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PRESS RELEASE

## Harris County Judge Ed Emmett to be honored as IABC Houston's Executive Communicator of the Year

*Elected leader of nation's third largest county to receive award at IABC Bronze Quill Gala*

**Houston, April 12, 2018:** In recognition for leadership in times of several crises – particularly last summer's Hurricane Harvey -- and for his impassioned advocacy in the recovery and rebuilding phases following the storm's disastrous path across the Houston region, the Houston chapter of the International Association of Business Communicators has named Harris County Judge Ed Emmett as its 2018 Executive Communicator of the Year.

IABC Houston is recognizing Judge Emmett for exemplifying what Houston Strong means. Throughout the course of Hurricane Ike in September 2008 and then Hurricane Harvey last year, he exemplified the commitment to serve as the voice of calm and reason in times of crisis. Pledging to provide accurate, up-to-date information, Judge Emmett and his staff conducted regular news conferences and briefed local, national and international journalists from a broad range of newspaper, radio, Internet and television outlets.

Judge Emmett has often stated, "emergency preparedness starts with being informed." Under his leadership and a focus on learning from experience, Harris County's Office of Emergency Management transformed the organization and its processes. This included a remake of the County's Joint Information Center (JIC), which enabled the County to relay potentially life-saving information from the judge and other area officials, including first responders, to the public in a consistent manner. The County's JIC system was expanded to enable several critical capabilities, including fielding telephone and social media requests, to the proper officials in the runup to and during a disaster.

Judge Emmett also worked with area officials to make tough decisions like the call to shelter in place to avoid potentially deadly traffic jams by millions of the region's residents who were unsure whether to evacuate from the storm's path. In the weeks and months after Hurricanes Ike and Harvey, he concentrated on recovery and rebuild programs including collaborating with volunteer organizations to help those affected.

"It is all about neighbor helping neighbor," said Judge Ed Emmett. "Volunteers immediately came together during the search and rescue efforts, and now they are stepping up to help rebuild their communities."

"Judge Emmett has become the face of preparation and recovery in our area," noted John Harris, president of IABC Houston. "As the type of executive who thoroughly appreciates the importance of communications, he was able to coordinate preparations ahead of the hurricanes and the recovery phase afterward.

"Engaging local, state and federal agencies, as well as the business community and area nonprofits to protect the public and help those in need was a monumental task, which Judge Emmett took upon himself to do. That's one of the many reasons we're honoring him with our Executive Communicator of the Year award," Harris said.

"I greatly appreciate IABC Houston for honoring me with this award," said Harris County Judge Ed Emmett. "Emergency response presents numerous challenges, but none more important than communicating quickly and clearly to the public what is happening and how they can best protect themselves and their neighbors. This award rightly belongs to the hundreds of people who work so hard to protect the public in times of disaster."

IABC Houston will present Judge Emmett with the award at its annual Bronze Quill Awards Gala, which is scheduled on June 14 at the Junior League of Houston.

Judge Emmett holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics from Rice University, and a Master of Public Affairs from the University of Texas at Austin. He has served as Harris County Judge since 2007 and is the presiding officer of the Harris County Commissioners Court. By Texas law, Judge Emmett is also director of the Harris County Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Management.

**IABC Houston**

IABC Houston ([www.iabchouston.com](http://www.iabchouston.com)) is part of a global network of 15,000 business communication professionals in more than 80 countries who are committed to improving personal and professional growth and organizational effectiveness through strategic communications. The Houston chapter's 150-plus members include public relations and communication professionals from Fortune 500 companies, communications agencies, nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and freelance writers and consultants.

**IABC Houston Executive Communicator of the Year Award**

IABC Houston annually recognizes the achievements of an area executive whose outstanding professional performance significantly contributes to the Houston communication profession by initiating, directing, supporting or sustaining outstanding and effective communications programs. Through this recognition, IABC Houston honors a leader who understands and actively supports good communication practices in the nominee's company, institution or organization.

A qualifying nominee must:

- ❖ Be an active senior executive (communication and public relations professionals are ineligible),
- ❖ Demonstrate a solid understanding and support of communication practices within the nominee's organization, and
- ❖ Exemplify the highest ethical and professional standards in fulfilling the nominee's responsibilities.

**Bronze Quill Awards**

Bronze Quill is the premier awards program for Houston-area communicators. The work submitted represents the best Houston has to offer. Across four divisions and 28 categories, the winning entries reflect the elite skills necessary for successful campaigns. The Bronze Quill Awards will be presented at IABC Houston's annual Awards Gala on June 14, 2018 at the Junior League of Houston, along with the award for Executive Communicator of the Year and the Downs Matthews Memorial Scholarship. More event information may be found at [http://iabchouston.com/content.php?page=2018 Bronze Quill Awards](http://iabchouston.com/content.php?page=2018%20Bronze%20Quill%20Awards).

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