

COMMUNITYCONNECT

Homelessness In Houston: The Problems, Solutions & Efforts

Thursday, July 29, 2021 | 3 – 4:30 pm

Speaker Bios



Thao Costis | President & CEO | SEARCH Homeless Services

Thao Costis is President and CEO of SEARCH Homeless Services, a leading Houston agency helping people move from the streets, into jobs, and safe, stable housing. During her 25-year tenure, she's focused on how SEARCH can best help people who are homeless transform their lives, improve their health, and change how the community addresses this problem. Prior to SEARCH, she worked at the Coalition for the Homeless of Houston/Harris County where she brought together 150 not-for-profit agencies to coordinate their efforts. Thao has a bachelor's degree in accounting from the University of Texas and an MBA from University of Houston.



Marc Eichenbaum | Mayor's Special Assistant for Homeless Initiatives | City of Houston

Marc Eichenbaum serves as the Special Assistant to the Mayor for Homeless Initiatives. Marc is a licensed attorney who specializes in public policy, strategic communications, and governmental affairs. Appointed by two administrations, Marc manages the City's involvement in The Way Home, Houston's globally recognized homeless housing initiative. Since 2012, The Way Home has housed more than 23,000 individuals experiencing homelessness, effectively ending veteran homelessness and reducing overall homelessness by 55%. Marc created the city's innovative Public Intoxication Team, is at the forefront of developing holistic strategies to reduce encampments and handles a variety of behavioral health issues for the Mayor. Named by Bloomberg Cities as one of "10 Innovators Who are Raising the Bar in the Fight Against COVID-19," Marc has advised cities, from Perth, Australia and Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia to Orlando, Nashville and San Diego, on how to create transformational systems to reduce homelessness.



**Michael C. Nichols | President/CEO
Coalition for the Homeless of Houston/Harris County**

Michael has been an active participant in business and civic activities in Houston for more than three decades. After earning his bachelor's degree in History from Brown University and his Juris Doctorate from Emory University, Michael practiced law and served two terms in the Georgia House of Representatives before joining Sysco Corporation. After retirement, he joined Grocer's Supply Company as Chief Operating Officer. Michael also served as Interim CEO of the Houston Parks Board before joining the Coalition for the Homeless in January 2019. He has been married to Marcia Couch Nichols for 44 years and has four children and four grandchildren.



**Wayne Young, MBA, LPC, FACHE | Chief Executive Officer
The Harris Center for Mental Health and IDD**

As the CEO of the largest behavioral and developmental disability care center in Texas, Wayne Young oversees the planning and delivery of behavioral health and intellectual and developmental disabilities services to over 88,000 people per year and manages an annual budget of over \$270 million. Previously, Young served as the Senior VP of Behavioral Health and Administrator of Trinity Springs Pavilion and Trinity Springs North for JPS Health Network in Ft. Worth, Texas, as well as the regional ED of a managed behavioral healthcare organization and held other leadership positions within the behavioral health and insurance industries. He currently serves as the chair of the Texas Health and Human Services Commission Behavioral Health Advisory Council, and has served in leadership roles in various professional organizations including the American Hospital Association, Texas Hospital Association, Institute for Behavioral Health Improvement and Mental Health America of Tarrant County. Mr. Young holds a Bachelor of Science in Human Development and Family Studies and a Master of Education in Community Counseling from Texas Tech University, as well as a Master of Business Administration degree with a concentration in Healthcare Administration from University of Dallas. He is a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC), a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC), and a Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives (FACHE).