

# Astrodome Conservancy Expands Board with Four Pivotal Member Additions

HOUSTON, TX, UNITED STATES, August 7, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [Astrodome Conservancy](#), the preeminent non-profit organization dedicated to safeguarding the legacy of the landmark Astrodome in Houston, proudly announces the appointment of four distinguished individuals to its Board of Directors. These new members bring extensive expertise and a shared passion for preserving the Astrodome's iconic status as a symbol of Houston's innovation and the embodiment of its cultural heritage.

Established in June 2016, the Astrodome Conservancy has been instrumental in advocating for the preservation and revitalization of the Astrodome, hailed as the "Eighth Wonder of the World," for its pioneering architecture and as a groundbreaking engineering feat at Mid Century.

Recently joining the Board of Directors – led by founding members Phoebe Tudor (chair), Minnette Boesel (vice-chair/treasurer) and Judy Nyquist (secretary), along with longtime executive director Beth Wiedower Jackson – are:

Bill Franks – A native Texan and longtime Houstonian, Bill Franks brings a wealth of experience in commercial real estate development and historic preservation. As President of Spire Realty Group, L.P., where he spent nearly two decades, and later with The Oxberry Group, Franks has led transformative projects across Houston and beyond, revitalizing urban spaces by



Historic Astrodome exterior



Historic Astrodome with parking attendant

repurposing underutilized buildings and repositioning them as economic drivers while preserving their historical integrity. Some of those outstanding Houston-area efforts include the Southern Pacific Building/The Bayou Lofts, the McCrory Building/1004 Prairie, the Cotton Exchange Building, the Stowers Building, the Jesse Jones Building/708 Main and The Alden/Sam Houston Hotel.



2024 Race of the Dome fundraiser

José Solís – An independent project management consultant specializing in green space, arts and cultural projects,

José Solís has played key roles in pivotal Houston projects such as Buffalo Bayou Partnership's Buffalo Bayou East effort, currently underway, and the future Advocates of a Latino Museum of Cultural and Visual Arts & Archive Complex. The eighth-generation Texan and native Houstonian spent much of his early career as an architect at Gensler. Bringing expertise in both community-driven initiatives and urban planning to the Conservancy, his past board experience includes Houston Mod, the Open Dance Project, DiverseWorks, Glasstire, Blaffer Museum of Art, the Houston Arts Alliance and the organization that developed the MATCH arts complex in Midtown.

S. "Shawn" Stephens – With a storied legal career spanning three decades, including the honorable distinction of being the first woman to earn national certification in appellate law, plus extensive board leadership in Houston's cultural and arts organizations, Shawn Stephens brings valuable governance experience to the Conservancy. Her non-profit tenure includes key roles with the Houston Ballet – she is the only person to have served in all of the organization's major volunteer positions – as well as the Texas Commission on the Arts. Demonstrating a deep commitment to community service and advocacy her board service also extends to Theatre Under The Stars, Stages, the University of Houston's Moore's School of Music, Houston Symphony League, Houston Zoo, Heritage Society, South Texas College of Law and Girls Inc. of Greater Houston and others.

Nicole Romano – Currently serving as the Director of Marketing and Communications at Houston Parks Board, Nicole Romano brings strategic communication and marketing expertise to the Astrodome Conservancy. Her background includes managing outreach and branding for major parks and cultural projects, aligning closely with the Conservancy's mission to promote and preserve Houston's cultural landmarks. Among her previous roles are Program and Events Manager for Levy Park Conservancy, Director of Communications for University of Houston Cynthia Woods Mitchell Center for the Arts, Director of Architecture Center Houston and Civic Art + Design Project Manager for Houston Arts Alliance. She is a past board member of both

Lawndale Art Center and Spacetaker.

"We are delighted to welcome Bill Franks, José Solís, Shawn Stephens and Nicole Romano to our Board of Directors," said Phoebe Tudor, Chair of the Astrodome Conservancy Board. "Their diverse backgrounds and extensive experience will be invaluable as we continue to advocate for the Astrodome's preservation and inspire community engagement through innovative programming in a year that is pivotal to the Astrodome's future."

The Astrodome Conservancy's ongoing efforts have aided in securing crucial designations such as Texas State Antiquities Landmark and National Register of Historic Places status, reinforcing its commitment to protecting the Astrodome's architectural legacy and cultural impact.

#### About Astrodome Conservancy

In 2016, the Astrodome Conservancy was founded as the champion of the landmark Astrodome on behalf of the people of Houston and Harris County. As a private, non-profit organization, their mission is to promote the Astrodome's legacy through preservation and development, advocate for public access, and create programming that inspires and engages. And the Conservancy wants the Astrodome to be dynamic and accessible to all. For the past eight years, it has been working diligently to explore alternative financing tools for redevelopment, perform public outreach, identify possible energy alternatives and incentives, and build partnerships locally and nationally to support reinvestment in the Eighth Wonder of the World. For more information and to get involved with the Conservancy, please visit [www.astrodomeconservancy.org](http://www.astrodomeconservancy.org).

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