



**CONTACT**  
**Elizabeth Hale**  
**Communications Manager**  
[ehale@bakerripley.org](mailto:ehale@bakerripley.org)  
**832-963-3678**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**3/25/2024**

**BakerRipley Announces the 2024 Board of Directors -  
Highlighting Impactful Contributions and Diverse Expertise**

HOUSTON – BakerRipley, a leading nonprofit organization dedicated to transforming communities across Houston and beyond, is proud to showcase the dynamic leadership and diverse expertise of its Board of Directors. Each board member brings a unique set of skills and a shared commitment to fostering positive change within the community.

**Board Officers**

**Gwen Emmett**, Chair of the Board, has been an instrumental figure on BakerRipley's Board since 2011, as chair beginning in 2018. Gwen's dedication to the health and well-being of Harris County's citizens is evident through her involvement with various health-focused organizations. Her efforts are directed towards creating a healthier community by supporting preventive care and programs aimed at enhancing the quality of life for every citizen.

**Matt Barnes** brings over 25 years of experience in leading educational initiatives and philanthropic efforts. Matt's visionary approach to education reform and parental engagement has been crucial in adapting learning models to meet 21st-century challenges. His commitment to empowering parents and students through "The Education Game" platform underscores his innovative contributions to education.

**Irma Diaz Gonzalez**, President and CEO of ETC, has been a force in workforce development and business leadership in Houston since 1987. Her leadership roles, including chairing the Houston Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and Mi Familia Vota Texas Chapter, reflect her significant impact on the community and her dedication to advancing economic and workforce opportunities.

**Hank Holmes**, Chief Banking Officer at Cadence Bank, has contributed significantly to the organization's growth and strategic development since joining in 2011. His expertise in banking and finance, coupled with his community involvement including his role at BakerRipley, enriches the organization's mission to serve the community effectively.

**Caroline Baker Hurley**, with her distinguished career as a judge and her ongoing commitment to education and community service, exemplifies leadership and dedication. Her involvement in various educational and community initiatives showcases her commitment to making a positive impact on society.

**Tommy Inglesby**, Managing Director at Accenture, stands out for his two decades of leadership in the energy sector. With a background that includes significant roles a

Halliburton and McKinsey & Company, Tommy's vision for vibrant communities through education has made him an invaluable asset as the Board Chair for Teach for America in Houston. His dedication reflects a profound belief in the transformative power of education.

**Heather Simpson**, with her leadership experience in the Junior League of Houston and involvement in numerous community organizations, brings a wealth of knowledge on volunteerism and community service. Ms. Simpson also maintains an ownership interest in Vaughn Construction, a family-owned general contractor business. Her commitment to community improvement through leadership roles in various nonprofit organizations aligns with BakerRipley's mission.

### **Board Directors**

**Coalter Baker**, Senior Director for Public Policy at the Greater Houston Partnership, brings a wealth of experience in public and nonprofit sectors. His deep roots in Houston and commitment to community improvement have driven his efforts to uplift diverse communities. Coalter's background in history and business administration fuels his strategic approach to public policy and community engagement.

**Allison O. Bashir** is known for her expertise in employment law, diversity, and inclusion. As the Vice President, Human Resources, of Community Health Choice, Allison's mission to foster an empowering work environment complements BakerRipley's values of inclusivity and community upliftment. Her dedication to creating spaces where conversations flourish has made a significant impact.

**Warren Broadnax**, CEO of She's Happy Hair, embodies the entrepreneurial spirit that drives community transformation. His journey from firefighter to leader of a nationwide business exemplifies resilience and dedication. Through the She's Happy Foundation, Warren extends his impact by mentoring youth in entrepreneurship and social responsibility, aligning closely with BakerRipley's community empowerment goals.

**Eloy Cortez**, a stalwart in the labor movement and community service, brings a unique perspective from his extensive experience with the International Longshoremen's Association. His dedication to volunteerism and service on numerous boards, including as chair for the Houston East End Chamber of Commerce, showcases his commitment to enhancing community welfare and labor rights.

**Rakhee Das**, Owner of Das-Strategies, is a technology and innovation strategist who has been instrumental in fostering long-term innovation within established organizations. Her board membership reflects a deep understanding of how technological advancements can be leveraged for community benefit, aligning with BakerRipley's commitment to progress and efficiency.

**Jeff Dudderar**, Senior Vice President and Houston Market President at Home Bank, brings over two decades of experience in banking operations and commercial banking. His involvement in various community and professional boards, including BakerRipley, underscores a commitment to financial stewardship and community development.

**Julia Engelbrink**, shows dedication to community service and education, as demonstrated through her volunteer work and involvement in youth outreach programs, and reflects the values at the heart of BakerRipley. Her family's longstanding support of BakerRipley highlights a generational commitment to community service and development.

**Christopher Greeley, MD** is Chief of Public Health Pediatrics at Texas Children's Hospital. Dr. Greeley contributes his medical expertise and passion for child welfare to the BakerRipley board. His leadership in pediatric public health and dedication to preventing child abuse and neglect are vital to BakerRipley's mission of nurturing healthy, thriving communities.

**David Hawes**, Managing Partner of Hawes Hill & Associates LLP, is a consultant with a rich background in municipal government and community development. His experience in managing special purpose districts and his role in creating safer, prosperous communities resonate with BakerRipley's objectives of neighborhood improvement and engagement.

**Roberta Leal, Ph D**, an assistant professor of social work at the University of Houston-Clear Lake, brings a personal and professional dedication to immigration and health disparities. Her work in social work education and field education, combined with her community involvement, strengthens BakerRipley's focus on supporting vulnerable populations through informed, compassionate outreach.

**Tina Q. Nguyen** is a trial lawyer specializing in complex commercial matters as a partner at Baker Botts. Nguyen enhances the BakerRipley board with her legal acumen and commitment to civic engagement. Her work in energy litigation and her active involvement in the Houston legal and business communities complement BakerRipley's commitment to integrity and excellence.

**Crystal Ortega**, a passionate advocate for parent engagement in education, embodies the spirit of volunteerism and community service. Her leadership as the Early Head Start / Head Start Policy Council Chairperson and her active involvement in her children's education and community events exemplify the core values of BakerRipley.

**Barrett Reasoner**, a partner at Gibbs & Bruns LLP, brings a wealth of legal expertise and a deep commitment to community service. His leadership roles in various legal and community organizations, including his service on BakerRipley's board, demonstrate a dedication to justice and community development.

**Jeremy Samuels** represents a family legacy of charitable work and community service. His leadership in the Evelyn Rubenstein Jewish Community Center and involvement in various educational and social justice organizations highlight his commitment to making a meaningful impact in the lives of Houstonians.

**Tom Sanders**, with his background in business development and volunteerism, exemplifies a lifetime of service and community engagement. His longtime leadership on the BakerRipley board and involvement in various community initiatives reflect a deep commitment to community betterment and volunteerism.

**Emily Sheeren**, a Partner at ghSMART, brings her expertise in leadership assessment and development to BakerRipley. Her work in executive coaching and succession

planning, along with her dedication to early childhood education through the Small Steps Nurturing Center, underscores her commitment to leadership excellence and community service.

**Ray Valdez** has decades of experience in community and volunteer leadership that enhances the BakerRipley board with a focus on equity, safety, and inclusivity. His advocacy for the Latino communities and dedication to fostering positive change align with BakerRipley's mission of community transformation.

**Carleton Riser**, President of Transwestern Development Company, contributes his extensive experience in real estate development to the BakerRipley board. His leadership in creating dynamic, sustainable communities through thoughtful development projects parallels BakerRipley's vision for vibrant, inclusive neighborhoods.

BakerRipley is honored to have such a distinguished group of leaders guiding its mission to connect, empower, and transform communities across Houston and beyond. Their diverse backgrounds and shared dedication to service drive the organization's continued success and impact.

For more information about BakerRipley and its programs and initiatives, visit [BakerRipley.org](http://BakerRipley.org).

#####

### **About BakerRipley**

BakerRipley brings resources, education, and connection to nearly half a million people throughout Texas each year. For more than a century, BakerRipley has offered innovative solutions to uplift and empower underserved communities as they pursue opportunities that create new and better lives for themselves and their families. BakerRipley is a United Way Agency partner. To learn more visit [www.bakerripley.org](http://www.bakerripley.org). #BakerRipley