

Pathways 2020 Speakers/Presenters

<p>Dr. Courtney Amor, Orthopedic Surgeon</p> 	<p>Dr. Amor has lived in Houston, Texas since 2007. He completed his training in Orthopedic Surgery at Baylor College of Medicine. Prior to beginning practice, Dr. Amor elected to pursue an additional year of subspecialty training in disorders of the hand and upper extremity at Texas Children's Hospital and Shriners Hospital for Children, which gave him a special understanding of hand and upper extremity problems affecting children and babies. Dr. Amor specializes in treating disorders of the hand, wrist, elbow, and shoulder. This includes fractures, dislocations, tendon injuries, nerve injuries, arthritis, and sports injuries. He focuses on the optimal non-operative management for conditions that do not require surgery, and can sometimes offer arthroscopic or minimally invasive options when surgery becomes necessary. Dr. Amor joined the faculty of the University of Texas Medical School at Houston in 2013 as an Assistant Professor. He is a proud SBAI father of three sons.</p>
<p>Tia Gibson, Interior Designer</p> 	<p>Tia Gibson is the Owner and Lead Designer of D. Claire Designs. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Finance from University of Houston-Clear Lake and a Master of Business Administration (MBA) from Texas A&M University-Commerce, graduating with a perfect 4.0 GPA from both universities. Tia's professional experience consists of 8 years in pharmaceutical sales and 4 years in marketing and business development with Chick-fil-A. She has a wealth of experience in customer service, operational processes, and business management. Her portfolio of awards is extensive and her consistent attention to detail has aided in her success across multiple industries. She is a member of the American Society of Interior Designers (ASID) and an active member of many local organizations to continue her development.</p>
<p>Dr. Steve Lockless, Microbiologist/Professor</p> 	<p>Steve Lockless is an Associate Professor in The Department of Biology at Texas A&M University. Lockless earned his PhD. in Biophysics at UT Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas, creative software to analyze large sequence data sets. He then completed post-doctoral work in Neurobiology and Chemistry at the Rockefeller University in New York City. In 2009, Dr. Lockless started his own NIH-funded research program to study microbial ion channels in the Department of Biology at Texas A&M University. Dr. Lockless is also an advisor for Othram, Inc., the first technology company to apply all the power of modern sequencing and genomics in a forensics environment.</p>
<p>Branden Gibson, Franchise Owner</p> 	<p>Branden Gibson is the CEO and Founder of Ashford Unlimited LLC which operates Chick-fil-a Restaurants in Houston, Texas. He holds a B.B.A. in Finance from Abilene Christian University and a M.B.A. from Texas A&M University-Commerce. Branden came to Chick-fil-A after a successful and award winning career in medical device and pharmaceutical sales. After honing his skills with Owner/Operator Matt Michaels, he was selected as the Operator of Chick-fil-A Wesley Chapel Road in Atlanta in 2012. In 3yrs at Wesley Chapel Road, Branden and his team were among the top performers in the Southeast Region. In June 2015 he relocated to the Houston Market at the Chick-fil-A at Westheimer and Fondren. Branden and his wife Tia are from Houston, TX. In June they will celebrate 13 yrs of marriage. They have two beautiful daughters, Kaitlyn Diane (8 yrs old) and Karrington Claire (5 yrs old).</p>
<p>Cheri Thomas, Attorney</p> 	<p>Cheri Thomas is currently running to become a Justice on Texas's Fourteenth Court of Appeals. An honors graduate of the University of Texas School of Law, Cheri has practiced civil litigation at Baker Botts, LLP and Stuart PC. Cheri has also worked as an attorney in the courts, supporting federal and state judges. Cheri was named a "Rising Star" in Texas Super Lawyers magazine for five years and was recently named a Fellow of the Texas Bar Foundation (which is comprised of the top 1/3 of 1% of Texas attorneys). Mrs. Thomas is also a proud SBAI mother.</p>

<p>Holly McAfee, Attorney</p> 	<p>Holly McAfee graduated from The University of Texas with a bachelors in Psychology and a Minor in English, and continued to the University of Texas School of Law. After spending several years defending Wyeth pharmaceuticals in civil product liability lawsuits related to a particular vaccine preservative, she desired a position that would provide more courtroom litigation experience. She transitioned to criminal law enforcement and worked her way up as a prosecutor in the Travis County District Attorney's office in Austin - from handling truancy and traffic citations in municipal court, to a specialized position handling misdemeanor family violence cases, and eventually managing a docket of over 250 felony cases. With the trial experience gained as a prosecutor, she eventually felt equipped to begin a private practice focused on the cases that had originally drawn her to law school - representing families and children in child protective cases. After moving to Houston, she paused her practice to focus on her three daughters, one of whom is a SBAI student.</p>
<p>Andrea Cody, Dancer/Choreographer/ Dance Company Owner</p> 	<p>Andrea Cody has worked in the arts for over thirty years for audiences including Microsoft, Coca-Cola, Dance of Asian America, Texas Dance Educators Association, University of Houston, Citgo, Camden, and Grantmakers in the Arts. She is a graduate of St. John's School with a bachelor's degree in the humanities from the University of Chicago where she studied dance theory, history and composition as well as music and economics. She is the executive producer of <i>H-Town Get Down</i> and <i>Swing, Baby, Swing!</i> at Miller Outdoor Theatre and <i>Celebration of Dance</i> at The Wortham Center. She learned dance from Margo Marshall School of Ballet, Houston Ballet Academy, Carnell Pipkin, and NEA National Heritage Fellows Frankie Manning and Norma Miller. She is also a proud SBAI mom.</p>
<p>Sonja Gee, CEO of MAM Non-Profit</p> 	<p>Sonja Gee was born and raised in Houston's Westchase area by her father who immigrated from China, and her mother who immigrated from Germany. She graduated from Rice University with a degree in Sociology, and Stanford University with a Master of Education, and then gained valuable experience in a variety of non-profit contexts before joining Memorial Assistance Ministries (MAM) as President & CEO. MAM was founded in the early 1980s and has grown from a small food pantry to the largest provider of social services in west Houston, serving a huge diversity of needs ranging from small to large. In 2019, MAM staff and over 2,000 volunteers supported more than 25,000 people working to build stronger and healthier lives and families.</p>
<p>Ms. Monica Pope, Chef</p> 	<p>Ms. Pope's father was in the Army, so she and her brother were born in Nuremberg, Germany and grew up in Houston. She shares her passion for connecting local farmers and consumers with weekly cooking classes, an online cookbook and several restaurants. Ms. Pope has also enjoyed national recognition in the form of a James Beard award nomination and a spot competing on 2010's second season of Bravo's <i>Top Chef Masters</i>. She is the only Texas woman chef to be named Best New Chef by <i>Food & Wine</i> magazine thanks to her inventive, "eat where your food lives" cooking style.</p>
<p>Maria Quesada, Chemical Engineer</p> 	<p>Born in Venezuela, Mrs. Quesada obtained a Chemical Engineering degree from Colorado School of Mines. She worked for Shell as a production technologist. In Scotland, she got a Master's Degree in Petroleum Engineering and worked for 12 years as a Production Engineer. In London, she continued working in Production Engineering. Production engineering is a combination of manufacturing technology, engineering sciences with management science. A production engineer typically has a wide knowledge of engineering practices and is aware of the management challenges related to production. She is married, and is the proud SBAI mother of two children.</p>

Alejandro Primera,
Petroleum Engineer



Alejandro Primera holds a Petroleum Engineering degree from “Universidad Central de Venezuela” and Postgraduate diploma from Heriot-Watt University in UK. He has developed his career in numerical reservoir simulation applied to development of conventional and unconventional oil and gas fields, with experience in the UK, Italy, Venezuela, Colombia, Mexico. In 2013 and after few years of experience in Schlumberger and later in ENI UK, he started the consultancy firm Primera Resources, focusing on decision making under uncertainty, reservoir management and enhanced oil recovery. He was also a consultant for Nexen (now CNOOC Intl.) in projects like Buzzard field redevelopment in the North Sea. He is founder and Managing Director for Primera Resources and co-founder and Executive Director for PetroleumUX LTD. He has volunteered for different Society of Petroleum Engineers (SPE) roles internationally and within the London section such as London Section chair, Continuing Education chair. He has contributed in other international roles and initiatives on the technical arena within the Society, leading the Reservoir Monitoring committee for the two SPE annual technical conference and exhibition, the most recent in Dubai 2016. He was awarded the North Sea regional and also international Young Member Outstanding Service Award by the (SPE)

Johnny Bravo,
Radio Personality



Johnny Bravo is from Houston, Texas and he has a passion to see people reach their highest potential. This is by fundraising, entertaining and connecting people. Johnny is a Licensed Auctioneer and professional member of several auctioneer organizations. He showed commitment and dedication in grade school by graduating with Perfect Attendance from Kindergarten through 12th grade. Also known as Johnny B, he started working in radio, MC'ing events, modeling and acting around 18 years of age. His radio career includes working at 104.1 KRBE. To date, Johnny Bravo has traveled around the United States and beyond MC'ing events including beauty pageants and boxing matches. Currently, Johnny Bravo is a live Disc Jockey for clients, consults with other radio DJ's and has national voiceover clients.