

MAYOR JAMES THOMPSON

SUGAR LAND'S NEW MAYOR SPEAKS
PROUDLY ABOUT THE CITY
AND HIS FAMILY

Written By Jennifer Nevarez

With a mixture of optimism, fortitude, and determination, Sugar Land Mayor James Thompson speaks about his plans for the future for the City and its residents. The strong exterior of the Air Force Veteran quickly changes into gentleness as he candidly speaks about his three children and his beloved wife.

THIRTY YEARS OF PUBLIC SERVICE

Mayor Thompson is no stranger to public service. During his 30 years as a Sugar Land resident, he has been appointed, elected, and has even volunteered in several different public service roles. Thompson became the first ever elected community member to be on the Fort Bend Municipal Utility District #12, which organized the first water and wastewater service provider for the initial development of First Colony. Afterward, he was appointed by County Judge Joe Stefanelli to the Fort Bend County Commissioner's Court. Here he worked as part of the Fort Bend Levee Improvement District #2 where he served 15 years and helped build the infrastructure of First Colony. From 1996 to 2005, Mayor Thompson served both as a District and At-Large council member on the Sugar Land City Council and was part of several endeavors, such as the creation of Town Square, the establishment of the University of Houston campus in Sugar Land, and the expansion of Highway 59 to name a few. In 1985 he founded and is the president of TEAM Associates, Inc., a manufacturer's representative sales agency servicing the industrial and contractors supply distributors in the markets of Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Louisiana. But his goals and aspirations for the city of Sugar Land and its residents don't stop there.

CHALLENGE UP AHEAD

The biggest challenge on the horizon for Mayor Thompson is the Cultural Entertainment District, which includes a baseball park and concert hall that will seat anywhere from 6,000 to 7,000 people. However, this new arena will not use property taxes to fund the venue and intensive traffic studies will be conducted to assure that there will be no negative impact on the neighbors. "I can assure you if you come to First Colony Mall during Christmas shopping, there are more than 6,000 parked there," chuckles Thompson. The other project and task he is focusing on is the successful redevelopment of the Imperial Sugar site. Thompson considers these projects the two largest impacts on the community.

The mayor moved here in 1978 when the population was less than 12,000. Managing the increasing population of the city has definitely been a task for the mayor. "The first two months seems like it's been two years, but it's been the most enjoyable time I've had and probably the busiest. But my expectations were not unrealistic about the job. I knew it would be a time demand," says Mayor Thompson.

FAMILY DEVOTION

"I'm most proud of our family, and our three great kids Michael, 32, Tara, 28, and Meredith, 24. They are all in their own respective careers and in today's environment that's not easy to do," says Mayor Thompson. "Sugar Land is a great environment to raise a family and has great school systems." All three of his children were active in sports. His son Michael played baseball,

Mayor Thompson with his wife Gay and their children Michael, Tara, and Meredith



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his daughter Tara participated in softball, and his youngest Meredith was a swimmer and went to college on an athletic scholarship. His wife Gay is in her 25th year as director of the Sugar Creek Baptist Church Preschool. She has been recently appointed by the county judge to the Fort Bend County Library Board. They have been married for 37 years. "Great communication and a common focus on family I think is one of the things that keeps you together and our first passionate goal was the kids."

Golfing and hunting are among his favorite hobbies, but considers his profession to be his true hobby. He recently got back from a hunting trip to Argentina and also enjoys spending time at his family's lake house on Canyon Lake. "It's where the family can spend time together in a social setting other than just the major holidays," says Thompson.

TAKE THE NEXT STEP FORWARD

"Take the Next Step Forward" was Mayor Thompson's campaign slogan, and with the new projects he is focusing on, he is definitely on his way toward making our beloved city an even more enjoyable and pleasant community that will continue to thrive. "If we can keep the same momentum going, keeping it one of the safest cities, one of the best cities to live in, and a diversified city, then we want to continue on that same path," says Thompson. SLM

JENNIFER NEVAREZ is the editor of Sugar Land Magazine and an expecting mother of a little boy to be named Dawson James Ho.

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