



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **THE HOUSTON READ COMMISSION SELECTS NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

***Sheri Suarez Foreman, former Chief Operating Officer, accepts the role of Executive Director***

(Houston, Texas) October, 2009 – Sheri Suarez Foreman became the Houston READ Commission’s new Executive Director on September 15, 2009, after a year as Chief Operating Officer of the organization. Harrison Williams, Chairman of the Board notes, “Sheri has proven herself over the past year with the READ Commission to be a most capable executive. In her new post of Executive Director, the Board has no doubt that she will surpass even her own great performance.”

When asked her vision for the organization named the Mayor’s Coalition for Literacy, Ms. Foreman stated, “I see the Houston READ Commission’s primary function as advocating for adult education. The Commission should serve as a single voice for adult education providers in Houston and access resources from private and public entities at the city, state, and federal levels to improve the quality of adult education programming in Houston.”

Sheri comes to the Houston READ Commission with experience in non-profit, educational, and for-profit organizations, such as Sheltering Arms Senior Services, Texas A&M University, The University of Colorado, College of The Canyons, The Small Business Development Center and most recently the Alley Theatre. Ms. Foreman attended Texas A&M for both her undergraduate and graduate work and completed her MBA in 2009.

### **About the Houston READ Commission**

In 1988, Mayor Kathy Whitmire established the Houston READ Commission (HRC) to promote adult literacy efforts in Houston on a scale that could not be achieved by individual literacy providers. Though many adult

education providers have taken on the responsibility of promoting themselves, there remain nearly fifty providers with over one hundred sites in Houston that do not have the resources to do so. HRC's job, therefore, is to ensure that these literacy agencies, represented as The Mayor's Coalition for Literacy, have not just a voice, but also an evident impact on Houston's low-literate population. Shockingly, one in three adult Houstonians is functionally illiterate (National Institute for Literacy). There must be a coordinated effort among all literacy agencies to stop this epidemic and reverse the effects of intergenerational functional low-literacy. This is the Houston READ Commission's charge. HRC is non-profit 501(c)3 organization committed to leading and mobilizing a coalition of literacy providers and resources to improve the literacy landscape of Houston. Because low-literacy takes shape in many forms, HRC offers oversight, training and best practices support of Adult Basic Education, English as a Second Language, GED preparation, and financial, health, workplace and computer education. The Commission also points potential students and volunteers to educational programming at the agency closest to them, through its Literacy Helpline.