



## 54TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE - ANOTHER SUCCESS

On December 10 - 12, 2008, Texas Vital Statistics, with co-sponsor Texas Public Health Association, hosted the 54th Annual Texas Vital Statistics Conference in Austin at the Renaissance Hotel. This professional conference was attended by 466 individuals from across Texas with an additional 133 staff members, speakers, and volunteers. Attendees included local registrars, county and district clerks, justices of the peace, hospital and birthing center staff, midwives, funeral home directors and their staff, and Medical Examiner staff. The theme, *Crossroads: Creative Collaboration in Transitional Times* reflected Vital Statistics' goals of both bringing more partners together in working toward improved vital registration across the state and moving all vital registration partners to electronic submission of records. There were 14 vendors, who were busy sharing, educating, and marketing to attendees the entire conference.

This year the conference moved from a Sunday through Tuesday format to a Wednesday through Friday format. The greatly improved first-day attendance and the comments received indicate appreciation for the change.

The keynote speaker Dr. Donald Patrick, former executive director of the Texas Medical Board, presented an informative, humorous, and inspirational speech. Dr. Yvonne Howze, Section Director of Health Information and Vital Statistics, provided our Awards Luncheon Address and entertained and motivated everyone. The State Registrar Geraldine Harris, the Office of Attorney General, and ImmTrac presented Five Star and numerous special awards. Award winners are listed within this newsletter.

The Conference held 48 breakout sessions, with topics focusing on such issues as: TER, passports and fraud, registration and issuance, delayed records, statutes and rules, document fraud and identity theft, paternity issues and certification sessions, ImmTrac, Twogether in Texas, Medicaid and perinatal issues, Disaster Planning, news from the Mexican Consulate, HIPAA, Medical Examiner's death certificate dilemmas, funeral home ethics and law, remote access to birth certificates, enrolling in TER, overview of the Master Registrar Certification Course, and a review of the VSU website. Speakers included staff from Field Services and other areas of VSU, as well as presenters from DSHS, other state and federal agencies, funeral home staff, county clerks, medical examiner, the Mexican Consulate, and other vital registration partners.

VSU wishes to thank the Texas Public Health Association for their help making the conference a success. Our speakers are appreciated for their valuable information and education for our attendees. And, many thanks to the numerous volunteers from VSU, without whose help, this conference would not have been possible.

### 2009 Regional Conferences Are Confirmed!!

June 16<sup>th</sup> - Lubbock  
June 18<sup>th</sup> - Tyler  
June 23<sup>rd</sup> - Kerrville  
July 14<sup>th</sup> - Corpus Christi

Be watching for the registration form on our website and in the next VS Today newsletter. For additional information, go to [www.texasvsu.org](http://www.texasvsu.org). We hope to see you this summer for lots more learning!



# 2008 TEXAS VITAL STATISTICS FIVE-STAR AWARD WINNERS

## EXEMPLARY FIVE-STAR LOCAL REGISTRARS

Abilene-Taylor Co  
Public Health District  
City of Austin  
City of Lewisville  
City of San Marcos  
City of Victoria

Comal County Clerk  
Dawson County Clerk  
Donley County Clerk  
Grayson County Clerk  
Guadalupe County Clerk  
Hood County Clerk

Jackson County Clerk  
Kerr County Clerk  
Van Zandt County Clerk  
Waco-McLennan Co  
Public Health District  
Williamson County Clerk

## RECOGNIZED FIVE-STAR LOCAL REGISTRARS

Austin County Clerk  
Bell County Clerk  
Brazoria County Clerk  
Brown County Clerk  
City of Amarillo  
City of Arlington  
City of Baytown  
City of Beaumont  
City of Bedford  
City of Brownsville  
City of Carthage  
City of Denison  
City of Edinburg  
City of Fort Worth  
City of Harlingen  
City of Houston  
City of Lubbock  
City of McAllen

City of Mission  
City of Pasadena  
City of North Richland Hills  
City of Temple  
City of Weslaco  
Collin County Clerk  
Comanche County Clerk  
Cooke County Clerk  
Deaf Smith County Clerk  
Fort Bend County Clerk  
Frio County Clerk  
Galveston Co Health District  
Gregg County Clerk  
Hamilton County Clerk  
Hunt County Clerk  
Kaufman County Clerk  
Llano County Clerk  
Madison County Clerk  
Midland County Clerk

Mitchell County Clerk  
NE Texas Public Health District  
Parker County Clerk  
Polk County Clerk  
Rockwall County Clerk  
Rusk County Clerk  
Scurry County Clerk  
San Antonio Metro Health  
District  
Smith County Clerk  
Tarrant County Clerk  
Taylor County Clerk  
Tom Green County Clerk  
Waller County Clerk  
Ward County Clerk  
Washington County Clerk  
Wise County Clerk  
Wichita Falls Public Health  
District

## FIVE-STAR HOSPITALS/BIRTHING CENTERS/MIDWIVES

Baptist St. Anthony's Health Systems  
– Amarillo  
Baylor Medical Center at Frisco  
Baylor Medical Center at  
Waxahachie  
Baylor Regional Medical Center at  
Grapevine  
Brownsville Doctors Hospital  
Brownwood Regional Medical Center  
Cedar Park Regional Medical Center  
Christus Santa Rosa Hospital  
– New Braunfels  
Columbus Community Hospital  
Corpus Christi Medical Center  
– Bay Area  
Daughters of Charity Health Services  
of Austin – Brackenridge  
Daughters of Charity Health Services  
of Austin – Seton Northwest  
Daughters of Charity Health Services  
of Austin – Seton Southwest  
Denton Regional Medical Center  
Goodall-Witcher Healthcare  
Foundation  
Graham Regional Medical Center

Harlingen Medical Center  
Harris Methodist HEB  
Harris Methodist – Erath County  
Harris Methodist Southwest  
Henderson Memorial Hospital  
Hill Country Memorial Hospital  
Houston Northwest Medical  
Center  
Knapp Medical Center  
Lake Pointe Medical Center  
Lamb Health Care Center  
Las Colinas Medical Center  
Las Palmas Medical Center  
Medical Arts Hospital  
Medical Center of Lewisville  
Medical Center of McKinney  
Medical Center of Plano  
Medical City Dallas Hospital  
Memorial Hermann  
– Katy Hospital  
Memorial Hermann  
– Southeast Hospital  
Memorial Hermann – Sugar Land  
Memorial Hermann  
–The Woodlands

Methodist Mansfield Medical  
Center  
Methodist Willowbrook Hospital  
Nacogdoches Memorial Hospital  
North Central Baptist  
Ochiltree General Hospital  
Palestine Regional Medical Center  
Permian Regional Medical Center  
Presbyterian Hospital Greenville  
Providence Memorial Hospital  
San Jacinto Methodist Hospital  
Scott & White University Medical  
Center  
Sierra Medical Center  
Southwest General Hospital  
St. David's Medical Center  
St. Luke's Baptist Hospital  
Texoma Medical Center  
Tomball Regional Hospital  
University Health System  
Uvalde Memorial Hospital  
Valley Baptist Medical Center  
– Brownsville  
W.J. Mangold Memorial Hospital

# 2008 TEXAS VITAL STATISTICS FIVE-STAR AWARD WINNERS

## FUNERAL HOME AND MORTUARY SERVICE

All Faiths Funeral Services – South  
Brookehill Funeral Home  
Broussard's Mortuary – Beaumont  
Broussard's Mortuary – Nederland  
Callaway-Jones Funeral Home  
Claybar Funeral Home, Inc. – Orange  
Cook-Walden Davis Funeral Home  
Davis-Greenlawn Funeral Chapel  
Davis-Morris Funeral Home  
Ellis Funeral Home – Midland  
Garza Memorial Funeral Home  
Grimes Funeral Chapels – Kerrville  
James Crowder Funeral Home – La Marque  
Joe Jackson Heights Funeral Chapels  
Joe Jackson North Funeral Home

Kerrville Funeral Home, Inc.  
Mission Park Funeral Chapel – South  
Niето-Dickey Funeral Home  
Porter Loring Mortuary – San Antonio  
Providence Funeral Home  
Restland Funeral Home  
Schmidt Funeral Home – Katy  
The Gabriels Funeral Chapel  
The Settegast-Kopf Co. at Sugar Creek  
Trevino Funeral Home – Brownsville  
Victoria Mortuary Services  
Weed-Corley-Fish Funeral Home, LTD.  
Winscott Road Funeral Home  
Wright's Funeral Parlor

## SPECIAL VITAL REGISTRATION AWARDS

Texas Vital Statistics offices saw many changes in 2008. With two pieces of legislation from the 2007 session taking effect, a large part of our state being hit by a major hurricane, and all areas of the state impacted by financial downturns, VSU needed help and support in many areas. The following people and their businesses made major contributions to their community and the business of vital registration in a variety of ways. Geraldine Harris, State Registrar, expressed our appreciation for their extra effort and honored the following in front of their peers at the annual conference.

Nellie Hymel, Broussard's Mortuary, Beaumont

Jamie Jewell, Dignity Memorial Funeral Providers,  
Grand Prairie

Sandy Castillo, Wellmed, San Antonio

William E. Piet, Porter Loring Mortuary, San Antonio



## 2008 CERTIFIED MASTER REGISTRARS

The Master Registrar Certification Course allows local registrars to both expand their knowledge of the statutes, rules, and regulations that guide registration practices and to become more familiar with the processes and with the people who work at the State Vital Statistics Office. The following individuals have completed the Master Registrar Certification Course curriculum and assignments, and have demonstrated mastery in Texas vital registration.

Geoffrey Agueze, VSU  
Cynthia Brown, VSU  
Gloria Caraway,  
Gregg Dep. Co. Clerk  
Laura Castillo,  
City of Victoria  
Gena Jiral,  
City of Yoakum  
Janie Madero,  
City of McAllen

Sally Oubre,  
Hood County Clerk  
Teresa Price,  
Titus County Clerk  
Anedrya Price,  
City of Dallas  
Eli Puentes, VSU  
Joan Strawn, VSU



## Correct Process for Filing a Complaint with the Texas Medical Board

VSU staff and many of its partners are engaged in efforts to encourage and assist Texas' 15,000 medical certifiers to enroll and utilize the TER system to certify death certificates. In some situations, funeral directors have filed complaints about medical certifiers with the Texas Medical Board (TMB) either for delays in certifying death certificates or for not filing the certificate electronically. Joan Donley at TMB has been helpful in providing the best process for filing these complaints.

When filing a complaint, refer to a *specific* death certificate and provide the EDR number in the complaint. If the doctor does not use TER for *any* death certificates, then only provide information about one specific death certificate. Using the complaint form on the TMB website ensures the correct processing of your complaint. Keep in mind that due to jurisdictional restrictions TMB investigates a complaint when a doctor does not use TER to file a death certificate; it cannot be concerned with whether or not a

doctor is enrolled in TER. TMB has investigated *many* doctors for not completing death certificates in a timely manner and can investigate doctors for not utilizing TER to certify deaths. These investigations ensure that TMB meets its primary responsibility to its clients – the families of the deceased, in this situation – in as fully a manner as possible.

VSU congratulates Mari Robinson, J.D., who became the Executive Director of the Texas Medical Board on March 1, 2009. Ms. Robinson has served as the Interim Director since October, and prior to that was the Director of Enforcement with TMB. She spoke at our annual conference in December regarding the Fast Track Complaint Process and her continued partnership is greatly appreciated by Field Services and the Vital Statistics Unit.

To see more information on the complaint process, visit the TMB website at [www.tmb.state.tx.us](http://www.tmb.state.tx.us).

*Vital Statistics TODAY* (UPS 016-976) is published quarterly by Texas Vital Statistics, Department of State Health Services, 1100 West 49th Street, Austin, Texas 78756-3191.

Periodicals Postage paid at Austin, TX POSTMASTER. Send address changes to *Vital Statistics TODAY*, Texas Vital Statistics, Department of State Health Services, P.O. Box 149347, Austin, Texas 78714-9347. Publication Number 35-12604

David Lakey, M.D.  
Commissioner



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[www.texasvsu.org](http://www.texasvsu.org)

### TRAINING

To request training in your area go to  
[www.requestTERtraining.texasvsu.org](http://www.requestTERtraining.texasvsu.org)

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