

## Laurence J. "Larry" Payne

Forty (40) years of experience in public service, education and not-for-profit and religious leadership,

The Heart of HoUSton: Lessons in Servant Leadership, is Larry's most recent endeavor. The book explores ways in which we can create sustainable leadership, personal transformation and authentic involvement for individuals and organizations.

Larry is Vice President of The Desire Group – Human Capital Management, Education, Training and Consulting Firm, based in Houston.

Larry previously served as President and CEO of Houston Habitat for Humanity - America's leader in the building of affordable housing for underprivileged families. During his tenure he increased home production threefold and personally secured an endowment from Oprah Winfrey for 65 houses known as Angel Lane Subdivision for Katrina families.

Larry's career in public service includes notable positions at the city, state and congressional levels. As District Director for Congressman Mickey Leland, he managed the congressman's Texas-based programs, pre and post-election. Recognized in national circles, Larry was asked by Congressman Chris Bell to serve as his District Director. Larry oversaw all operations for the 25<sup>th</sup> Congressional District with oversight of offices in Houston, Pasadena and Baytown.

Prior to serving representatives from Congress, Larry established himself at the city level where he served as Executive Advisor and Consultant to Houston Mayor Lee Brown on issues of diversity, education and community initiatives. In addition, Larry served as Houston's Deputy City Controller under George Greanias and Directed Houston City Council Agenda for Houston Mayor Kathy Whitmire.

The recipient of the Knights of St. Peter Claver Justice Award, a National Award given to select individuals who exemplify outstanding community service, Larry's love to serve extends also into leadership roles within the Roman Catholic Church; including Executive Director of the Office of Social Development for the ArchDiocese of Minneapolis / St. Paul, Vicar of Urban Affairs for the Diocese of Belleville, Illinois, and Director of Community Relations for the ArchDiocese of Galveston-Houston.

Dedicated and committed to community service, Larry was selected by his alma mater, The University of St. Thomas, as their Alumni of the Year for 2007.

Larry's background demonstrates his passion for educational issues. Larry served as the former President of the Greater Houston Coalition for Educational Excellence and alliance of the Greater Houston Partnership and as the Director of Community, Institutional, and Governmental Relations for the Institute for Urban Public Education at the University of Houston. In addition, Larry's was a consultant for William H. Sadler Publishers, Inc. in New York as an advisor on multicultural urban education issues.

Outspoken on education and social justice issues, Larry brought his interest to the public with a weekly Public Affairs TV show "Dialogue Houston", now in its 21<sup>st</sup> year, where challenges of leadership and the changing demographics in the Greater Houston area are discussed and airs on Houston Community College (HCC-TV) and KUBE-TV, Channel 57. With the popularity of his TV show, Larry added "Interchange," a weekly radio show on KYND-AM (1520) to his mix of programs he hosts to serve the public interest.

Larry's actively participates in the following community organizations: The American Leadership Forum; The Institute for Spirituality and Health; The Greater Houston Women's Foundation; Children At Risk; The National Conference for Community and Justice; Houston Graduate School of Theology; Interfaith Ministries; Leadership Houston; Center for Houston's Future; Teach for America; The University of St. Thomas - Social Justice Committee; Education Foundation of Harris County; Catholic Charities; and Ser-Ninos Public Charter School.