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# ELECTION NEWS

October 1, 2010

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## 2010 IMPORTANT ELECTION DATES

**Last Day to Register  
to Vote  
Oct. 4, 2010**

## Get YOUR Election Information

The November 2, 2010 General and Special Elections sample ballot, early voting locations, list of Election Day polling locations, ballot-by-mail applications, along with all other pertinent election information is available at the Harris County Clerk's Elections Division website  
[www.harrisvotes.com](http://www.harrisvotes.com).

**TO OBTAIN A  
BALLOT-BY-MAIL  
APPLICATION CALL  
713.755.6965**

## HARRIS COUNTY CLERK'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE CONVENES BEFORE ELECTION



Houston, TX – The Harris County Clerk's Advisory Committee will meet on Monday, October 4 at 2:30 p.m. at Houston Community College Southeast Eastside Campus, 6518 Rustic, Houston, TX 77087, in the Learning Hub, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Seminar Rooms 218, 219, and 220.

"As part of our effort to provide the latest information pertaining to the conduct of the upcoming election, attendees will receive the newly produced Harris County

November 2, 2010 Election Plan Report", said Beverly Kaufman, chief elections officer of the county. It is the last gathering of the committee prior to the election.

The County Clerk's office convenes an advisory committee at regular intervals during an election cycle. At the meeting, aside from the election department addressing election related questions and the committee members having a chance to provide input, the meeting affords the committee an opportunity to explore ways to work with community groups to provide voters the information, materials and assistance needed to access the voting process in a manner which is consistent with the law.

Currently, three advisory committees exist, Hispanic, Vietnamese and African American. The Vietnamese and Hispanic advisory committees were created to help address language sections of the federal voting rights act, with a special focus on addressing Election Day language assistance at the poll. Section 203 of the 1975 Voting Rights Act calls for political subdivisions that reach specific language minority voter population benchmarks to provide election information and balloting materials in the native language of those groups, as well as in English. President George W. Bush signed a 25 year extension of the Voting Rights Act before leaving office.

In Harris County, the groups covered by the 1975 Voting Rights Act are Hispanics and Vietnamese. The Vietnamese committee began meeting in 2002. The Hispanic Committee was established in 2004. Although African Americans are not a language minority, County Clerk Beverly Kaufman convened an African American Advisory Committee in 2006.

Since the inception of the committees, participation has varied and has been ethnically and politically diverse. Participants have included elected officials, community organizations and other institutions, as well as business and educational leaders of each community. Representatives from each party are also invited. Recently, all three committees have been meeting at once.

The Harris County Clerk Advisory Committee Meeting is open to the public.

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## Election Judges CORNER

The Harris County Election Board met on Sept. 22, at the Harris County Administrative Building to take actions on the following items: Adoption of Signature Verification Committee/Early Voting Ballot Board as submitted by the Harris County Republican, Democratic, & Libertarian Parties and Appointment of Signature Verification Committee/Early Voting Ballot Board Chair/Presiding Judge.

The county election board consists of the county judge, county clerk, voter registrar, sheriff, and county chair of each political party.

Nelda Epps was appointed to lead the Signature Verification Committee/Early Voting Ballot Board.

These two entities review returned ballot envelopes for compliance with the Texas Election Code prior to their tabulation for the general elections of state and county officers.

## FREE TO BE LIKE HER FATHER



law.

Du-Ha Kim Nguyen works to provide voters of Vietnamese ancestry the information, materials and assistance needed to access the voting process in Harris County. Vietnamese voters are one of the language minority groups in the County covered by the United States Voting Rights Act of 1975. Nguyen takes great pride in fulfilling her role as it allows her to follow in her father's footsteps. As Division chief of Ethnic Minority People Division in the Republic of Vietnam, her father made sure minorities were treated equally under the

Du-Ha along with her parents and three siblings immigrated to the United States in 1995 from Dalat City, Vietnam. Her father's position in the vanquished government made him and his family subjects of persecution by the communist regime. After hostilities officially ended between South and North Vietnam in 1975, her father was incarcerated for six years. After his release, he remained a political prisoner within the borders of his native land until the day he left. His suffering qualified them for War Refugee status in the eyes of the American government.

Nguyen's family settled in Nashville, Tennessee. She was 19 years old. Having learned English while in Vietnam. She decided to go to college. She studied Computer Engineering. But after graduating, like her father, believing that there is a need to help the underprivileged, she worked for 10 years as activities director for a Vietnamese American Community Center while also volunteering with different Vietnamese organizations, helping orphans and the indigent.

Nguyen moved to Houston in August 2005. She worked for over a year as an interpreter and translator at the Disaster Recovery Center of Houston helping Hurricane Katrina and Rita evacuees of Vietnamese origin. In 2007, she joined the Harris County Clerk's Office.

As part of the County Clerk's Communications and Voter Outreach Department, Nguyen is responsible for formatting election materials, including brochures, notice of elections, posters and flyers. She is also responsible for convening the Vietnamese advisory committee and coordinating its efforts to reach out to the 39,265 Vietnamese surnamed registered voters in Harris County.

Nguyen feels that Harris County has made great strides in reaching out to the Vietnamese community. By simply placing an Early Voting location in a Vietnamese Community Center, she proudly asserts, the County has facilitated the voting process for limited English proficient voters of Vietnamese origin.

Like her father, Nguyen has enriched her family's history of helping people. Since the launch of the County's language assistance program, the Vietnamese community of Harris County experienced the election of the first State Representative in Texas of Vietnamese ancestry and its first Houston City Councilmember.

Nguyen is married and has two children, 4 year-old Dan and two year-old Vy.

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