

PRIMA PRESS

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR OUR MEMBERS

texasprima.org
Texas Chapter Public Risk Management Association

June 2020

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President's Message: Look for the Silver Lining...



A popular 1920's song titled "Look for the Silver Lining" includes the words:

"A heart full of joy and gladness, will always banish sadness and strife, so always look for the silver lining and try to find the sunny side of life."

In my first newsletter article of the year, I mentioned we were "Roaring into 2020." Little did we know what was ahead and how life was about to change. What a whirlwind of a few months it has been since COVID-19 (Coronavirus) hit the United States, Texas, and our very own communities. The 1920's saw its own share of challenges and 2020 is proving to be no different. We are truly living in extraordinary times, which in turn requires an extraordinary response. Our organizations have been put to the ultimate test to quickly create new policies and procedures, implement and manage telework solutions, respond to a multitude of questions and scenarios, navigate new legislation and make tough decisions regarding cancellations, closures and staffing levels. We've been doing all of these tasks while adjusting to a "new normal" both at work and at home and trying to search for the silver lining in our current situation.

While the country, state and our local communities are navigating the many phases of reopening, we begin to face new challenges such as budget constraints, limitations on the size of gatherings and the way we interact with our families, friends and colleagues. Texas PRIMA is committed to being a resource for you during these uncertain times.

We have experienced excellent attendance for our first three webinars of the year, which included timely information on COVID-19 and its impact on Texas Workers' Compensation. If you did not get a chance to listen to the webinars "live," please visit the Member's Only section on the Texas PRIMA website to view the archived recordings. More webinars are planned in the coming weeks and months, so be on the lookout for more information to hit your inbox soon! I'd also like to encourage you to visit the Community Forum section on the Texas PRIMA website for various COVID-19 resources. The Community Forum is an excellent place to ask questions and get answers from your colleagues and to share your struggles or successes.

National PRIMA recently awarded our chapter and one of our leaders with two outstanding awards. The Texas Board of Directors nominated Melissa Steger (UT System) for the 2020 Chapter Service Award for her dedication to the board and the association. Melissa spearheads our Webinar Committee and does an excellent job planning and executing these educational opportunities. She has also been nominated as President-Elect for the National PRIMA Board. We are so proud of her and look forward to her leadership at the national level! In addition, Texas PRIMA was also awarded the 2020 Chapter Recognition Award for our webinar series. Webinars are a great way for us to provide hot topic information and to continuously engage with you, our members, throughout the year....until conference.

Speaking of the Texas PRIMA Annual Conference...this is the pinnacle of the year, the time where we get together as colleagues and friends to network, learn, and have a little fun. It is a time for us to celebrate accomplishments, discuss best practices, and be among this profession's brightest minds. You may be wondering what the annual conference will look like this year given the circumstances surrounding the Coronavirus pandemic. The Board of Directors has virtually convened on several occasions in recent weeks to make decisions on moving forward with our annual conference. After a lengthy discussion, considering feedback from the membership and financial implications, the board has decided to move forward with a hybrid conference. While we are not yet exactly sure what this will look like, we do know this will allow those members and corporate partners who are still able to travel, to actually be in San Antonio at La Cantera in November. There will also be a virtual component to the conference which will allow those with travel or budget restrictions to still take part in the conference to some degree. The board is committed to giving attendees the best experience possible, whether it be in-person or virtually, given the circumstances and in the safest manner. We will continue to monitor the situation as conference gets closer and we will keep you apprised of any new developments.

Be sure to follow us on Facebook and LinkedIn, and check your emails for updates about upcoming events. We look forward to "seeing" you in November, whether in person or virtually. Stay safe and stay connected! We will get through this together and we will Put the Glitz in Risk...just six feet apart!

Lesley Ward
2020 Texas PRIMA President



**SAVE THE DATE FOR
"COFFEE TALK"
WITH TEXAS PRIMA!**

*Friday, July 10, 2020
9:00-9:45 am*

**Come take a virtual coffee break with
your fellow Texas PRIMA Members!
We will have a few discussion items,
and a ton of FUN!**

**Space is limited. Register by June 19, 2020
to receive a surprise in the mail prior to
this virtual event!**

*Members only opportunity

[REGISTER HERE!](#)



Save the Date: November 8-11, 2020
Texas PRIMA Annual Conference - La Cantera Resort & Spa
Registration opens August 1st

As we continue to monitor the pandemic and its effects, we are also continuing to plan our 2020 Annual Conference both live in San Antonio and virtually through our new Learning Management System. While we cannot control the uncertainty that we are all feeling as COVID-19 sweeps the globe, we want to do all we can to ensure you can confidently plan to join us this fall. We will continue to monitor the situation and will keep you updated should conference plans change in the coming months. For now, stay safe and healthy! We hope to see you in November at La Cantera Resort!

Reserve your hotel room now!

[Public Entity Hotel Reservation Link](#) - This link is for the Public Entity employees only!

[Corporate/Risk Pool Hotel Reservation Link](#) - This link is for Corporate or Risk Pool (non-Public Entity) employees.

Texas PRIMA Educational Programs

Regional Risk Management Seminars



The Texas PRIMA Education Committee remains committed to providing educational opportunities during these uncertain times. We made a few scheduling changes, to better serve the needs of our members, by postponing our June Regional Risk Management Seminar to August 5, 2020.

We will continue to monitor the situation with COVID-19 and research the best ways to adapt

to provide the training opportunities and educational resources our members need. This includes looking at in-person and virtual options to reach some members who may not be able to travel. There is no doubt it has been a challenging year, but I know that we will emerge stronger and better than ever!

We hope to see you at one of the Regional Risk Management Seminars this year.

- [Central Texas \(Austin\)](#) - Wednesday, August 5, 2020
- North Texas (Dallas) - Date and Time: TBD

I would like to recognize this year's Education Committee members who have been very busy in their various risk management roles at work, as well as dealing with the challenges at home, and still finding the time to put together our educational opportunities. I am honored to work with such a committed team of Risk Management professionals. This year's education committee members are:

Jason Hardy, Workforce Services Manager, City of Irving

Robert Warren, Risk Manager, City of Arlington

James Alvarez, Risk Specialist, Travis County

Leslie Milvo, Risk Manager, City of Austin

Briana Perez, Safety Coordinator, City of Corpus Christi

Melissa Ledesma, Safety and Risk Coordinator, City of Sugarland

Victoria Viggers, Asst. Director of Employee Benefits, El Paso Community College

Lou Moore, Benefits and Wellness Manager, City of Lubbock

Jaime Decantillon, Director of Risk Management & Insurance, Cy-Fair ISD

A big thank you and I look forward to our continued work together this year!

A friendly reminder to please follow us on Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, and Twitter to keep up with information on upcoming regional seminars, webinars, and all that is happening with Texas PRIMA!!

Belinda Raindl

Education Committee Chair

Webinars

Texas PRIMA has hosted three webinars so far this year. The April webinar addressed the General Risk Management -Property Insurance Market. In May, Mark Galley with Think Reliability taught us to "Be a Better Problem Solver: Learn to Analyze, Communicate & Prevent Issues at Work." The webinar committee added a bonus webinar on COVID-19 and Its Impact on Texas Workers' Comp which was heavily attended.

Below are upcoming webinars so you can make plans to attend.

6/10 at 9:30 a.m.

[Insight into Coronavirus Aid – Keys to Understanding the Benefits and Limitation of Available](#)

[Federal Funding](#)

6/24 at 10 a.m.

[Texas Workers' Compensation and The Impact of Medicare – Marty Cassavoy with ExamWorks Clinical Solutions](#)

7/21 at 10 a.m.

[Penetrating the Cone of Silence / Communication with Police and Fire – Dean Coughenour, National PRIMA Speakers Bureau](#)

8/11 at 10 a.m.

[Ethical Hazards of Workers' Compensation – Matt Ward with Medical Equation](#)

I know everyone's schedule is a little hectic right now. If you missed one of these sessions, they are available in the member's only section on the [Texas PRIMA website](#) for viewing at your convenience.

Melissa Steger

Webinar Committee Chair

Take Safety as Your Partner

Because of COVID-19, my life looks different today than it did yesterday. I would imagine almost everyone's life – everyone's world, in fact – is somewhat different than it was just a couple of months ago. No one could have predicted how quickly this pandemic would spread, nor how much it would mirror a rollover car crash in the sense that it has turned almost everything we do upside down.

Crashes happen in a blink of an eye and have many of the same life-altering effects as this virus, not only for the victims, but also their loved ones. As we focus on our health and how we return to work safely, we should also focus on items we once took for granted, such as driving, and view them through a different lens. I think we can agree road safety should move up a level or two in our hierarchy of what's perceived as important.

I tend to view things through a safety lens, whether the task is driving, or something else involving work, or my personal life. What lens do you use? How can you take advantage of these circumstances to build a better tomorrow? Let me suggest you double-down on safer driving choices and work to promote safe driving behaviors during meetings or conversations with friends and co-workers.

We know that total injury costs from crashes drain hundreds of billions of dollars from the U.S. economy annually, including medical expenses, wage and productivity losses. Now more than ever, I see this as a needless waste, and as we try to find our way moving forward, I see an opportunity for change.

Mental distractions are not going away. People are struggling to put food on the table and pay their bills. Their minds are racing. Behind the wheel, that poses a risk. Distracted drivers are dangerous drivers. You can lead by speaking in an empathetic voice and involving employees in decisions that impact their health and wellbeing.

That includes safety – at work, at home and on the roads. While traffic volume has diminished during this pandemic, there has been a nationwide surge in speeding and reckless driving incidents. Evaluation policies and procedures take on greater importance as this is not business as usual, not yet. Slow down. So you can live in this moment and the next.

Driving too fast makes it harder to react in dangerous situations and increases the force of impact during crashes. Buckle up – every person, every seat, every time. It's your best defense in a crash. Talk about risks associated with fatigue and the importance of sleep-health.

Being awake for 18 to 24 hours can have the same effect on your body as alcohol impairment. Adults need seven to nine hours of sleep to reach peak performance levels. A good night's sleep can reduce stress levels, increase memory and lower your blood pressure.

Today, it is more important than ever you are on top of your game, whether working from home, in the office or sitting behind the wheel. Think of safety as a compass leading you on a journey. There is no reason to get lost or to even crack open the door and let more risk seep into your life.

Lisa Robinson

Senior program manager with the National Safety Council and head of the Our Driving Concern Texas Employer Traffic Safety Program

Texas PRIMA Awards Program

Who's the Bee's Knees in Risk Management? You or some of your colleagues are! Don't let those Sockdollagers go unnoticed and unrecognized. It's that time, take a moment to spotlight an individual or Risk Management Program by nominating yourself, or a colleague, for the Risk Professional of the Year, the Rising Star, or the Risk Management Program Achievement Awards.

Risk Professional of the Year – Recognizes an individual who exemplifies excellence, innovation, and commitment to the risk and insurance management field.

Rising Star – Honors someone with 2-7 years of professional experience in the risk and insurance management industry who exemplifies leadership potential, and professional development.

Risk Management Program Achievement Awards – Celebrates programs, projects, or products that are creative and highlights the success of our public entity organizations.

The successful award recipients are recognized at the awards celebration during Texas PRIMA's annual conference in November at La Cantera Resort in San Antonio, Texas. Additionally, recipients will receive a wall plaque and recognition in the PRIMA Press newsletter. **The Risk Professional of the Year and the Rising Star recipients both receive complimentary conference registration and hotel accommodations for one night during the conference.**

So get your Cake Walk on and visit www.texasprima.org/awards for more information to nominate yourself, someone else, or a program. **Application deadline is September 1, 2020**, so get hopping! If you have any questions give me a shout at donna@pocca.com.

Donna James-Spruce, A.R.M.
Awards Chair

Conference Scholarship Program

The scholarship application process for Texas PRIMA's 31st Annual Conference at La Cantera Resort in San Antonio, Texas, November 8-11, 2020 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 related to attending the conference, including travel and lodging at the conference hotel
- Complimentary membership in Texas PRIMA through September 2021
- Virtual conference registration

This will be our ninth 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 each year. As a former scholarship recipient of Texas PRIMA, the growth I experienced due to the generous donations of our sponsors was invaluable in my own professional growth. We look forward to their support again this year and to topping last year's recipient numbers. Look for an email in August with specific details to include the application process. Applications will be accepted through September 13th. We appreciate your help in spreading the word about the Texas PRIMA's 31st Annual Conference and scholarship program: www.texasprima.org/scholarship

*Jason Hardy
Scholarship Chair*

Board Nominations

Want to be an active advocate and ambassador for the Texas Chapter PRIMA membership? Our organization provides board members with a stellar opportunity to continue to be a leader and help us shape our Risk Management world. If you want to champion the importance of our organization, "put your name in the Glitz and Glam hat".

The Nominations and Elections Committee will soon be soliciting nominations to serve on the Texas PRIMA Board. To be eligible, a nominee must be a member of Texas PRIMA with responsibility for risk management functions, insurance, benefits and/or safety management within your governmental entity. Board members are also required to attend four board meetings throughout the year and also our annual conference. Travel and hotel costs for attending the board meetings is paid by the association. Consideration for election includes experience, demonstrated leadership, participation in the Chapter and a proven commitment to the organization and the profession.

The Board is made up of two Past Presidents, four Officers (President, President Elect, Secretary and Treasurer) and Four Directors at Large. This year we are seeking to fill two Director Positions. Announcements for nominations begin in August 2020, the deadline to submit your name is in September 2020 and elected board members are announced at Texas PRIMA's Annual Conference in November 2020. The Board terms commence in January.

Hope you can find the GLITZ and SPARKLE in August 2020 for the announcements from Texas PRIMA and nominate yourself or another colleague to serve and encourage the pursuit of excellence for our membership. This opportunity will also provide invaluable experience that is impressive on any resume, all while providing networking opportunities with other risk management professionals.

We are available to discuss any questions you may have. Contact Texas PRIMA at info@texasprima.org or by phone at 512-394-0719.

*Norma Martinez
Nominations & Elections Committee Chair*

Welcome New Members

Kenneth Colston, Risk Manager, Midland County
Yesenia Ennis, Assistant Human Resources Director, City of Pharr
Lillian Everson, Student, UHD
Maria Garza, Claims Specialist, City Of Brownsville
Sherri Hathaway, Risk Manager, Victoria Independent School District
Helena La Fleur, Risk Manager, Texas Military Department
Iris Martinez, Risk Analyst I, San Jacinto River Authority
Nina Reyes, City of Garland

Keep Texas PRIMA members informed by sending your "Members on the Move" updates to our newsletter, PRIMA Press. Tell us about your new position, promotion or designation. Send submissions to info@texasprima.org.

Sponsor Highlight



McGriff is proud to be a Platinum sponsor of Texas PRIMA. McGriff, a division of Truist, is the 5th largest insurance brokerage firm in the world with over \$2 billion in annual revenue. The Truist family has over 55,000 employees and over \$470 billion in assets. The McGriff Texas operation is the largest provider of insurance and risk management services to Public Entities in Texas.

With offices in Houston, Dallas, and San Antonio, McGriff specializes in providing Commercial Property & Casualty, Employee Benefits, and Risk Management consulting services for Texas Public Entities. The staff dedicated to Public Entity accounts has a broad range of experience including former Public Entity risk managers and Texas PRIMA board members who have "walked in the shoes" of Texas Public Entity risk professionals.

The experienced professionals at McGriff take advantage of relationships throughout the global insurance marketplace to obtain the best coverage available at the best price for our Public Entity clients, even in the most challenging market conditions. McGriff utilizes in-depth knowledge, experience, and resources to help our clients find solutions for a full range of risk management and benefits needs. The goal of McGriff is to establish long-term partnerships with our clients by providing top-notch service, inspiring customer confidence and trust.

McGriff congratulates the success of Texas Chapter PRIMA as the premier organization providing education, training, and resources for Public Entity risk professionals, and we appreciate the opportunity to be a long time partner of this organization.



Aetna is one of the nation's leading diversified health care benefits companies. We serve an estimated 46 million people with information and resources to help them make better health care decisions. We offer a broad range of traditional, voluntary and consumer-directed health insurance products and related services. These include medical, pharmacy, dental, behavioral health, group life and disability plans. We also offer medical management services, Medicaid health care management services, workers' compensation administrative services, and health information technology products and services. Our customers include employer groups, individuals, college students, part-time and hourly workers, health plans, health care providers, government-sponsored plans, labor groups and expatriates.



The Surplus Lines Office of Texas (SLTX) administers the State of Texas' excess and surplus lines insurance marketplace with meaningful data, compliance, and educational resources to support the growth and viability of specialty insurance.

Thank you Sponsors!

Platinum

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Diamond

AS&G | Aetna | UnitedHealthcare | CIGNA | SLTX | Injury Management Organization, Inc | PMA Companies | AWPRx

Gold

Texas Political Subdivisions | Munich RE | Midwest Employers Casualty Company | Safety National | Carlisle Insurance Agency, Inc. | Pate Rehabilitation | Lockton Dunning Benefits | RediMD | RWH Myers & Company

Silver

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