



June 2017

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## President's Message



### What the Hail Is Going On?

Coming out of a recent meeting to discuss some not-so-good news regarding wind & hail insurance coverages, I sat at my desk and contemplated what to do next. I thought, "Surely I'm not the only one going through this." So, I picked up the phone and within an hour I had discussed my issues with two well-respected colleagues in public risk management. While further contemplating strategies for moving forward, I reviewed presentation materials and notes taken during a conference seminar on the property insurance market. By the end of that day, I had a plan ready to discuss with my supervisor and was comfortable recommending what our next steps should be.

As I sat down to write this President's Message, I thought back to that recent situation and realized it could have been much more difficult without the knowledge and relationships I have gained during my time as a member of Texas PRIMA. I hope many of you could tell the same story, or one similar, because that is what Texas PRIMA is all about. As an organization, we constantly work toward strengthening the quality of risk management through continuing education and providing members the opportunity to exchange ideas and consult with one another. If you're struggling with a difficult work task, don't forget about the resources available through Texas PRIMA. It's what we are here for.

Speaking of education and networking opportunities, I was pleased to be able to attend our recent Regional Risk Management Seminar in Grand Prairie. There was something for everyone, with topics covering drone liability, body cameras, cyber liability, driving safety, and return to work. With one of our largest groups ever in attendance, the biggest complaint was there were so many people in the room that it felt cramped. When your biggest problem is needing to find larger venues to accommodate expanding numbers of attendees, you must be doing something right! If you can

make it to one or both of our up-coming regional seminars, I highly recommend it. The next one on the agenda will be in San Marcos on June 22nd with Corpus Christi to follow on July 20th. We hope to see you there.

Of course, don't forget to make plans to attend our main event - the 2017 Conference & Expo. As we continue to sail toward kicking it off in November, I ask that you think about any program accomplishments you may have had this past year and consider telling your story as a presenter in a conference session. Our call for presentations is currently open and accepting submissions for session topics. Also, we are always looking for deserving risk management professionals and programs for one of our Risk Management Awards. Visit the Texas PRIMA website and send in those nominations because we love recognizing our members.

Finally, I would like to close this letter by thanking all our members and sponsors who do so much to help Texas PRIMA thrive. Your constant support provides motivation for the board to continue improving Texas PRIMA and sustaining it as an organization you can be proud of. Thank you!

John Palm  
2017 Texas PRIMA President

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## Eliminating Risk With Robust Return to Work Programs

by Michele Punturi, Esquire, and Michelle M. Leighton, AIC\*

A well-structured return to work program is one of the most effective ways to manage, and even reduce, the costs associated with a workers' compensation claim, while efficiently improving an employee's recovery after an injury. All parties can benefit from a highly successful return to work program. Employees re-enter the workforce in a meaningful job, earning wages and maintaining job status with the company. Employers reduce the amount of time that their workers are absent and eliminate the costs of retraining other workers to fill the positions. Unions keep their members employable. Health care providers have another tool at their disposal to timely aid in an injured worker's recovery. Each phase of the four-step program sets the foundation for desirable return to work outcomes.

[\[click here\]](#) to read the full article]

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## Local Jurisdictions: Are You Financially Prepared for a Disaster?



As emergency managers in Texas, we tend to focus on mitigating, preparing and responding to emergencies and disasters from an operational perspective. Seldom do we do the same for the fiscal side of emergency management, with areas such as recovery often becoming an afterthought. With today's economy, fiscal responsibility needs to be considered at the beginning of the disaster, not at the end. Finance is part of all phases of emergency management and we should be concerned with much more than just how to respond to

disasters. We should also be concerned with how much the disaster costs and if our local jurisdictions have the tools they need to track, calculate and justify those costs.

The Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM), along with the Governor's Office, has committed to ensuring that local jurisdictions have the tools necessary to financially recover from a disaster.

[\[click here\]](#) to read the full article]

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## Exemplary Leadership in Risk Management

by Jason Hardy

There are countless books, TED Talks, seminars, and opinions on leadership. There are people out there who only consider those with certain titles leaders. The clear majority of the people in the world do not consider themselves a leader. The idea is out there that for a person to be a leader that they must have certain traits that make them a leader. Hundreds of years ago a person would have been considered a candidate for leadership if they were tall, strong, have a loud booming voice, handsome, etc. The reality today is that just because a person has certain traits does not make them an exemplary leader. Brent Kelly in an article that was featured in Property Casualty 360° shares about his leadership exploration. "I thought that 'true' leadership was awarded, appointed or assigned. I thought that leadership only came with an impressive title or position." He goes on to further say that anyone who has influence is a leader. Peter Northouse defined leadership "as a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal."

With this in mind, everyone can be a leader.

[\[click here\]](#) to read the full article]

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## Members on the Move

### **Congratulations to Texas PRIMA Members:**

Melanie Hill, ARM, Risk Manager for City of Grapevine on her ARM designation in December 2016.

Robert C. Warren, CRM, Risk Manager, Human Resources for City of Arlington on his designation as Certified Risk Manager (CRM).

Samantha West, Risk Administrator for City of Frisco on her promotion from Risk Management Analyst to Risk Administrator.



Donna James-Spruce, Risk Manager, accepted the National Safety Council's, 2017 Our Driving Concern Texas Employer Traffic Safety Award, in recognition of the Port's outstanding commitment and leadership in the area of traffic safety and being an example for Texas employers statewide. Other recipients include; City of Arlington, Dallas ISD, City of Irving, City of San Antonio, and City of Waco.

### **Welcome New Texas PRIMA Members:**

Jessica Alaniz, Risk Coordinator, Del Mar College

Phillip Davis, MPA, Risk Administrator, City of Baytown

Angela Flores, Risk & Safety Specialist, City of La Porte  
Hiawatha Franks, Division Director WC Claims Administration, Texas Association of School Boards, Inc.  
Russell Julian, Executive Director, Dallas Fort Worth Aerospace Training League  
Cynthia Knape, Risk Manager, Texas City ISD  
Reyna Pyka, Executive Assistant/Subrogation Specialist, City of Grand Prairie  
Olivia Romo, HR Generalist, City of Mansfield  
Elizabeth Soto, PHR, HR Director, City Harlingen Water Works System  
Johnny Vera, Risk Specialist, City of Edinburg  
Tyler Williams, Safety Coordinator, City of Frisco  
Lety Yanez, CEBS, PHR, Human Resources Director, City of Wylie  
Georgina Ybarra, Risk Manager, City of Pearland

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## **Texas PRIMA's 28th Annual Conference Scholarship Program**

The scholarship application process for Texas PRIMA's 28th Annual Conference at The Moody Gardens Hotel and Conference Center in Galveston, Texas, November 12-15, 2017 will be here before you know it. There are many deserving people who may not be aware of the scholarship program Texas PRIMA offers. We are encouraging members to get the word out to any of your public entity colleagues and clients who might qualify. The scholarship program is designed to assist risk management professionals whose public entity might not be able to afford the cost of attending the Annual Conference. Full and partial scholarships will be awarded and may include up to the following:

- Conference Registration Costs
- Costs related to attending the conference, including travel and lodging at the conference hotel
- Complimentary membership in Texas PRIMA through 2018

This will be our 6th year to include scholarship donation opportunities for our sponsors. It has been a huge success and their generosity has enabled us to bring more recipients to the conference than ever before! We look forward to their support again this year and topping last year's recipient numbers.

Look for an email at the end of July with specific details to include the application process. Applications will be accepted July 21 through September 5.

We appreciate your help in spreading the word about the Texas PRIMA 28th Annual Conference and scholarship program.

Donna Parker Stirman  
Scholarship Chair

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## **Regional Risk Management Seminars**

Don't miss these Texas PRIMA Regional Risk Management Seminars. These events provide great networking and educational sessions to further the development of those in the field of Risk Management for public entities! Please feel free to share this with your peer groups in these regions who may benefit from attending. Agendas and are posted on the links below.

[Thursday, Jun 22, 2017](#)  
[Central Texas \(San Marcos\)](#)

[Thursday July 20, 2017](#)  
[South Texas \(Corpus Christi\)](#)

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## Texas PRIMA Awards Program

Nominations are being accepted for Texas PRIMA Awards! Texas PRIMA recognizes excellence among its risk management members with three awards:

**Risk Professional of the Year** and **Rising Star Award** honor individuals who exemplify the title through continual innovation and commitment to the Risk Management field.

**Risk Program Achievement Awards** honor public entities with creative and successful risk management programs.

Winners receive a complimentary conference registration and are recognized at the awards luncheon during Texas PRIMA's annual conference in November. Winners will also be recognized in the Texas Chapter's "PRIMA Press" newsletter.

Visit <http://www.texasprima.org/awards> to learn more about the Texas PRIMA Awards Program and how to apply.

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## Sponsor Highlight



### **UnitedHealthcare** – A Recognized Leader in the Health Care Industry

As a recognized leader in the health and well-being industry, UnitedHealthcare's mission is to improve the quality and effectiveness of health care for all Americans, enhance access to health benefits, create products and services that make health care more affordable, and use technology to make the health care system simpler to navigate.

Under the UnitedHealth Group family of companies, UnitedHealthcare and its sister company Optum deliver innovative products and services to approximately 70 million Americans, and to over 5 million in Texas alone. Using industry-leading data and analytics we help cities, counties and school districts; along with other public entities, determine the best way to improve member health and save money. We offer solutions to our customer's needs that are distinctive; including our dedicated customer service health advocates (Advocate4me), integrated analytical program (Health Plan Manager) and innovative digital wellness program (Rally). Our weight-loss program (Real Appeal) has a member satisfaction rate of 95% and is our newest innovation to improve member health.

In addition to our medical, pharmacy and wellness offerings, we provide a broad range of specialty products and services designed to meet your needs as well as those of your members. Our suites of products include Dental, Vision, Life, Disability and Financial Protection products.

We offer an extensive nationwide network of physicians, hospitals and other healthcare providers; including 67,400 providers under contract including 514 hospitals in Texas alone. Our UnitedHealth

Premium® program is a national quality initiative that informs members about physicians who meet quality and cost efficiency guidelines based on national standards. Our NexusACO suite of products offers national tiered plan design options with the added value and quality driven by collaborating with a select group of Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs) including our many ACO partners in Texas.

UnitedHealthcare understands the unique challenge Texas public sector employers face in controlling the cost of health benefits and simplifying the health care experience for consumers. We are proud of the 16,000 full-time employees who live and work in Texas and we are committed to our public sector partners' mission to improve the health care experience for all. For more information, call UnitedHealthcare or your broker partner.



**York Risk Services Group** is proud to be a Platinum sponsor of Texas PRIMA. York Risk Services Group's Texas Team continues to believe in and support the mission of Texas PRIMA to strengthen the quality of public entity risk management through continuing education and networking. We have been a proud supporter of Texas PRIMA since its inception, and over the past decade, this support has been reflected in our sponsorship at the platinum and diamond levels, funding scholarship opportunities, volunteering to help with conference planning, and providing industry expert speakers at the regional and annual conferences.

York Risk Services Group provides leading-edge integrated claims, managed care and risk management solutions to Public Entities. We have a deep understanding of risks in Texas, and that allows us to develop claims solutions that are tailored to the specific needs of Texas Public Entities. We deliver the expertise and resources of the third largest TPA through local relationships, custom solutions and accountability at all levels. Whether you are looking for workers' compensation administration; managed care; property and liability administration; pool program administration; loss control; or a reinsurance intermediary, York is the long-term partner you seek.



**AS&G Claims Administration, Inc.** is the nation's premier provider of claims administration services to the public risk sector. For 33 years, they have been a single source provider of workers' compensation, general liability, automobile liability, professional liability and property claims expertise to local governments and municipal organizations. AS&G has 7 offices in Texas and 16 offices nationwide that service the Gulf Coast, South East and Mid-Atlantic states. Their goal is to reduce clients' costs through proactive claims handling and experienced decision making. AS&G's dedication is to deliver quality service that exceeds expectations.

**Thank you Sponsors!**

**Platinum**

McGriff Seibels & Williams of Texas, Inc | York Risk Services Group | TRISTAR | Aetna | AON

### **Diamond**

AS&G | UnitedHealthcare | CIGNA | Surplus Lines Stamping Office of Texas | Old Republic

### **Gold**

Texas Political Subdivisions, JSIF | Munich RE | Safety National | Midwest Employers Casualty Company | OneBeacon Government Risks | Vantage Benefits

### **Silver**

Silver | Arthur J. Gallagher Risk Management Svc, Inc. | TASB Risk Management Fund | Texas Association of Counties | TML-IRP | Travelers | HCA Asset Management, LLC | AIG | Davis Vision | Frost Insurance Agency | Duff & Phelps | Injury Management Organization, Inc | Humana Genesis Mgt & Insurance Svc, Inc. | Select Physical Therapy | 1-2-1 Claims | First Financial | Trident | Medical Consultants Network | Claims Administrative Services | Drivecam powered by Lytx | CHUBB | CCMSI | Trinity Review Services | Delta Dental Insurance Company | Origami Risk | PMOA, Inc | Carlisle Insurance Agency, Inc. | Commercial Risk Services | Absolute Data Processing | Mitchell Pharmacy Solutions Comp Today | Meridian Investigations Group | CHSI Technologies | ICA | Texas Drug & Alcohol Testing | Riddell Sports

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## **Letter from the Editor**



I spent a lot of time contemplating whether or not I should run for the PRIMA board. As part of my research, I asked several former board members to convince me why I should throw my hat in the ring. Ironically, I received a common response from each: “You will form a bond with people who will always have your back.” I’ve been on the board now for six months, and if I were asked the same question today, I would strongly agree. Let me explain.

After my first newsletter, I gained a little experience, felt a bit more confident, and decided to move closer to perfection. As life tends to do, a curve ball was thrown at me but that was not going to get me down.

First, David Parker found a fabulous article on Local Jurisdiction: Are you Financially Prepared for a Disaster? Shortly after he submitted the article to me, he notified me that he accepted a new position out of state. We wish him success and hope that he continues to keep in touch with his Texas PRIMA peeps.

Toward the end of May, my other committee member informed me that work has him spread thin and it wouldn’t be fair to us if he continued on our communications committee. Such is life in the hectic risk management arena. Each of us can certainly empathize! BUT, the clock is ticking, the deadline is approaching, and we were in search of one more article. So, what’s a girl to do but ask for help? I sent a quick email to a few board members and heroes arose.

Jason Hardy quickly stepped up to the plate and personally authored a resourceful article titled “Exemplary Leadership in Risk Management.” This article reignited my fire to continue toward the high standards to which I hold myself and the programs I administer. I’m certain the article will do the same for you.

On a side note, if you’re looking for another endeavor to fill your “other duties as assigned list,” please see the advertisement below.

Wanted: A fun-loving, creative member of a public entity possessing a stable relationship with

letters, words, and punctuation.

Perks: Experience, credit toward a resourceful newsletter read by many of your peers, and new relationships with loyal friends.

Pay: Plenty of kudos and a feather in your cap.

If you are interested, please contact me at [msteger@utsystem.edu](mailto:msteger@utsystem.edu)

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## Board of Directors

John Palm III, ARM, President

Donna James Spruce, ARM, President Elect

Donna Parker Stirman, Immediate Past President

Gilbert Sanchez, Past President

Norma Martinez, Secretary

Cindy Conyers, CRM, Treasurer

D. Jason Hardy, CSRM, Director

Leslie Milvo ARM, AU, Director

Melissa Steger, Director

Lesley Ward, Director



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