



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**HOUSTON CELEBRATES GIS DAY 2004 AT THE UNIVERSITY OF  
HOUSTON-DOWNTOWN CAMPUS WITH NUMEROUS ELECTED  
OFFICIALS, BUSINESS LEADERS AND AREA STUDENTS**

“KPRC TV 2 Chief Meteorologist Frank Billingsley is serving as the Keynote Speaker”

(Houston, Texas) ---- On Thursday, November 18 and Friday, November 19, 2004, the University of Houston-Downtown Campus, located at One Main Street in the Central Business District, will serve as the site for the greater Houston region’s official Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Day 2004 celebrations being presented by the Geographic Data Committee of the Houston-Galveston Area Council.

Starting at 9:00am on November 18<sup>th</sup>, GIS Day 2004 Opening Session will feature a variety of attendees and participants including: Houston City Council Member(s) Addie Wiseman, Ada Edwards, Carol Mims Galloway, Harris County Public Infrastructure Director Art Storey, Texas Southern University Associated Dean for External Affairs Carroll G. Robinson, University of Houston Professor Dr. Alberto Gomez-Rivas, Harris County Precinct Two Deputy Commissioner Roel Garcia and Michael Marcotte, Director of Public Works & Engineering for the City of Houston.

On Friday, November 19<sup>th</sup> starting at 9:30am, almost 400 students from the Houston Independent School District will be attending informative GIS presentations, participating in geography quizzes, visiting with exhibitors, working in an internet lab and using real GIS applications.

Geographic Information Systems or GIS Day 2004 is an international event that celebrates and recognizes the innovative ways in which GIS technologies are used to provide increased efficiency and the delivery of critical services to citizens by government agencies and private corporations.

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This technology is employed to address problems and challenges in many critical areas including homeland security, emergency response, environmental protection, health care, public works, zoning and land use, business site selection and many other areas.

According to numerous industry reports and academic studies, most citizens are unaware they are using and benefiting from GIS technology when they access a bank's automated teller machine, view maps online and secure driving directions, receive an overnight delivery, rent a DVD or even order fast food from a national food-chain retailer.

Maria Vera, Member of the Geographic Data Committee with the Houston-Galveston Area Council and GIS Coordinator for Houston TranStar, the transportation and emergency management center for the greater Houston region states, "It is my sincere hope that through high-profile events like GIS Day 2004 which continues to grow every year in terms of interests, awareness and participation, we can build that same kind of broad-based knowledge, fellowship and comradery that has fueled many new accomplishments and innovations on behalf of citizens across the greater Houston region and the nation".

Sponsors of GIS Day 2004 include: Duke Energy, Claunch & Miller, Inc., Information Builders, LJA Engineering, Lockwood, Andrews & Newman, Inc., PBS&J, URISA, Kucera, ZEH and the Houston-Galveston Area Council.

Exhibitors for GIS Day 2004 include: Harris County Flood Control District, SES, Cobb Fendley & Associates, Houston Department of Health and Human Services, METRO, Applied Field Data Systems, Inc., Collins Software, City of Sugar Land, Texas, Harris County Information Technology Center, City of Houston Public Works & Engineering Department, North Harris College, Fort Bend Independent School District, Fort Bend County, Harris County Mosquito Control, Texas Department of Transportation, Rice University, San Jacinto College, Baker, ESRI, University of Houston-Downtown Campus, Tri-Global Technologies, Ltd., Harris County Public Infrastructure Department and Houston TranStar.

For more information about GIS Day 2004, interview opportunities and request or for a schedule of events, please contact Maria Vera, GIS Coordinator for Houston TranStar at 713-881-3278 or Carol Gaines, Harris County Information Technology Center at 713-755-8385.

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