

Newsletter

Texas Association for Institutional Research

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

President's Message	1
Executive Committee	3
2013 Program Committee	3
Elected Committees	3
Appointed Committees	3
Vice President's Message	4
TAIR Workshops	5
TAIR-L Listserv	6
Data Advisory Committee Update	8
Galveston Island	9
Jossey-Bass and Wiley Discount	9
Moody Gardens	10
Special Event	11
Travel Grants	11
Call for Nominations	12
Important Conference Information	12
Future Conferences	12

A Letter From Your President Carol Tucker



The Texas Association for Institutional Research (TAIR) continues to provide opportunities for professional development and information-sharing for institutional researchers from all over the state. Most recently, TAIR held a well attended summer workshop in San Marcos. Thank you to Tom Corll, TAIR Member at Large for Professional Development, who organized the workshop and also to the TAIR members who prepared and presented the sessions. Tom has already booked the same location for August 2013 and is already making preparations.

Providing information and being a resource to our members is also being accomplished by the TAIR Data Advisory Committee (DAC). They've created a data dictionary that will be available to all members once it is published. This new publication is talked about in more depth in the DAC update on page 8 of this newsletter.

Membership in the TAIR organization has many benefits. One that is available year-round is inclusion in the listserv. This tool enables you to reach out to others when you have a question or problem you need to address for your campus. As we all do more with less, this tool is even more valuable and I encourage you to take advantage of it. With so many campuses and years of experience represented in our organization, there is a wealth of expertise to draw upon just an email away. Please note that while your TAIR membership makes you eligible for the listserv you must initiate your subscription to it. More information on how to do so is available on page 6 of this newsletter.

TAIR membership also allows you to pay reduced registration fees for the TAIR summer workshop and annual conference.

Continued on page 2

These are all very valuable benefits, and for the low annual fee of \$25.

The best value for TAIR members is attendance at the annual conference. It is our largest and most encompassing professional development opportunity of the year. Susan Thompson, TAIR Vice President, and the Program Committee have been hard at work preparing for the conference. This year's theme, "Developing Knowledge from Strands of Information", touches on what we all do for our institutions and will have a number of sessions available for you to choose from. In addition to the sessions, the committee has lined up two general session speakers to provide us with further knowledge and inspiration. Early registration continues through December 31. To help ensure that cost doesn't prevent members from being able to attend, TAIR is again sponsoring travel grants. The deadline to apply is December 15 and application instructions are available on the TAIR website. See page 11 for more information.

The conference will conclude with the annual business meeting. At this meeting we will conduct TAIR business, including voting on changes to the by-laws that will be presented to the membership prior to the conference. These by-laws help to guide our work each year and the changes are to clarify a few items that the Executive Committee noticed in our work this year. Another guiding document, the Officers Guide, is used by both the Executive Committee and the Program Committee to carry out their responsibilities and has been updated extensively by Darline Morris and last year's committee members. Thanks to their efforts, having this document updated each year helps the subsequent committee members in their work and records best practices and recommendations from year to year.

We could not do any of what we do without our members. TAIR is completely run by volunteers who generously give their time. I would like to personally thank everyone who is serving TAIR in any capacity; we couldn't do it without you! We have many opportunities to get involved; I would like to encourage you to consider contributing your time and expertise. It is a great way to meet and interact with fellow IR professionals around the state and we all benefit from the help. If you have questions or are unsure how to get involved, please contact me or any member of the Executive Committee.

I look forward to seeing you in Galveston! Please feel free to contact me if you have questions or suggestions for TAIR.

Sincerely,

Carol Tucker, TAIR President



Photo courtesy of Catherine Brown

TAIR 2013 Program Committee

VP and Program Chair	Susan Thompson, Texas State University – San Marcos
Concurrent Sessions Evaluations	Faron Kincheloe, Baylor University
General Sessions	Mary Barton, University of North Texas
Local Arrangements	Pam Haws, The University of Texas at Arlington
Brochure	Marilyn Greer, The University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center
Registration/Secretary	Tracy Stegmair, Richland College
Vendor Contact	Sue Herring, Baylor University
Roundtables	Marcelo Paredes, The University of Texas – Pan American
Special Interest Groups	Lisa Haynes, Texas Woman's University
Session Coordinators	Lincoln Holmes, The University of Texas at Austin
Workshops/Prof Develop	Amy Bawcom, Central Texas College
Technology	Tom Corll, Midland College
	Dave Downing, University of North Texas

Elected Committee

Nominating Committee

Darline Morris, Postsecondary Consultant -- Chair
Lincoln Holmes, University of Texas at Austin
Phil Rhodes, Houston Baptist University
Danielle Texera, Rice University
Marcelo Paredes, University of Texas – Pan American

Appointed Committees

Data Advisory Committee

Martha Oburn, Houston CC System -- Chair
Public Universities: Vicki West, Texas Tech University
Colby Stoever, Texas A&M – Corpus Christi
Dean Williamson, Prairie View A&M University
Roy Matthew, University of Texas – El Paso
Private Universities: Sue Herring, Baylor University
Phil Rhodes, Houston Baptist University
Community Colleges: Kathy Friedrich, College of the Mainland
Tom Corll, Midland College
Technical Colleges: Ben Cox, Texas State Technical College – Waco

Professional Development Committee

Tom Corll, Midland College -- Chair
Brian Cordeau, University of Texas – San Antonio
Kara Larkan-Skinner, Amarillo College
Phil Rhodes, Houston Baptist University
Tracy Stegmair, Richland College
Amy Bawcom, Central Texas College
Colby Stoever, Texas A&M – Corpus Christi

Awards Committee

Darline Morris, Postsecondary Consultant -- Chair
Members to be selected

Financial Review Committee

Jim O'Donnell, Eastfield College -- Chair

Executive Committee

President

Carol Tucker

University of Houston – Downtown
Houston, Texas
(713) 221-8269
TuckerCa@uhd.edu

Vice President

Susan Thompson

Texas State University – San Marcos
San Marcos, Texas
(512) 245-2348
susan@txstate.edu

Secretary

Sue Herring

Baylor University
Waco, Texas
(254) 710-8836
Sue_Herring@baylor.edu

Treasurer

Linda Perez

Houston Baptist University
Houston, Texas
(281) 649-3391
lperez@hbu.edu

Members-at-Large

Professional Development

Tom Corll

Midland College
Midland, Texas
(432) 685-5540
tcorll@midland.edu

Technology

Dave Downing

University of North Texas
Denton, Texas
(940) 369-5290
dave.downing@unt.edu

Immediate Past President

Darline Morris

Postsecondary Consultant
Whitney, Texas
(254) 694-2267
dbaldwin@hillsboro.net

Newsletter Editor

Catherine Brown

University of the Incarnate Word
San Antonio, Texas
(210) 832-2114
cshays@uiwtx.edu



A Letter From Your Vice President **Susan Thompson**

“Galveston, oh Galveston, I still hear your sea winds blowin’...” (from the song, “Galveston”, written by Jimmy Webb and recorded by Glen Campbell, released in 1969).

The 2013 TAIR conference is shaping up to be a great one! I am excited to share with you some preliminary information about the conference, as your program committee has been hard at work to ensure that you have a wonderful conference experience, filled with excellent professional development experiences and opportunities to network with your colleagues.

The TAIR 2013 conference will be held February 11-13 at the Moody Gardens Hotel, a world-class hotel situated among 240+ acres of magnificent gardens and attractions. This conference will mark the 35th time TAIR members have joined together for an annual conference, and we have some special treats planned to observe TAIR’s 35th birthday.

One treat is the Special Event; this year we will have an opportunity to attend the fun and colorful Fat Tuesday parade on the Strand and follow it up with a very special dinner in one of Galveston’s finest restaurants by the bay; see the Special Event notice on page 11 of this newsletter for additional details.

Another treat is a present from TAIR to you: everyone attending the TAIR conference will receive a special t-shirt commemorating TAIR’s birthday. When you register for the conference online, you will be asked to provide your preferred t-shirt size. Be sure to provide the information requested so that your t-shirt will be ready for you when you arrive at the conference!

Our conference theme this year is “Developing Knowledge from Strands of Information,” and the TAIR program will offer a wide range of professional development opportunities to assist you in developing knowledge through concurrent sessions, roundtables, special interest groups, and pre-conference workshops. Workshops and concurrent sessions are organized around six tracks this year: Assessment & Effectiveness, Current Issues in Higher Education, Planning & Organizing, Reporting & Decision Support, Research, and Technology & Training.

Some pre-conference workshops will take place on Sunday, February 10 on the UTMB campus; shuttle service will be provided from the conference hotel. Be sure to review the pre-conference workshop listings and schedule on the TAIR website prior to completing your registration, lodging and travel arrangements so that you can sign up for one of the great workshops being offered.

We have secured two top-notch general session speakers for this year. Mr. Joe Belnap, Senior Director of Administrative Computing at Utah Valley University, will inspire us with a presentation on the power of habit, and Dr. Christina Leimer, Associate Vice President for Planning and Institutional Effectiveness at Bridgepoint Education, will share her thoughts about the cultural differences between education professionals, business, and policy makers that lead to differing perspectives on higher education effectiveness.

Registration for the TAIR conference is now open on the TAIR website at www.texas-air.org/conference/2013/. At the conference website, you can find information about the pre-conference workshop schedule and conference program, lodging and travel information. Please be aware that hotel registration **MUST** be made over the telephone in order to obtain the TAIR conference rate. To register at the hotel, please call the hotel directly at 1-888-388-8484 and specify that you are attending the TAIR conference.

I hope you will take some time soon to look over the conference information and then make your conference registration. TAIR conferences are the best opportunity that we have to meet our colleagues from around the state to network and learn from each other in a relaxed, fun setting. TAIR is just the right size -- small enough to get to know everyone, but big enough to provide learning opportunities for everyone!

I look forward to seeing you in Galveston, where we will hear the sea winds blowin’, I’m sure!

Susan Thompson
TAIR Vice President/Program Chair

TAIR Workshops

TAIR held its annual summer workshop at the Texas State University's Round Rock campus on Friday, August 3, 2012. Over forty-five participants took advantage of this professional development opportunity and attended at least two of the five workshops that were offered. The workshop topics included:

- Dashboards – A Developers Perspective
- Developing Effective Presentations
- Developing Measurable Outcomes
- Survey Development
- Using Accountability Board Data

At the conclusion of the workshops, the Texas Workforce Commission presented an overview of their work with the SkillsNET program. During their presentation, they provided an overview of the Texas economy, provided the most recent data on online job postings, and described the capabilities of SkillsNET to align programs to employer demand.

Participants shared that they found the workshops informative and well worth their investment in time and monies. Special thanks go to the presenters who shared their time and expertise with all attendees, and thanks is extended to the staff at the Round Rock campus who once again hosted the summer conference.

SAVE THE DATE: TAIR will hold its annual summer workshop at the Texas States University's Round Rock campus on **Friday, August 2, 2013**. We hope to see many of you there!

Susan mentioned in her update on page 4 that the Executive Committee has adopted six tracks to assist conference attendees in focusing their attention toward areas of interest. Those six tracks along with their intended focus are:

1. Planning & Organizing -- Strategic Planning, Organization, IR office and Personal organization
2. Research -- Statistical and Institutional Research applicable to a range of institutions
3. Technology & Training -- Use of technology in IR, basic/intermediate/advanced software how-tos
4. Assessment & Effectiveness -- Implementing assessment programs, goal setting/measuring, novel assessment ideas
5. Reporting & Decision Support -- Internal/external reporting, dashboards, data warehouses/other decision support systems
6. Current Issues in Higher Ed

The TAIR pre-conference workshops will also conform to these tracks.

This year, the pre-conference workshops will have some extended opportunities for those who have an interest in learning more about a subject area. Kate Proff will be providing two workshops on SQL. The first workshop will focus on novice-level areas. The second workshop will provide additional instruction for individuals who have a moderate level of training in that subject area. Conference attendees will be able to sign-up for one of the SQL workshops only, or they may choose to attend both workshops for a more in-depth knowledge of the subject.

In the same manner, Kara Larkan-Skinner will be presenting two separate, but related workshops on developing measurable outcomes. Her first workshop will focus on methodologies while her second workshop will focus specifically on writing good, quality-based outcomes. Again, conference attendees can chose to attend only one of the two sessions, or they may choose to attend both. Regardless of your experience, background or level of expertise, we hope to see you at one the pre-conference workshops in Galveston.

TAIR Workshops (cont.)

The following pre-conference workshops are planned for the 2013 TAIR conference. Please review the list to determine which workshops will best meet your needs or interests – there's something here for everyone!

Using Accountability Board Data

Accountability continues to rise in importance and the data available from the Coordinating Board can be extremely useful for the Institutional Researcher who understands the report and the content that is presented. Colby Stoever is a former member of the Coordinating Board and has volunteered to share his insight into these reports, answering questions and providing some insight on how the information in many of the reports can be used and shared on college and university campuses. This workshop is appropriate for those IR professionals who are new to the career field and will open some insights for experienced IR professionals.

Presenter: Colby Stoever, Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi

Developing Measurable Outcomes 1

This workshop will focus on various methodologies and processes that are used by institutions when developing learning outcomes. Processes and techniques will be discussed such as the acronyms SMART and DUMB and application on how to determine strong outcome measures opposed to weaker measures. Attendees should acquire the basic skills necessary to successfully write outcome measurements that would be applicable to their campus cultures whether working at a university or small college. This workshop is appropriate for new and experienced IR professionals who work with assessment programs, have assessment related responsibilities, or are just curious and wish to know more about this subject area.

Note: This workshop is offered independently from Developing Measurable Outcomes 2; attendees may register for either or both workshops.

Presenters: Kara Larkan-Skinner, Amarillo College
Tom Corll, Midland College

Developing Measurable Outcomes 2

This hands-on workshop will focus on the development of measurable learning outcomes following the ABCD model currently used at Amarillo College. Designed as a follow-up workshop for those who attended the Measurable Outcomes session presented at the summer workshop in San Marcos, workshop attendees will have the opportunity to develop measurable outcomes for divisions, departments and offices across a broad spectrum of the campus. Attendees will be provided opportunities to critique anonymous outcomes from other institutions, hands-on experience developing outcomes unique to

TAIR-L Listserv

The listserv is a great resource and support network for TAIR members. This electronic mailing list is used to share information of interest to the TAIR membership, such as position openings and information updates, and to seek advice or assistance from others regarding projects or issues.

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board staff use TAIR-L to quickly communicate changes in reporting requirements or other important information of interest to the institutional research community.

Members who are currently subscribed to the listserv can post messages; just send your email directly to tair-l@texas-air.org. It is best to send your message in a plain text format so that it is readable by the greatest variety of email systems.

If you are not currently a subscriber to TAIR-L or want to change your subscription, visit www.texas-air.org/mailman/listinfo/tair-l_texas-air.org.



Photo courtesy of Catherine Brown

TAIR Workshops (cont.)

their own institutions, and evaluate peer assessments developed during this workshop. This workshop is appropriate for new and experienced IR professionals who work with assessment programs or have assessment related responsibilities.

Note: This workshop is offered independently from Developing Measurable Outcomes 1; attendees may register for either or both workshops.

Presenters: Kara Larkan-Skinner, Amarillo College
Tom Corll, Midland College

Getting Organized: Controlling Email and Managing Workflow, Priorities, and Projects

Drowning in email? Desk a mess? Projects running late? All of us in higher education are under constant pressure to produce more with less at a faster pace. This workshop will present some common-sense tools to deal with the flood of email, projects, and tasks that cross our paths every day. The workshop will cover four major topics: controlling email, establishing productive workflow, identifying priorities and horizons of focus, and a framework for project planning. Attendees should bring a list of their current projects and a current to-do list for in workshop review. This will be a working session, not a lecture – the result will be an updated, clarified project list and actionable to-do lists.

Presenter: Phil Rhodes, Houston Baptist University

Newcomers to Institutional Research

The TAIR Newcomer's Workshop will focus on maintaining an effective institutional research office. Topics include the various roles and key responsibilities of institutional research, necessary skills needed for a researcher, primary dogmas of assessment (surveys and focus groups), research resources, academic accreditation, financial analysis and presentation of data. Included in the workshop will be guest panelists representing key areas of institutional research (THECB, public four-year and two-year colleges, private four-year institutions) who will be presenting "hot topics" for their area of expertise.

Presenter: Marilyn Greer, M.D. Anderson Cancer Center

Strategic Planning from the Outside – In

In these competitive times, institutions are increasingly measured by performance and their proven ability to anticipate and respond to the unique and changing needs of their community, region and world. To thrive in such a dynamic climate requires strategic planning based on researched trends that are accurate, relevant and far-reaching – trends that position your institution for whatever challenges and opportunities lie ahead. This workshop will emphasize strategic planning (i.e. external "outside-in" rather than internal "inside-out") and techniques to engage the larger communities we serve in the strategic planning process.

Presenter: Joel Lapin, The Community College of Baltimore County

Beginning SQL and Database Management

This workshop will start with the fundamentals of database management. Basic terminology and structure will be covered. Participants will learn how to create a simple database. Using that database, participants will then learn how to extract and manage the data with visual query builders and SQL. This workshop will be using Microsoft Access and SQL Developer; however, instruction will be tailored for use with any database and SQL client. Participants can expect to learn how to create a database using point-and-click methods and SQL, insert and update data in tables, select/query data, join tables, filter data, and many other SQL query basics. Prerequisites: None

Note: This workshop is offered independently from Intermediate SQL and Database Management; attendees

TAIR Workshops (cont.)

may register for either or both workshops.

Presenter: Kate Proff, Texas State University – San Marcos

Intermediate SQL and Database Management

This workshop will take participants to the next level in their SQL and database knowledge. A basic overview of database design and SQL syntax will be covered. Participants will create a MySQL database. With that database, participants will learn how to manage multiple tables and joins. Participants will retrieve and manage data efficiently through subqueries, grouping, case logic, functions, date manipulation, and other SQL commands. Participants will also learn how to troubleshoot query errors and ensure they are extracting exactly the data they need. Given time, participants will be shown how to pull data directly into Excel, Access, and SPSS through an ODBC connection. Prerequisites: Basic knowledge of databases and SQL (participant knows how to create a simple SQL query using a select statement and table joins)

Note: This workshop is offered independently from Beginning SQL and Database Management; attendees may register for either or both workshops.

Presenter: Kate Proff, Texas State University – San Marcos

TAIR Data Advisory Committee (DAC) Update

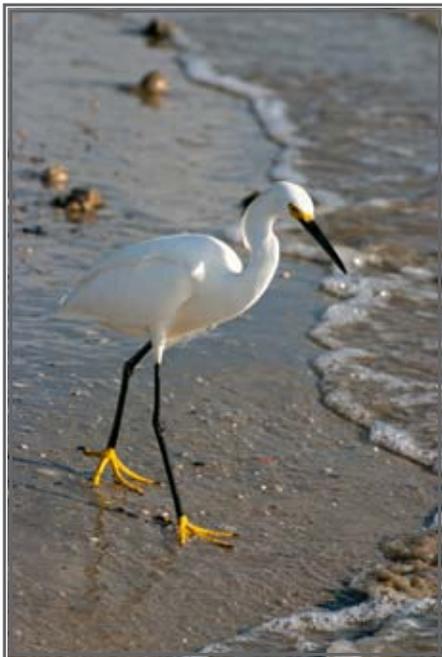


Photo courtesy of Galveston Island Convention & Visitors Bureau

All Texas public colleges and universities will feel the impact of the implementation of the proposed changes in state funding. The state's focus is increasingly on student success. For community colleges, the model is based on momentum points awarded for progress through developmental courses to degree attainment or transfer. Universities will move towards outcome-based funding measuring students' success for degree attainment, persistence, as well as cost and time to degrees. This fall, TAIR DAC has been working with THECB staff member Julie Eklund to provide input on how these will be defined and operationalized. DAC members have asked for greater clarity and transparency from the THECB as we move into this new era of funding. In addition to clear definitions, plans are being developed to provide institutions with the actual program code that will be used to analyze the data and make calculations.

The DAC's second fall project is the launching of the TAIR Data Dictionary that was developed by the DAC last year. The purpose of this project is to provide the TAIR membership with a comprehensive resource that will serve all colleges and universities in their efforts to provide clear, understandable explanations of the terms that are used in higher education. The first iteration of the Data Dictionary is to be posted on the TAIR website in November. An announcement will be sent out on TAIR-L. Thanks go to Kate Proff and Tom Corll for taking leadership for this project.

Martha Oburn, TAIR DAC Chair

Galveston Island



Photo courtesy of Galveston Island Convention & Visitors Bureau

Galveston Island is the number one attraction in Texas for out of state visitors. And why wouldn't it be? With 32 miles of beaches, world class attractions and a variety of restaurant and lodging, the 5 million visitors who flock to the Island each year know Galveston has a lot to offer.

Galveston's relaxed island atmosphere is only 40 minutes from Houston Hobby Airport, so adding a getaway to your trip is easy.

Experience a flight in an authentic World War II aircraft at the Lone Star Flight Museum, or slip into some water park fun, at Schlitterbahn Galveston Island. Travel the world's oceans; mingle with tropical plants; or unravel the mysteries of science, at Moody Gardens. And step back in time at one of Galveston's many historic attractions.

For more information on Galveston Island visit www.galveston.com.

TAIR Member Discount on Jossey-Bass and Wiley Books!

We are happy to announce that as a benefit of your membership in TAIR you are entitled to a 20% discount on Jossey-Bass and Wiley books. (Offer excludes electronic and subscription products.) Jossey-Bass, an imprint of Wiley, is the leading publisher of higher and adult education resources. To purchase discounted books, visit www.josseybass.com/highereducation or www.wiley.com and enter discount code SD142 at checkout.

Please note that TAIR is sharing this discount as a service to our members, TAIR does not endorse any publisher.

Can't wait to visit Galveston? Check out some of Galveston's webcams at www.galveston.com/webcams/ to see what is happening right now on the Strand, at the Seawall, at the Moody Gardens penguin habitat, or several other interesting places!

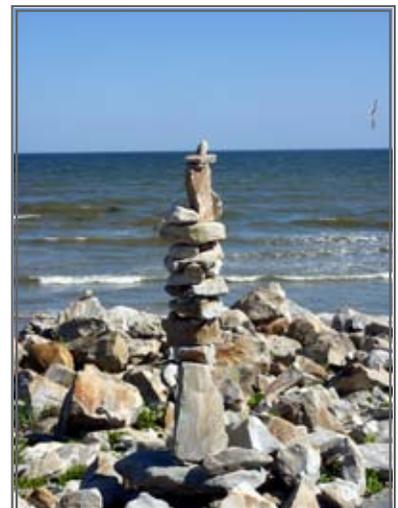


Photo courtesy of Catherine Brown

Moody Gardens

Moody Gardens® began in the mid-1980s with a horse barn, a riding arena with a hippotherapy riding program for people with head injuries and an extraordinary vision to create an island tourist destination. Today Moody Gardens is one of the premier educational/leisure facilities in the Southwest. It also provides horticultural therapy, education and employment for persons with a wide range of physical and emotional disabilities.

Since its inception in 1983 and adoption of an eight phase master plan in 1985, Moody Gardens® has illustrated through its various attractions numerous innovative and creative programs - resulting in a visitation count of approximately 2 million visitors annually.

1986 – Hope Therapy: Site secured by The Moody Foundation to establish a hippotherapy program. Later expanded to include animal and horticultural therapy, education and employment for persons with physical and emotional disabilities.

1986 – Convention Center: Originally opened as Hope Arena. It later expanded from 35,000 to 60,000 square feet to accommodate trade shows, conventions and events. It is now known as the Moody Gardens® Convention Center.

1988 – Palm Beach: Tons of white Florida sand was barged in across the Gulf of Mexico to create this exotic family beach.

1988 – The Learning Place: Originally opened as Seaside Safari. Now the home of our educational programs.

1990 – Production Area: Includes two greenhouses used to propagate most of the plants seen on our grounds and for our Medicinal Plant Program. Our Water Treatment Plant takes effluent from Galveston's water treatment facility and treats and polishes it for use on all exterior landscaping.

1993 – Rainforest Pyramid® and MG 3D Theater Complex: More than 1,700 exotic plant and animal species from the rainforests of Asia, the tropical Americas and Africa are featured in the Rainforest. The Visitor Center houses the Garden Restaurant and Dancing Waters light and fountain show. It opened as America's first IMAX® 3D Theater and continues to showcase films by some of the world's top filmmakers.

1997 – Discovery Pyramid: Moody Gardens®' second grand pyramid. Debuted with NASA - inspired exhibits, and now features traveling and other science exhibits. Also home to the Ridefilm Theater, offering a thrilling motion simulation experience.

1999 – Moody Gardens® Hotel and Spa: Nestled among acres of tropical gardens and magnificent pyramids, sits the luxurious Moody Gardens® Hotel, an architectural masterpiece, with 428 beautifully decorated rooms, over 22,000 square feet of flexible meeting space, dining, and a full service salon and spa.

1999 – Aquarium at Moody Gardens®: The 1.5 million-gallon Aquarium Pyramid® is a splashy tribute to the North Pacific, Caribbean, Tropical Pacific and South Atlantic Oceans, opened in the summer of 1999. As one of the largest aquariums in the world, the facility features close-up views of penguins, sharks, seals, seahorses, moray eels and much more.

2004 - Hotel and Convention Center Expansion: This expansion project provided an additional 125-room wing to the hotel and expanded the Exhibit Hall to 60,000 square feet. This flexible meeting space is available for events ranging from trade shows and concerts to large gala dinners.

2005 – 4D Special FX Theater®: The 4D Theater features 3D images and extra special effects such as leg ticklers, seat buzzers, scent, mist, snow and more to enable you to see, feel, hear and smell the action!

2008 – Moody Gardens Golf Course: Galveston's premier public course opened in June after two years and \$16 million-comprehensive renovations to the former Galveston Municipal Golf Course. Lush paspalum fairways are lined with 500 palms and shorebird habitat.

2011 – Rainforest Pyramid and Palm Beach Enhancements: The Rainforest Pyramid and Palm Beach both reopened May 28 after extensive enhancement projects. The Rainforest Pyramid sustained substantial damage from Hurricane Ike in 2008 and through the generosity of the Moody Foundation received a \$25 million enhancement project that provided a canopy walkway that gives access to the treetop level for a whole new perspective of the rainforest, as well as new exhibits, plants and animals. Palm Beach added several new features, including a wave pool, lazy river and tower slides.



Photo courtesy of Catherine Brown

Special Event: Fat Tuesday Parade and Dinner, February 12th

Laissez les bons temps rouler!



Photo courtesy of Galveston Island Convention & Visitors Bureau

Join in on the fun! For the TAIR Special Event, we will attend the Fat Tuesday parade in Downtown Galveston along “the Strand”, followed by dinner at the Fisherman’s Wharf.

Buses will transport us from the Moody Gardens Hotel to the Strand, where we will have an opportunity to experience the annual Fat Tuesday parade with all its beads, floats, marching bands, and fun! This colorful parade is the closing event of the Mardi Gras celebration in Galveston and is typically a more family-oriented event than the Fat Tuesday parade in New Orleans.

The Fisherman’s Wharf is located about a block from the parade viewing area. After the parade, we will gather at the restaurant for a delicious dinner in a beautiful setting with a great view of Galveston Bay. Buses will transport us back to the hotel after dinner. Tickets to the special event are a bargain at \$35 and cover the parade entrance fee, transportation, and meal.

Mardi Gras 2013 -- Bead there!

TAIR Travel Grants

TAIR wants to be sure that funding is not the reason that you or your staff will miss TAIR 2013 and will be awarding travel grants at \$300 each to help cover expenses. Travel grants are available to both active members and those becoming new members in 2013.

The deadline to make an application is **December 15, 2012**. TAIR Travel Grant Application and directions are available at:

www.texas-air.org/assets/pdf/Travel_Grants_Application.pdf

Call for Nominations



Photo courtesy of Galveston Island Convention & Visitors Bureau

The TAIR Nominating Committee is calling for nominations for the following four positions:

TAIR President – this is a three year term:
2013/14 Vice President/Program Chair for the 2014 TAIR Conference at the Galleria Crown Plaza, Dallas
2014/15 TAIR President
2015/16 TAIR Current Past President

TAIR Treasurer 2013 – 2015
TAIR Member at Large for Technology 2013 – 2015
TAIR Nominating Committee 2013 – 2014

Please take a few minutes to submit your recommendations to the TAIR Nominating Committee by clicking on the following link:

www.texas-air.org/conference/2013/callfornom.html

Information about the responsibilities of TAIR officers is available in the TAIR Officer's Guide, posted on the TAIR website at www.texas-air.org/officers/.

Feel free to nominate yourself if you are interested in serving for one of these positions. Nominations will close **November 20, 2012**. Thank you for your recommendations... and see you at Moody Gardens in Galveston for the TAIR 2013 Conference.

Darline Morris
TAIR Current Past President

Conference Information

Important Information

Conference information and the registration form are available online at www.texas-air.org/conference/2013/

Register to stay at the Moody Gardens Hotel by calling 1-888-388-8484. Be sure to mention you are attending the TAIR conference.

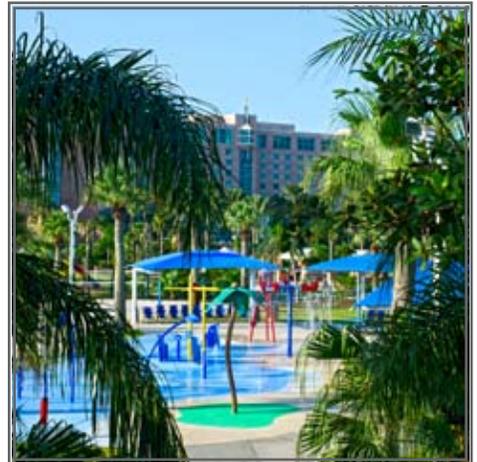


Photo courtesy of GICVB

Future Conferences

Save these dates for future TAIR conferences:

**February 17-19, 2014
Addison**

Conference hotel –
The Crowne Plaza Dallas Near
The Galleria

**February 17-19, 2015
Amarillo**

Conference hotel –
The Ambassador Hotel