complete advanced courses at the center in the following programs:

Advanced Architectural Design – Students learn to use industry standard software to

create designs, drawings, renderings and scaled models and can earn Auto Desk Revit and AutoCAD certifications.

Automotive Technology – Working in a 23,000 square-foot lab with 18 service bays, students perform minor car maintenance such as alignments, oil changes and brake jobs on vehicles and can earn Automotive Service Excellence certifications.

Construction Technology – Coursework includes basic construction practices, framing and finishing as well as mill and cabinetmaking. Students can pursue certifications in the areas of NCCER and OSHA.

Culinary Arts – Students will have the chance to show their skills to the public through a restaurant which is open to the public and can also earn their ServSafe certification.

Digital Design – Using state-of-the-art laboratories featuring built-in sound booths and a control room, students will be able to obtain industry-recognized Adobe certifications through courses in audio/video production, graphic design and commercial photography.

Health Science – In partnership with West Houston Medical Center, which is located across the street from the center, students will practice their skills in real-world settings to earn certifications as pharmacy technicians and certified nursing assistants.

Industrial Robotics – Students interested in manufacturing careers will learn how to program the FANUC robotic arm and work toward the Certified Production Technician credential.

Information Technology – Students will learn skills in computer maintenance, networking and cyber security with opportunities for industry recognized certifications.

Veterinary Science – Beginning in the 2019-2020 school year, students will learn veterinary practices for large and small animal species and may earn veterinary technician certifications.

Welding – In a laboratory with 20 welding booths, students use hand tools, power machines and the latest welding equipment to practice welding processes and earn qualifications to take industry certification tests.

For more information about the Center for Advanced Careers, or to schedule a tour, call 281-498-8110.



Windows to New Careers: Alief ISD’s new Center for Advanced Careers features a glassy, open design with windows that adjust to the light to save energy.



Transportation Stations: At 18 new service bays, AISD automotive technology students will pursue coursework in brakes, steering and suspension, engine performance, electrical work, and light maintenance and repair.

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5

Responding to Basic Needs While Promoting Independence

West Houston Assistance Ministries helps area families in crisis

In the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Harvey, many affected Houstonians benefitted from heroic actions taken by first responders. A second wave of response occurred in the form of temporary shelters and assistance from various aid organizations. But for those in West Houston living with Harvey’s devastating effects a year later, nonprofits such as West Houston Assistance Ministries (WHAM) fill an important role in continuing to support lives still reeling from the costliest tropical cyclone on record.

Third responders

“I call us the ‘third responders,’” said Mark Brown, WHAM’s CEO. “There’s still so much needed in terms of rebuilding homes, providing assistance with food and employment and offering mental health support. Even before the disaster, there were a lot of people in crisis in West Houston and in Westchase District. We normally see about 2,500 clients per month, but thanks to Harvey, we’ve seen about 40,000 people in the past year.”

Brown said as third responders, WHAM’s 20 staff members and about 300 active volunteers work to provide rental assistance to prevent eviction and resulting homelessness and to ensure that no one leaves WHAM hungry. Their Client Choice Food Pantry is one of the largest in the region, where clients are provided shopping carts and may select items with volunteer guidance. “Along

with the Houston Food Bank, many local restaurants and grocery stores donate fresh items daily, so in addition to non-perishables we offer meat, milk, cheese and fresh produce – it’s really high-quality food.”

Since last October, WHAM distributed more than one million pounds of food to the community and has given more than \$620,000 in financial assistance. Brown said WHAM works with apartment communities on rent payments for clients with documented needs. “All of our assistance is evidence-based,” Brown said. “We’re extremely careful about how we steward our resources. That said, our assessment shows that we’re about a million dollars shy of meeting the need – about 5,000 area people who need at least \$200 in assistance aren’t getting it. We’re part of the solution, but there’s a lot more work that needs to be done.”

Development and donations

Work is another key component to WHAM’s services. Last year, the nonprofit provided employment services to more than 800 clients, assisting with everything from resume building to interview clothing and coaching. They also offer a job training partnership with Houston Community College. “One of the reasons I love sitting on Westchase District’s Advisory Board is because I’m pro-economic development,” Brown said. “I don’t want WHAM to have a dependency model. We’re about helping people to get over their hurdles, to get a job and to get on with their lives.”

One source of revenue for WHAM is its Second Blessing thrift store, which sells clothing, furniture, books and housewares donated from the community. “We don’t buy and sell on consignment; 100 percent of our goods are donated and the profits from the store help fund our work,” Brown said. “It’s been a good promotional tool as well, because many bargain hunters have learned about WHAM from our store.”

The WHAM staff learned about the generosity of the Westchase District community in the days following Harvey. “Companies whom we’d never heard of and didn’t know they knew about us would turn up with truckloads of clothing and diapers to the point where we didn’t know where we would store it all,” he said.

Brown said there’s always room at WHAM for individuals and companies seeking volunteer and teambuilding opportunities. “If you’re looking to give something back to your community and help those who are struggling and in crisis, we have a safe and supportive environment and would welcome your time and talents,” he said. “It can be a powerful, meaningful experience for reconnecting with others.”



New Hope from Old Items: Mark Brown, CEO of West Houston Assistance Ministries, and Sonya Scott, WHAM’s director of client services, stand in the middle of WHAM’s Second Blessing thrift store. Revenue from Second Blessing helps to fund WHAM’s social service programs.

West Houston Assistance Ministries

10501 Meadowglen Lane • 713-780-9942 • whammministries.org

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Alief ISD Superintendant &
Scott Muri
Spring Branch ISD Superintendant

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Account Executive Becomes Police Field Trainer

Having ditched his desk job, Officer John Reyes now trains rookie cops

With his likable demeanor and winning smile, John Reyes doesn’t seem like the kind of guy who’s always looking for trouble. Yet three days a week, the Houston Police Department officer canvases the streets of Westchase District doing just that. As a member of the Westchase District Patrol, Reyes keeps his eyes peeled for suspicious activity and opportunities to intervene in difficult situations. It can be risky work, but this former finance executive wouldn’t have it any other way.

From corporate finance to crime fighting

Reyes grew up in San Antonio with an older sister, graduating from John Jay High School and earning his bachelor’s degree in corporate finance from the University of Texas at San Antonio. After four years of working for Washington Mutual and UPS, he decided he was in desperate need of a career change. “I was tired of sitting behind a desk looking at the same pieces of paper



Keeping Multifamily Safe: *Officer John Reyes often interacts with apartment communities in Westchase District, addressing concerns and suggesting public safety improvements for properties.*

every day,” he said. “I realized there was no way I could do that for the next 20 or 30 years.” It was Reyes’ brother-in-law, an employee of the Texas Department of Public Safety, who suggested a job in law enforcement. “He always had interesting stories about his work and I decided I wanted to pursue a career as a police officer,” Reyes said.

After graduating from the Houston Police Academy in 2009, Reyes was assigned to Midwest

Patrol, working evenings and nights for five years before a year-long stint with HPD’s gang task force. “With gangs, the cases got a lot more interesting, but the hours got a lot longer,” he said. “I learned different tactics for policing and gained a lot of my investigative skills there.” For the past three-and-a-half years, Reyes has been a field trainer, taking rookie officers fresh from the academy under his wing for 15 days to mentor them in police work. “I’m teaching them about safety, policies and standard operating procedures on a lot of different situations,” he said. “It’s especially rewarding when I see some of the people I’ve trained turn into pretty good officers.”

Community and camaraderie

Reyes learned about Westchase District Patrol from fellow officer Zhen Wang. Reyes has patrolled the District for the past 18 months, first filling in for other officers and eventually working three shifts per week. “What I like about working in Westchase District is that the community is made up of mostly good people who are trying to go to work every day and do better for themselves and their families and they’re appreciative of our service,” he said. “Plus, there are some really great guys working for Westchase District, some of whom I’ve known for years,” he said. “And Don (McKinney, the District’s vice president of public safety) has been in our shoes, so he understands the stresses we deal with and it’s easy working for him.”

The best part of his job, Reyes added, is the camaraderie with his fellow officers. “When we’re working a scene together, I really feel like part of a team. The world of corporate finance was pretty dog eat dog, while police work is more of a collaborative effort for the greater good and to accomplish the police mission.”

Duty and diapers

The married father of three is juggling his training and patrol duties with studying for the sergeant’s exam this fall, all while adapting to the sleep schedule of his newborn daughter. “Right now it’s all about time management,” Reyes said. “My sons are starting to enjoy flag football and t-ball, but with my daughter, I’m starting over at square one.”

More Than a Desk and a Chair

Office Evolution joins coworking trend in Westchase District

Coworking venues now total 1.5 million square feet of the city’s available office space, according to *Forbes*. In Westchase District, companies such as TechSpace and Regus have helped transform what used to be a niche alternative to traditional office leases for start-ups and freelancers into a widely-embraced workspace option for companies of all sizes. Joining the District’s coworking offerings is Office Evolution, which opened its first Houston location earlier this year at Briar Forest Crossing, 1300 W. Sam Houston Pkwy. S.

Operating with ohana

With 76 locations (51 operating and 25 under development) in 25 states, the Denver-based company is the fourth largest coworking space franchisor in the country. It aims to provide not only flexible offices, meeting spaces and administrative services, but to create a supportive corporate culture among its members. When Fritz and Leigh Fowler – managing partners of the Houston location – were looking for franchise opportunities, they were attracted to the concept of networking with other people and helping small businesses grow.



Take Three: *(From left) Fritz Fowler; Bree Brown, business center manager; and Leigh Fowler take a quick break in the community kitchen at the new Office Evolution in Westchase District.*

“I’ve worked my entire career from virtual offices, so this just made sense,” Leigh said. “One of Office Evolution’s core values is the Hawaiian idea of *ohana*, or family, meaning we’re in this together. The company views its tenants as members. That appealed to our personalities.”

The Fowlers also found Westchase District an appealing site for their venture. “We’re right next to the beltway, which puts us in an easy in-and-out location,” Fritz said. “Plus we offer free parking and are on the first floor of

the building, so we’re easy to reach.” The 8,700 square-foot space houses 29 private offices, four dedicated desks and two conference rooms with audio-video capabilities. “You can have just the right amount of office space you need while staying within your budget, knowing that as your business grows, we can grow with you,” he added.

Interactive environment

Fritz said while some coworking spaces target startups or tech companies, Office Evolution in Westchase District caters to the professional service industry, such as independent attorneys and accountants who are looking for private office space. “We have members who are in the oil and gas and engineering sectors, as well as other franchise owners and individual consultants,” he said. “Regardless of the field, we try to make working with us simple and easy so that our members can focus on developing their core businesses.”

Leigh said the Houston location regularly hosts networking events such as lunch-and-learns featuring a mix of members and outside experts who can share their insights about business development and branding. “Even though technology allows people to work from home, there’s real value in interacting with other people, whether that’s asking for advice or referring business to one another,” she said. “Our members get to know each other in a friendly, supportive environment.”

Favoring flexibility

Shared workspaces start at \$99 per month, with dedicated workspaces starting at \$349 per month. Members also may choose live phone answering and remote receptionist services as well as a business address, private mailboxes and package reception. Each Office Evolution location has community printers, copiers and scanners, and complimentary coffee, tea and wireless internet.

“We have both month-to-month and long-term agreements and we require only a 30-day cancellation notice,” Fritz said. “We even offer conference rooms and day office options for non-members that let guests book in 15-minute increments. We find that really gives businesses the flexibility they need.”



Adjustable Amenities: *Featuring 29 private offices, Westchase District’s new Office Evolution offers its members workspace flexibility and professional decor.*

Office Evolution

1300 W. Sam Houston Pkwy. S., Suite 100 • 346-561-0612
officeevolution.com/locations/houston

(Continued from Page 1)



No Appointment Needed: Across from Randalls at 9668 Westheimer, the Urgent Doc urgent care clinic sees patients from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily.

hidden costs, the most you’ll ever pay when you visit us is \$249.” he said. “We also have a membership program, where for \$35 per month, you pay \$10 to be seen at any of our eight clinics throughout Texas. Even if you have health insurance, it can add up to big savings, depending on how often you visit our clinics.”

Cost savings, along with convenience, are what Battle said he thinks account for the success of Urgent Doc

during the past five years. “With retail medicine storefronts like ours, you don’t have to miss work and mess with appointments, parking garages or long wait times,” he said. “You’re in, you’re out and you’re on your way to feeling better.”

SignatureCare ER

If, however, you feel that you’re dealing with a life-threatening condition, then you may want to consider SignatureCare Emergency Center, a new 8,000 square-foot freestanding emergency room that recently opened at 11103 Westcheimer (at the southwest corner of Westheimer and Wilcrest Drive).

The center is staffed 24/7 with board-certified physicians and is equipped with a full laboratory, plus X-ray, ultrasound and CT equipment to treat most adult and pediatric medical emergencies. “We’re able to treat heart attacks and strokes, as well as injuries, abdominal pain, burns, pneumonia and more,” said Jennifer Bower,

SignatureCare’s facility nurse manager. “We believe we can help offload some of the workload of the busy surrounding hospitals and give people in the area access to comprehensive care without the wait. Our goal is for you to be seen within 10 minutes. Customers had to wait longer than that to be served when this was a restaurant.”

For decades, the corner building had been home to former dining spots such as Houston’s and J. Alexander’s, before SignatureCare converted it into an ER. Jennifer Martin, SignatureCare’s digital marketing manager, said repurposing the location brought considerable challenges.

“We had to stabilize the entire slab and raise the floor by 18 inches so it could withstand the weight of our radiology equipment, which sits on the old kitchen space,” she said. “Also, the building had no sprinkler system so we had to run piping from the road to the building, which meant shutting down a lane of Westheimer for almost a week in order to complete the project.”

Bower said while admissions have steadily increased since opening, some visitors have shown up simply to see what’s become of the former eatery. “We’ve had people just come in to visit and look around who’ve said, ‘Oh, I once had a drink over there!’ or ‘I had a steak on the patio,’” she said. “We tell them that while we don’t serve sirloins, we’re here to provide white-glove concierge medicine and give them quality care.”

When to choose which option

In general, urgent care is a good choice for dehydration, stitches and most primary care complaints. Emergency rooms are best equipped to evaluate chest pains, numbness or slurred speech, seizures and head or eye injuries. ER facilities may be more expensive than urgent care clinics; it’s a good idea to check first with your healthcare insurance provider and know your options before you find yourself in an urgent, or emergent, situation.

Urgent Doc Urgent Care Clinic	SignatureCare Emergency Center
9668 Westheimer Road	11103 Westheimer Road
Open daily from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m.	Open 24 hours, 7 days a week
713-597-7770	832-708-3651
urgentdoc.com	ercare24.com

Neighborhood News



Aerial image courtesy of Mark Mulligan, Houston Chronicle

Westchase District recently unveiled the latest entry to its public art collection: a **20 x 100-foot mural** commemorating the first responders and civilian rescuers who reacted bravely in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey. The mural was painted by artist Larry Crawford, who has painted three other murals along the District’s trail system and 10 “muralitos” on traffic signal control boxes near various intersections throughout the District. The “Harvey Heroes” mural is Crawford’s largest work to date and the largest mural in Westchase District.

Even pictures don't do justice to the size and scale of this piece, so you should definitely check it out in person. The mural is located along the banks of a Harris County Flood Control District channel, immediately adjacent to our Westchase District trail system at the confluence of the Brays Bayou Connector Trail and Wilcrest Connector Trail. For a quick glance at all of the public art in Westchase District, visit westchasedistrict.com/public-art.

Westchase District businesses contributed generously this summer to the **school supply drive** hosted by the Westchase District Community Fund.

More than four carloads of donated school supplies were delivered to Sneed Elementary, Paul Revere Middle School and West Houston Assistance Ministries (WHAM’s Sonya Scott



and Mercedes Santos-Garay are pictured sorting through some of their donations).

One highlight from the drive: Kongsberg Oil & Gas, 10777 Westheimer, donated a smart board to Paul Revere. Thanks to all who participated.

The demand in Houston for self-storage space continues to grow: Westchase District is home to 750,000 square feet of self-storage facilities, spread across 11 locations throughout the District, according to John D. McWilliams with CBRE. The oldest one dates back to 1975 while the most modern one, **Security Self Storage**, recently opened at 9526 Westheimer (at the northeast corner of Tanglewilde and Westheimer).

The three-story location has both drive-up and climate-controlled spaces available starting at \$39 per month for a 5' x 5' unit. The facility features computerized entry systems, LED security lighting and video surveillance. Renters receive free use of a moving truck with any new rental and they also may purchase packing supplies. Office hours are Monday - Friday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday from 1 to 5 p.m. Call them for more details at 713-266-9199.

