



2022 SAM HOUSTON AWARD RECIPIENTS

Nina and Edd Hendee

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Nina Hendee is a native Texan with a passion for the history of our great state. She was born in Dallas, and developed her love of Texas history at a young age. Edd attended the University of Houston and grew up in the Bellaire area. His restaurant career began at a young age. Edd was a manager with the Steak 'n Ale restaurant chain where he met and married Nina. Declining a move with Steak 'n Ale away from Texas, they made the jump as independent restaurant owners.

Nina and Edd own and operate the Taste of Texas in Houston, which they began in 1977. The restaurant has gained local and national acclaim for exceptional food and impeccable service. In 1984, with America's corporate downsizing and the fall in the oil industry, the restaurant needed a new concept for survival. The Hendee's embraced the Certified Angus Beef® brand and doubled sales in three years. In 1991, they constructed their own building, leading to a 300-seat hotspot and fame as the top volume independent restaurant for Certified Angus Beef® middle meats in the world.

The Taste of Texas employs over 200 young people and values the development of their leadership skills. Students are encouraged in their academic endeavors by flexible scheduling; grade bonuses of up to \$400 a semester, a scholarship program, and a strong commitment to personal and academic excellence.

Nina started her speaking career with area school children sharing her love of Texas and its rich history. Approximately 13,000 Houston area students look forward to the Taste of Texas field trip each school year where they hear great tales of our Texas forefathers, tour the restaurant, and enjoy a lunch, compliments of the owners. Nina is now sharing her love of Texas history with 2nd generation students whose parents came as 4th graders! An active member of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo's Speakers Committee, Nina has won the coveted "Mega-Mouth" Award. She has been involved with the HLSR for over 25 years.

She and her husband Edd enjoy traveling and cycling. While staying very active in politics, the restaurant business, numerous charities and Second Baptist Church of Houston, Nina and her husband Edd find their greatest joy in their children, Lisa and husband Chris Blackard and granddaughters Hannah, Elizabeth & Maddie, Kristin and husband Corbin Blackford and grandson Henry, and granddaughter Annie, son Kyle and Wife Erin Poulson and granddaughter Grayson and grandson Jackson, and their daughter in law, Claudine and her husband David Hartland and grandchildren, Campbell, Hudson and Reagan and Sam & Conrad Hartland.