

# TEXAS DAYS IN STAVANGER 2010

June 11<sup>th</sup> – June 18<sup>th</sup>

A presentation of the participating groups



**With Participation By:**

**HOUSTON/GALVESTON-STAVANGER  
SISTER CITY SOCIETY**

**AFFILIATED WITH SISTER CITIES INTERNATIONAL  
AND MEMBER OF NORDMANN'S FORBUNDET**

**A Letter of Greeting from, Anne Brith Berge, President of the  
Houston-Galveston/Stavanger Sister City Society**



**Texas Days in Stavanger 2010**

Houston and Stavanger formed a Sister City Society relationship in 1980 as a result of the strong oil industry and other industries such as shipping. Additionally, the increased investment, which was made by Norwegians in commercial activities in the greater Houston area and vice versa, also played a significant role.

The support for the Sister City program by business, civic and cultural leaders was a prime contributor to the fact that Houston has been recognized as having had the best Sister City programs several times.

The most important part of the Sister City's program involves the organizing of youth exchange programs as the main feature of our international cultural and business exchange festivals, which alternate between Stavanger and Houston-Galveston and take place every two years. The first one was held in Stavanger in 1982 and the most recent in Houston in 2008.

This year, we are happy to bring about 50 high school students plus their leaders, who are proud representatives of the cities of Houston and Galveston. These students will perform on various stages and compete in sports.

On behalf of the Houston/Galveston-Stavanger Sister City (HGSSCS), I sincerely thank all those in Stavanger who make this exchange program a reality and so warmly welcome our youth, and above all, I thank Stavanger for their gracious hospitality and friendship.

Furthermore, we wish to welcome you to Houston and Galveston in 2012!

Anne-Brith Berge  
President, HGSSCS

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**Greetings from the Mayor of the City of Stavanger  
The Honorable Leif Johan Sevland**



**Texas Days in Stavanger 2010**

Stavanger and Houston/Galveston have enjoyed close relations ever since becoming sister cities in the beginning of the 1980s. The cooperation has given us a unique opportunity of making friendships and to share knowledge with different partners at different levels in the two fine Texan cities. It has also provided an opportunity for youths across the Atlantic Ocean to enter into communication with each other. The value of such contact can in my opinion not be underestimated as it creates a better understanding between the people of Houston and Galveston and the people of Stavanger. More than one thousand youths from both cities have until this day visited each other and life-long relationships have emerged.

I would like to sincerely thank all of those in the energetic and open city of Houston/ Galveston who have welcomed the youths from Stavanger in 2008 and previous exchanges. We truly appreciate it and are looking forward to welcoming you to Stavanger in 2010!

Leif Johan Sevland  
Mayor of Stavanger

## HOUSTON/GALVESTON-STAVANGER SISTER CITY SOCIETY

### Houston, Galveston, Stavanger – A Leading Success Story of a Sister City Program

#### FACT SHEET

##### **What is the Sister Cities Program?**

“Sister Cities International (SCI)”, a non-profit citizen diplomacy network creating and strengthening partnerships between U.S. and international communities, was established by President Eisenhower to improve communications, cultural, and business relations between the people of the United States and the rest of the world community. As stated by President Eisenhower, “Sister City relationships can turn nations into people and contribute as no other form of communications to the humanizing of international relations”.

##### **What is the Houston/Galveston-Stavanger Sister City Program, and why is it so successful?**

Houston and Stavanger formed a sister city relationship in 1980 as a result of strong business ties between the two cities and the significant investments made by Norwegians in commercial activities in Houston and vice versa. The support for the organization by business, civic, and cultural leaders was a prime contributor in recognizing Houston as having the best Sister City program in 1983. During Stavanger’s visit in April 1988, Galveston took part in many of the activities and expressed a wish to join the Sister City organization. On September 26, 1988, the mayors of Houston, Galveston, and Stavanger formally signed a document joining the three cities in the program named “**Houston/Galveston-Stavanger Sister City Society (HGSSCS)**”. Further on, HGSSCS is one of Houston’s 17 Sister Cities and is also part of the “Sister Cities International (SCI)” organization.

##### **What other Recognitions have been made of the ties between the three cities?**

Ministers from Norway are regular visitors to Houston. Houston has been selected to have a Royal Norwegian Consulate General, a Norwegian Trade Council, a Norwegian-American Chamber of Commerce and a Norwegian Seamen’s Church. Four Houstonians have been decorated by the king of Norway, whereas one of them, Mr. Jay Medley, received one of the highest awards ever given by the king to a foreign individual. Some years ago, Houston was chosen the “Port-of-Honor” for visits by “Christian Radich”, a square rigged Norwegian training ship, and “Saga Sieglar”, a replica of a Viking trading vessel.

##### **What Long-Term Relationships have been established?**

The Society helps build long-term relationships between Houston/Galveston and Stavanger by sponsoring many activities. The organization was involved both when the late King Olav V of Norway and the present King Harald V of Norway visited Houston as well as when the Norwegian ambassador to the U.S. visited here. Additionally, the Society suggested and implemented the membership of the Stavanger Chamber of Commerce in the Greater Houston Chamber of Commerce as its first foreign member.

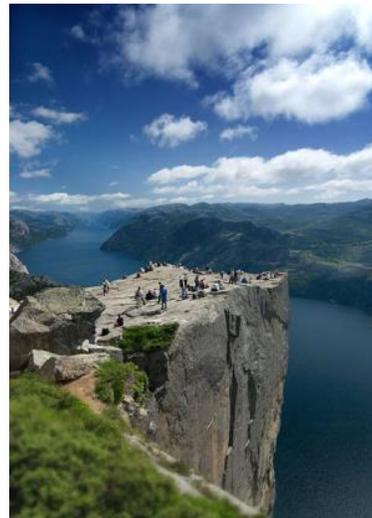
## HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS

Founded in 1980 as a result of a Norwegian Festival and strong oil and shipping industries both in Houston and in Stavanger, **Houston/Galveston-Stavanger Sister City Society** has been actively engaged in promotion and goodwill. Then in 1988, Galveston having been involved in many of the activities that year formally joined the organization. Thus, on September 26, 1988, the mayors of the three cities signed a formal document joining the organization in an educational, business, and cultural exchange program.

The list of schools and groups, which have participated in the many exchange programs over the years, are varied and long. The primary activities have been cultural exchanges in which Houston/Galveston and Stavanger have alternated as host every other year. These programs, which have won several awards from the national Sister City organization, have emphasized youth. Participating student delegations have included music, drama, and athletic groups who have performed or competed at schools and other sites. In addition to the youth exchange programs, there have been countless teachers, group leaders, parents, relatives, city officials, business people, board directors, sister city members and volunteers involved over the years.

Additionally, the Society hosts annual activities for its members that are interesting, educational, and cultural, and thus gives people from Stavanger, Norway, Houston and Galveston areas an opportunity to become acquainted and discover mutual interests.

Photos courtesy of [www.visit-stavanger.com](http://www.visit-stavanger.com)





# CITY OF HOUSTON

Office of the Mayor

**Annise D. Parker**

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Mayor

P.O. Box 1562  
Houston, Texas 77251-1562

Greetings!

The Houston/Galveston-Stavanger Sister City Program is an international partnership that strengthens the economic and social aspects of both communities. This relationship has provided us with the opportunity to build strong business ties and participate in an educational and cultural exchange between our two cities. The Houston/Galveston-Stavanger Sister City Society has hosted many annual activities so the people of Stavanger, Norway, Houston and Galveston can become acquainted.

The City of Houston is honored to have Stavanger, Norway as our official sister city for so many years and will always welcome the residents of Norway with open arms. I am confident that our relationship will continue to be a leading example for other U.S. and international cities to follow.

I appreciate Mayor Leif Sevland and the people of Stavanger, Norway for their significant contributions to our city and look forward to your continued support in the years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Annise D. Parker".

Annise D. Parker  
Mayor



# City of Galveston



## Office of the Mayor, Joe Jaworski

P.O. Box 779 / Galveston, Texas 77553-0779 / (409) 797-3509 / Fax (409) 797-3511

Greetings!

As Galveston's new Mayor, it gives me great pleasure to send greetings to our Sister City of Stavanger. The Houston/Galveston-Stavanger Sister City relationship has been a particularly successful one and we look forward many more years of continued friendship. These visits are so beneficial to the promotion and enhancement of the cultural development between our cities.

I am both pleased and honored to have such a strong relationship with our Sister City of Stavanger. Though an ocean apart, our two cities have enjoyed a longstanding friendship. Throughout the years, delegations have traveled from ocean to ocean to exchange ideas, explore cultural differences, and investigate economic development opportunities.

I extend to you my cooperation in all areas of mutual concern and interest and look forward to your next visit to Galveston.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Jaworski". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Joe Jaworski  
Mayor  
City of Galveston



## A Brief Overview of Houston and Galveston

**Houston:** adapted from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Houston,\\_Texas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Houston,_Texas)  
In August 1836, John Kirby Allen and Augustus Chapman Allen, two real estate entrepreneurs from New York City, purchased 6,642 acres (26.88 km<sup>2</sup>) of land along Buffalo Bayou intending to found a city. The Allen brothers decided to name the city after Sam Houston, the popular general at the Battle of San Jacinto, who was elected President of Texas in September 1836.

Houston was granted incorporation on June 5, 1837, with James S. Holman becoming its first mayor. In the same year, Houston became the county seat of Harrisburg County (now Harris County) and the temporary capital of the Republic of Texas. By 1860, Houston had emerged as a commercial and railroad hub for the export of cotton. Railroad spurs from the Texas inland converged in Houston, where they met rail lines to the ports of Galveston and Beaumont. After the Civil War, Houston businessmen initiated efforts to widen the city's extensive system of bayous so the city could accept more commerce between downtown and the nearby port of Galveston. By 1890 Houston was the railroad center of Texas.

In 1900, after Galveston was struck by a devastating hurricane, efforts to make Houston into a viable deepwater port were accelerated. The following year, oil discovered at the Spindletop oil field near Beaumont prompted the development of the Texas petroleum industry. President Woodrow Wilson opened the deepwater Port of Houston in 1914, seven years after digging began. By 1930, Houston had become Texas's most populous city.

Today, Houston is the fourth largest city in the United States, following New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago. It is a center of space exploration, air transportation and shipping, as well as oil exploration, production, and refining. It is home to the world-class Texas Medical Center, a consortium of hospitals providing leading edge care in heart care, transplants, cancer treatment. Shoppers flock to the Galleria and the suburban shopping malls in several districts of the city. The city has a great diversity of restaurants, cultural activities and even sister cities, reflecting world-wide roots of its residents – from Europe, to Asia, to Africa, and Latin America.

**Galveston:** adapted from <http://www.galveston.com/about/> and [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Galveston,\\_Texas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Galveston,_Texas)  
Galveston, a coastal city of over 57,000 people, offers 32 miles of relaxing beaches, superb restaurants, top resort hotels, marvellous downtown shopping, numerous antique stores, incredible art galleries, fabulous entertainment and one of the largest and well-preserved concentrations of Victorian architecture in the country. From soft sandy beaches to famous 19th century architecture, the island is surrounded with incredible history and unique beauty.

Galveston was first seen by Europeans around 1528. It was settled in 1816, and founded as a port for Mexico in 1825, and briefly served as capital of the Republic of Texas in 1836. Today, the port has grown to 850 acres (3.4 km<sup>2</sup>) of port facilities, and serves as home to University of Texas Medical Branch, John Sealy, and Shriner's Burn Hospitals, and home to several banks, financial institutions, and charitable institutions such as the Moody Foundation / Moody Gardens.

The Island has seen two great hurricanes, yet the worst natural disaster in U.S. history could not erase the tranquility of a Galveston sunset. For more about our rich history, with Indians, French, Spanish, pirates, sailors, cotton and textile merchants, bootleggers, musicians, oilmen, and now **tourists**, see <http://www.galveston.com/history/> and [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Galveston,\\_Texas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Galveston,_Texas)

# Galveston Ballet



**Galveston Ballet is a regional pre-professional ballet company and academy offering a full range of instruction in classical ballet to students ages three through adult.**

**Galveston Ballet Mission:** The mission of Galveston ballet is two-fold: (1) to offer the young people of Galveston County the opportunity to participate in a learning company where they can experience the discipline and beauty of ballet and develop their skills and talents in this domain; and (2) to enrich the cultural life of the entire community by presenting performances of great classical and contemporary works each year.

**Purpose of Organization:** Galveston Ballet is the official ballet company of Galveston and a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Current programs include classical ballet training, Opera house performances, fine arts community education, and ballet scholarships.

**Training:** Galveston Ballet offers classical ballet classes for students ages three through adult. Members in the upper level performing company attend ballet classes over ten hours per week. In addition to offering ballet classes during the fall and spring semesters, Galveston Ballet offers a variety of summer programs including a Fairy Tale Camp for younger students and a Summer Intensive Workshop for teenagers and adults.

**Performance:** Residents of Galveston and surrounding communities often receive their first exposure to ballet by attending a Galveston Ballet Opera House performance. Galveston ballet produces two Grand 1894 Opera House performances each year, a contemporary mixed repertory in the fall and a classical ballet in the spring, and performs at various community events. Past classical performances have included Romeo and Juliet, Giselle, Sleeping Beauty, Don Quixote, Cinderella, La Bayadere, La Fille Mal Gardee, Napoli, and other well-known ballets.

**Community Education:** Galveston Ballet's Dance in Schools scholarship program offers a fine arts program of lecture, demonstration, and dance to Galveston's elementary schools. As part of the 2009 Dance in Schools program nearly 900 of Galveston's school children attended a free Opera House performance of Galveston Ballet's, Peter and the Wolf. For most children it was their first time to see a ballet, to see an orchestra, and to visit the Opera House. Galveston Ballet students learn the value of discipline, practice, patience, and importance of community service.

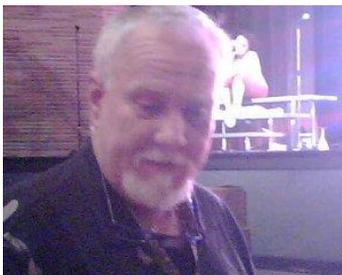
## Galveston Ball High School Theatre



The Theatre Department at Ball High School in Galveston has just finished a very busy year, with great success. In the fall, more than 150 students from kindergarten through 12th grade performed Roald Dahl's classic musical "Willy Wonka" at Ball High School at 8 p.m. on Dec. 10, 11 and 12, 2009 – a chocolate delight. "Willy Wonka" is Roald Dahl's timeless story of the world-famous candy man and his quest to find a worthy heir. It came to life in this stage adaptation of "Charlie and The Chocolate Factory" and features songs from the classic family film "Willy Wonka And The Chocolate Factory". To prepare, the cast rehearsed several hours each weekday evening and as many as eight hours on Saturday.

Ball High Theatre headed to the State Finals of the UIL One-Act Play Competition in Austin on May 8, after winning the Region meet on April 24 at San Jacinto College for their production of Equus. Numerous acting and technical awards were won at both levels of competition. For every performer on stage in a theatre - there are probably 3-5 technical theatre people involved, and the technical crew won the top award in the Regional meet. At State, 255 of a total of 274 5A schools entered and Ball finished in the top 8!

Students will perform select scenes and monologues from comic writers during their Stavanger visit, appropriate for all audiences.



**Scott Vernon,**  
Galveston Ball High School  
Theatre Faculty

## Galveston Tennis

The Galveston Tennis team represents a cross-section of the revitalization of tennis as a sport for youth in Galveston. Students in the Texas Days in Stavanger 2010 Tennis Team come from both Galveston and Texas City high schools. There are three boys and two girls who have both strong academic as well as athletic, talents.



### Boys:

- Junior, Texas City - Top 2 % of his class and has received numerous academic awards.
- Sophomore, Galveston - Plays varsity tennis and has qualified for state tournament in singles, doubles and mixed doubles. He volunteers as an assistant coach for junior summer tennis.
- Senior, Texas City – Academic honor roll, and began playing tennis at the age of 8. In 2006, he was part of the team that won the USTA Junior Team Tennis State Championship and has played high school varsity tennis since 2007. In his first of four years of high school, he earned the rare and honored accomplishment of the athletic school “Letter” and “varsity jacket.” He volunteers as an assistant at professional tournaments in Houston.

### Girls:

- Sophomore, Galveston - “Top 50” Students in Galveston, academic National Honor Society, and is currently #1 in her class. She has played tennis since she was 4 years old, and is now on the Ball High varsity tennis team. She is a SAVY volunteer at Moody Gardens, with the Aquarium, has played volleyball, and is a member of the “Eco Dream Team” at her school.
- Senior, Galveston - Top 5 % of her class and is active in academic National Honor Society and Rotary International, where she received the Rotary Youth Leadership Award. She has played at the #1 spot on the girls varsity team for all 4 years, and competed in many area tournaments, qualifying to play at the regional level.

**Barbara Sasser – Leader** - Coach Sasser has played competitive tennis for most of her life. She played national tournaments as a junior, college tennis and continues to compete at the national senior level. She enjoys teaching very young children, and has a grass court in her front yard. Coach Barbara Sasser volunteers to teach tennis to Ambassador’s Preparatory Academy, and serve the adult “Wimbledon on the Bayou” activities. She has lived full time in Galveston since 1977. She and her husband Dominic have owned several businesses and guide the Kempner Fund, which has provided significant aid in the rebuilding of Galveston after Hurricane Ike.

## Lamar High School Modern Dance

In keeping with the mission of Lamar High School as an IB World school, the arts are a form of human expression through activity. They contribute to the school curriculum by offering a distinctive way of learning where seeing, feeling, hearing, thinking, and creating are combined in a powerful form of visual, aural, and tactile affective communication.

Through the arts, students, working both cooperatively and individually have, opportunities to research, identify, and discuss issues; to provide insights, opinions, solutions, and resolutions; and to reflect on, appreciate, and evaluate art.

The arts are a powerful medium for the exploration of the human condition, our society, and the world. In this respect, they are a powerful educational tool for the exploration of self and others.

*Lamar Dance Theatre* is a performing arts, concert, dance ensemble. *LDT* is widely recognized as a first class performing company. Specializing in contemporary dance, this group performs throughout the year in concerts, recruiting shows, conventions, and guest appearances. The group consists of students from Modern Dance level 4 and Break Dance/Hip-Hop level 4 under the shared artistic direction of Ms. Penny Tschirhart and Ms. Meoka McBride.

*Lamar Dance Theatre* presents a student-based choreography concert in the fall and a formal concert in the spring consisting of faculty and guest artist choreography. The company has a regularly scheduled class period during the school day as well as after school rehearsals.

Participation in *Lamar Dance Theatre* is by audition only. Auditions are held each year in the spring.



## Lamar High School Madrigals



*The Mirabeau B. Lamar High School Department of Choral Activities* involves approximately 160 students in grades 9-12 and includes seven sections of ability based ensembles: Beginning Men, Beginning Women, JV Men, JV women, Concert Women, Chorale, and Madrigals. The students in Madrigals are also members of a traditional choir class. The department performs four major concerts a year: a traditional fall concert, “Sounds of the Season” winter concert, Pre-UIL concert and spring pop show. Approximately six choirs traditionally perform at Texas’s state based Concert and Sight-reading competition. The department participates in a spring trip, alternating in and out of state venues.

*The Lamar Madrigals* are a small ensemble (8-16 students) that performs a variety of music—from chamber choir to pop style music. The Madrigals serve as the department’s PR group and do a large amount of outside performances and competitions throughout the year. Participation in Lamar Madrigals is by audition only. Auditions are held each year in the spring.

**Mirabeau B Lamar High School**  
**3325 Westheimer Road**  
**Houston, Texas 77098-1003**  
**713-522-5960; 713-535-3769 (Fax)**

## Houston Area Track & Field Team



Houston is represented by a regional Track and Field team drawn from the several regional High Schools and Preparatory Schools, over the 4 years of high school.. There are representatives from:

- Concordia Lutheran High School in Tomball, Texas (Girl's State Champion in High Jump) and participates in Javelin.
- Episcopal High School in Bellaire, Texas (Boy's Preparatory All-conference in Cross Country and 800 meters)
- Houston Christian High School in Houston, Texas (Boy's 200 and 400 Meter Races, and the 4 x 100 Relay, and 4 x 400 Meter Relay)
- New Caney High School in New Caney (Girl's High Jump and 100 Meter Hurdles)
- St. John's School is sending several participating students and their coach:
  - Girl's Preparatory All-conference and school record in Discus; Shot-put
  - Girl's Preparatory All-conference and champion 300m Hurdles, High Jump, and the 4 x 400m Relay and 400 Meters
  - Girl's Participant in 100, 200, and 400 meters and the 4x100 and 4x400 relays
  - Two Boy's Senior Captains:
    - One is participating in the 4 x 100 Meter Relay.
    - The second runs cross country and is an all-purpose jumper, sprinter and hurdler. His best events are Triple Jump, Pole Vault, and 300m Hurdles.
  - Participant in High Jump and Javelin.

The team's Head Coach is Richie Mercado, St. John's School, with 26 years coaching athletics, including service to USATF as National Pole Vault Staff, Coaching Education Instructor, Jr. Elite Clinician and Heptathlon Jr. Coordinator. He organized the Houston-Galveston / Stavanger Sister City Society Festival Athletics competitions in 1992 in Houston and led the Houston-Galveston athletics team to Stavanger in 1994.

The team's Assistant Coach is his wife, Brenda Mercado, St. John's School, with 26 years coaching athletics, basketball, and field hockey. She was the Assistant Coach with the 1994 team to Stavanger.

# Hurricane Ike Documentary



Great Storm of 1900 Monument, Galveston Seawall, during Hurricane Ike, (Houston Chronicle)

**Hurricane Ike**, which struck Galveston and Houston on September 13, 2008, was the third most destructive hurricane to ever hit the United States. The most destructive was the **Galveston Great Storm of 1900**. Damages from Ike are estimated at \$27 billion (2008 USD), and if estimates are true, Ike was the fourth costliest Atlantic hurricane of all time and third costliest U.S. hurricane of all time.

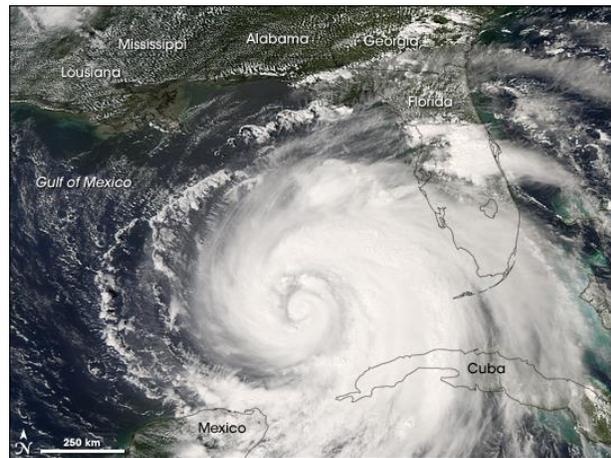
At one point the diameter of Ike's tropical storm and hurricane force winds were 550 and 240 miles (885 and 390 km), respectively, making Ike the most massive Atlantic hurricane recorded. Ike also had the highest IKE (Integrated Kinetic Energy) of any Atlantic storm in history, a measure of storm surge destructive potential, similar to the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Scale (Categories 1 up to 5). The immense size of the storm, nearly filling the Gulf of Mexico, coupled with the storm surge of the equivalent of a Category 4 hurricane, caused a 17-foot surge, with much of downtown Galveston entirely flooded to a depth of 8 feet (about 245 cm.), ruining businesses, homes, automobiles, and bringing with it, a year of clean-up and rebuilding.

Rising from that destruction, both people who stayed on the island during the storm, or those who struggled for up to three weeks to come home, began a massive effort, in a city without power, without gas, without safe drinking water, minimal phone service, and with basic services still reeling. Still, one month later, the island's schools reopened. Many of the children were displaced to tents, upper floors lacking full power or shelter, or staying with friends and relatives. Yet, this familiar routine gave stability to these children, and a means to sort out, grasp, and understand what had happened to them and their community.

In Galveston's Ball High School, the Film and Media Arts teacher and Film Club sponsor, Mr. Robert Weiss, then age 27, and who himself was "Born on the Island", and returned, has been able to channel a group of about 15 students through that year to document, chronicle, and tell the story of their people and their Community and now present it as living history to the world.

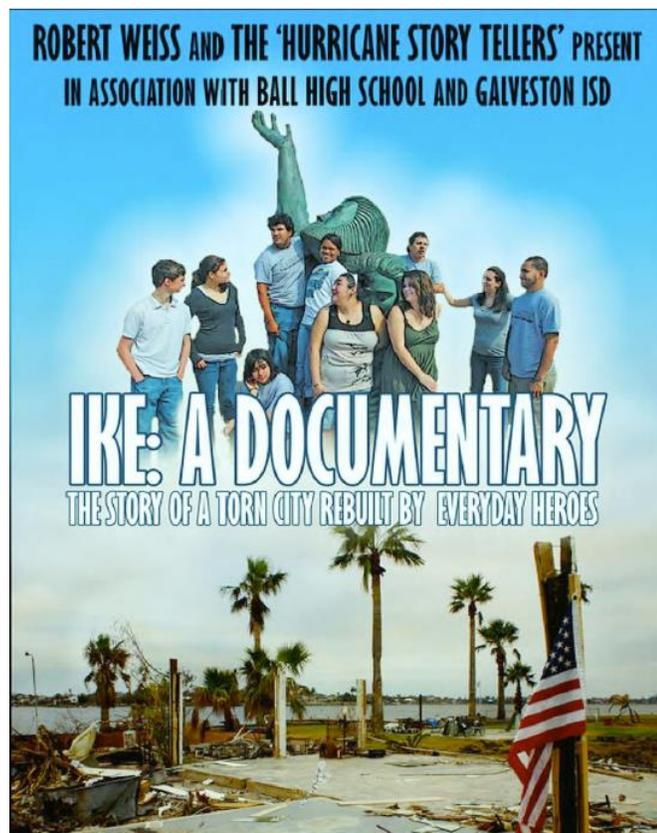
Mr. Weiss, along with these everyday students in the Advanced Media Technology (Film) class, became known as the "Hurricane Story Tellers". The project grew beyond telling their stories and their neighbors' stories, to learning interviewing skills, technical filming and editing skills, and ultimately, interviewing and being interviewed by U.S. media giants of our day. For this, Mr. Weiss earned the Galveston "Teacher of the Year, 2009" honor. The finished product, a documentary film, imbued the students with skills necessary to succeed in future journalistic and

He used his resources and talents, as well as his own native Galvestonian resolve, to assist these students to achieve this, and has seen to it that this film has been offered to the nation as a documentary for this first anniversary of Hurricane Ike, and to the film community via the entry into international-level film festivals. We are proud to present this film to our sister city, Stavanger.



(David J. Phillip-Pool/Getty Images)

<http://www.universetoday.com/2008/09/11/satellite-iss-images-of-hurricane-ike/>



To be presented Thursday, June 17, 2010 in Stavanger.

Grateful thanks to our sponsors and partners for making  
Texas Days in Stavanger 2010 possible.

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