

TX WISE Newsletter

Q2 2022

Welcome!

This is our newsletter for second quarter, 2022. The newsletter has a fresh new look, and we welcome your feedback. We also welcome your ideas for new features and content, so please send suggestions to the [WISE TX Teams site](#), or via [e-mail](#).



Second Quarter Events and Observations

April 2022

- Diversity Month
- Autism Awareness Month

May 2022

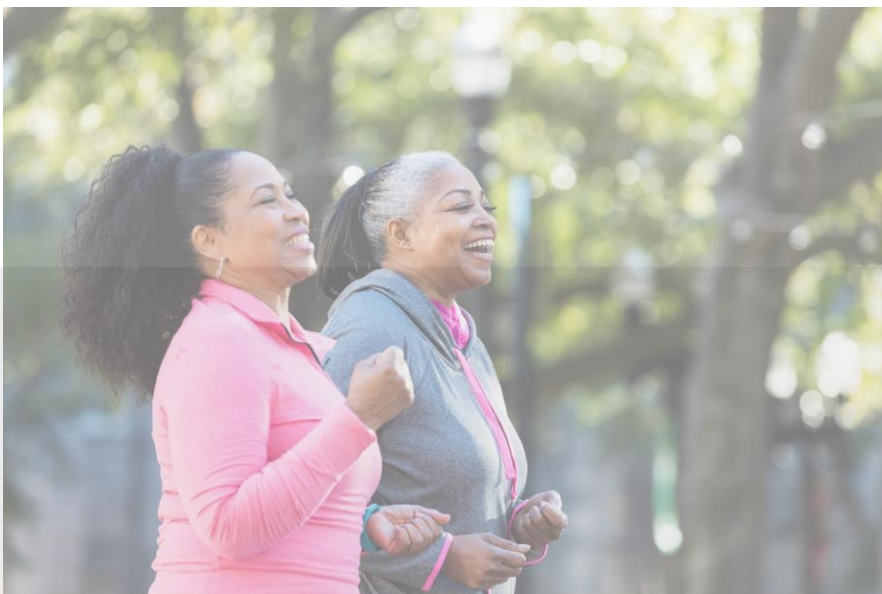
- Asian Pacific American Heritage Month
- Older Americans Month
- Jewish American Heritage Month
- Mental Health Awareness Month

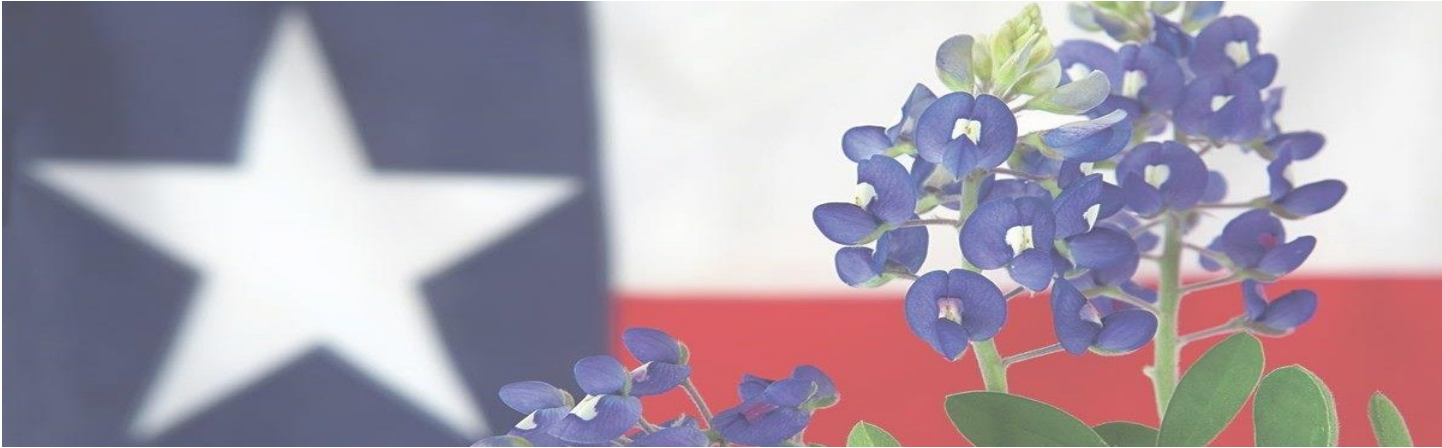
June 2022

- LGBTQ Pride Month
- Immigrant Heritage Month

In this issue...

- Q2 2022 Events and Observations
- Volunteer Survey
- Getting to know YOU! Featured members
- Special Feature: Local Woman Business Owner, Erica LeCross
- Book Club





News and Announcements

WISE TX Volunteer Challenge 2022

We are hosting a Volunteer Challenge Grant (VCG) community outreach event to support local non-profits and community organizations beginning in early Q3 2022. Stay tuned for more details!



Getting to Know **YOU!**



Lia Rodriguez

Medical Director of
Clinical Quality in Medical
Affairs, Aetna

Houston, TX

Favorite Hobby

Loves to cook and try new
recipes



Angelita (Angie) Rogers

Senior Manager, Network
Management, North
Texas

New Braunfels, TX

Favorite Hobby

Watching movies and
reading books



Stacy Wolfe

Manager of Plan
Sponsor Services
Learning & Performance

Weatherford, TX

Favorite Hobby

Travel, deal shopping,
audibles, research



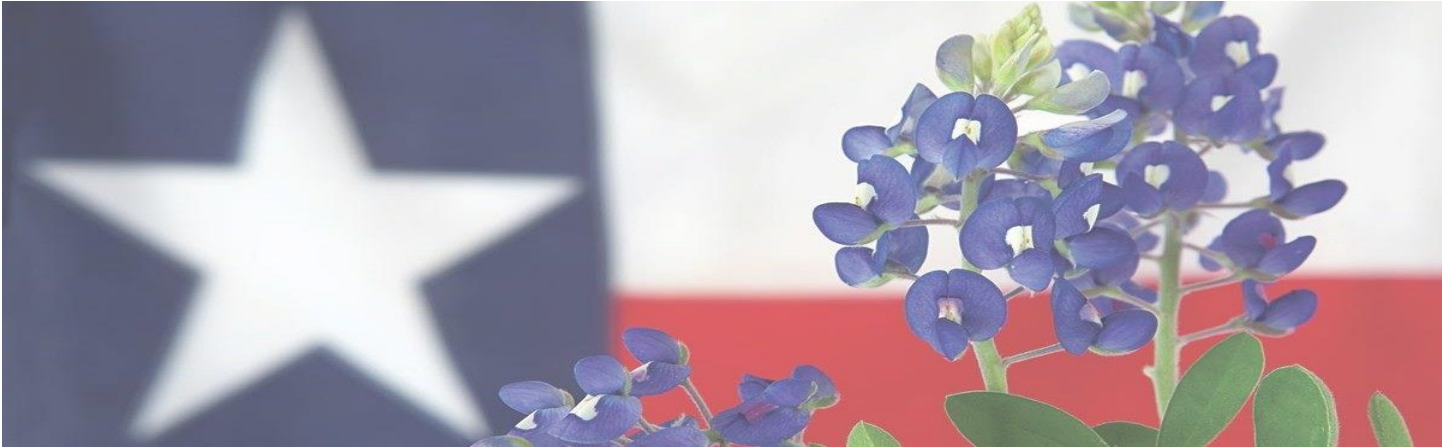
Trishia Bertrand

District Leader- Retail
Pharmacy

Crosby, TX

Favorite Hobby

Learning



Special Feature: Local Woman Business Owner

Meet Erica LeCross – Owner, Cross & Co. Salon, Plano, Texas



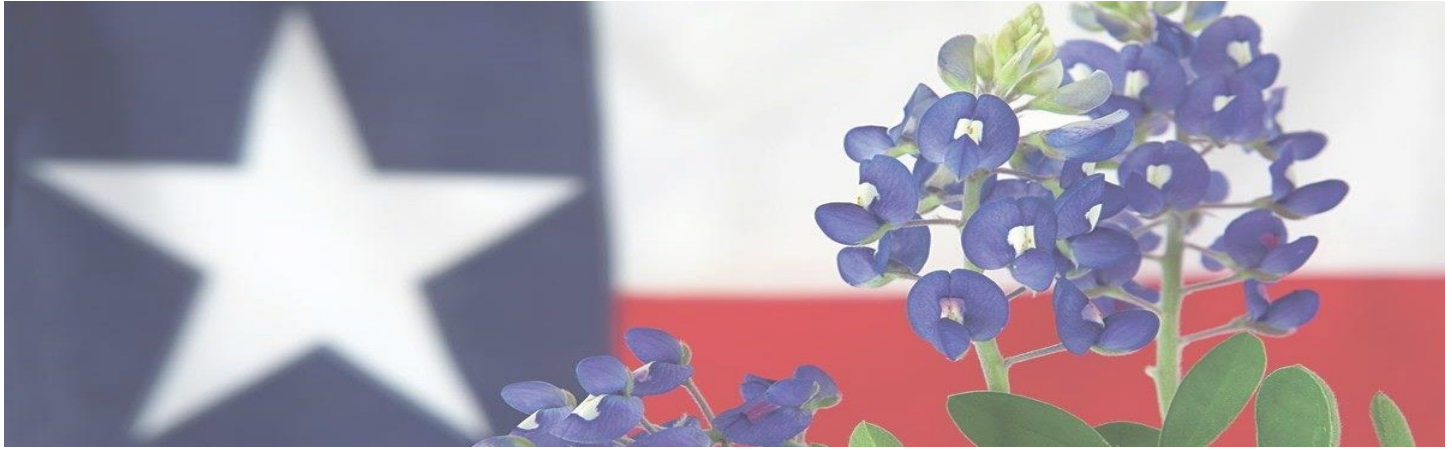
In this issue, we are featuring Erica LeCross, owner and operator of Cross & Co., a salon that specializes in naturally curly hair. Erica's brand core values – **empathy, education, and encouragement** – align with our WISE mission of **providing colleagues, especially women, with educational, mentoring, and** volunteer opportunities, **and promoting empowerment and networking skills.** Through her work, she cultivates confidence in her clients by teaching them how to work *with* their natural curls, not against them. Recently, Erica, who is also a “curly,” shared her story from finishing beauty school to opening her own salon in

Plano. In the last decade, she has been steadfast in her commitment to her personal dream, hustling, overcoming challenges, and staying flexible as circumstances changed.

Erica's journey began with a simple goal: work in the beauty industry. Recognizing that **education** was key, she attended cosmetology school and graduated in 2011.

She started her career as a hairdresser at blowout salon (a salon that specializes in hair drying and event hairstyling). While doing blowouts, she made two important discoveries: her affinity for styling curly hair, and her entrepreneurial nature. She worked as an independent hairstylist for a short time, but her first attempt was unsuccessful because she “didn't have the support system, experience, or knowledge...” and she “wasn't in the headspace to be successful.” Her husband got a job in San Francisco, so he and Erica moved, and Erica tried something new: lashes. Although she loved San Francisco, she and her husband moved back to Texas about a year later. “I wasn't feeling fulfilled with hair before I moved to California, and I wasn't feeling fulfilled with lashes when I moved back to Texas,” Erica explained.

*“Nights,
evenings,
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Meet Erica LeCross – Owner, [Cross & Co. Salon, Plano, Texas](#) (continued)

She knew she had to find her place in the beauty world. She told her husband, “I feel like hair is where I’m supposed to be, but I want to do it on my own, I want to do it with my brand, and I want to do it with curls.” She had no curly clients, so she started by doing lashes and curly hair at a suite she rented in Addison, while working part-time at a blowout salon. She planned to eventually phase out blowouts and lashes so she could focus on curly clients only. “Nights, evenings, weekends, whenever, however, I needed to make it happen.”

Meanwhile, her husband got another great job offer in San Francisco. So, while Erica sharpened her skills in Addison, she visited San Francisco occasionally to build clientele and find the perfect retail space for her salon. She and her husband would move back to San Francisco in Summer of 2020. They had a plan, and the sky was the limit. What could go wrong?

Erica’s plans halted in March 2020 when the Governor ordered non-essential businesses to close due to the pandemic. Suddenly Erica had down time, much of which she spent worrying, “Am I being lazy? Am I slacking? Is time passing me by?” But she persisted and kept busy during the shutdown by continuing her hairdressing education. Recognizing the need to adapt, she told her husband, “Our dream of California isn’t going to happen, so let’s make another dream happen in Texas.” That’s how Erica ended up with a storefront in Plano.

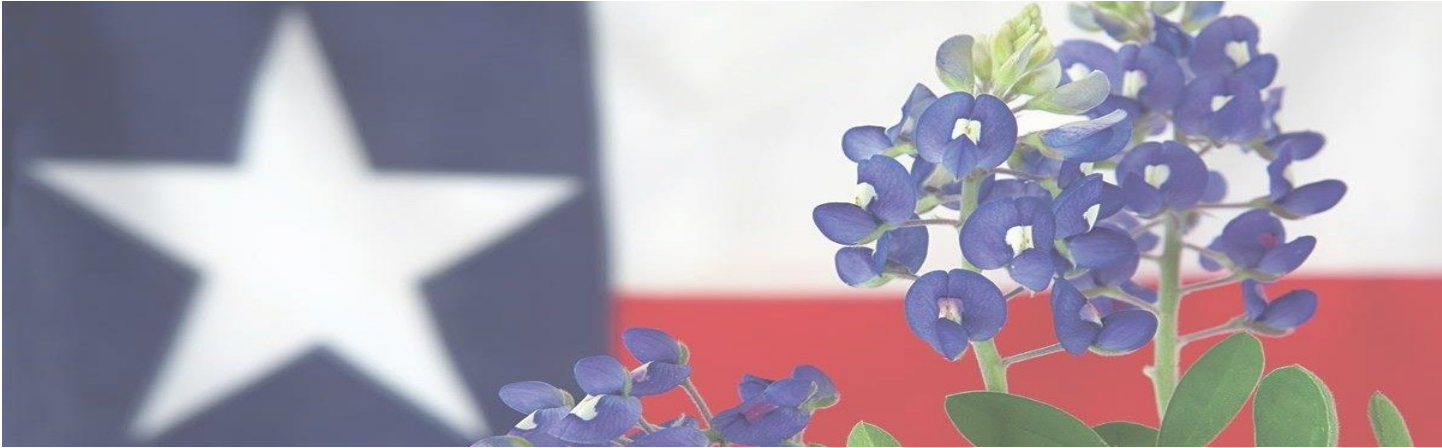
Although she was unsuccessful the first time she went independent, this time was different. *She* was different; she had knowledge, clientele, a support system, and confidence that she didn’t have before. Plus, demand had grown for curl specialists, perhaps because many embraced a natural look during lockdown. By 2021, Erica had her own salon, [Cross & Co. Salon](#), and an awesome team that included her sister, [Veronica](#), who was (and still is) the manager and receptionist, and several talented hairstylists.

Erica’s salon is her dream – “...I want to do it on my own, I want to do it with my brand, and I want to do it with curls” – turned reality. Her brand’s core values of **empathy, education, and encouragement** are central to her business. Clients feel *seen* and *heard* when they share their natural curl experiences (and often, their frustrations). Stylists gently *encourage* and *teach* their clients hairstyling techniques that actually **work**. Clients leave the salon feeling *uplifted* and *confident*, **proud** of their natural curls.

Behind the scenes, Erica helps the stylists take their careers to the next level by going independent. She *encourages* and *shares her knowledge and experience* with them. In fact, some of the stylists working at Cross & Co. have already gone independent and still work in the salon. The stylists clearly like and respect each other, *supporting* and *learning from one another*.

So, what’s next for Erica? Today, she is committed to growing her brand and helping all Cross & Co. stylists go independent. She herself no longer does hair because mentorship and running the business are her top priorities. Although she hasn’t slowed down since she opened Cross & Co., she hopes to eventually have time for other teaching opportunities, and giving back to her community, maybe by offering free haircuts in underserved communities, or other charitable efforts. Whatever Erica decides to do in the future, one thing is certain: she will **hustle** to make it happen. Until then, she continues to create an exceptional salon experience for clients and stylists alike.

Although we in WISE TX don’t work in the same industry as Erica LeCross, we share the same core values: **providing colleagues, especially women, with educational, mentoring, and** volunteer opportunities, **and promoting empowerment and networking skills**. Erica and the stylists of Cross & Co. know they are doing more than hair in their daily work. In Erica’s words, they help their clients, and each other, “tap into the confidence that empowers them.”



WISE TX – Book Club

Girls Need More Moms as STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) Role Models

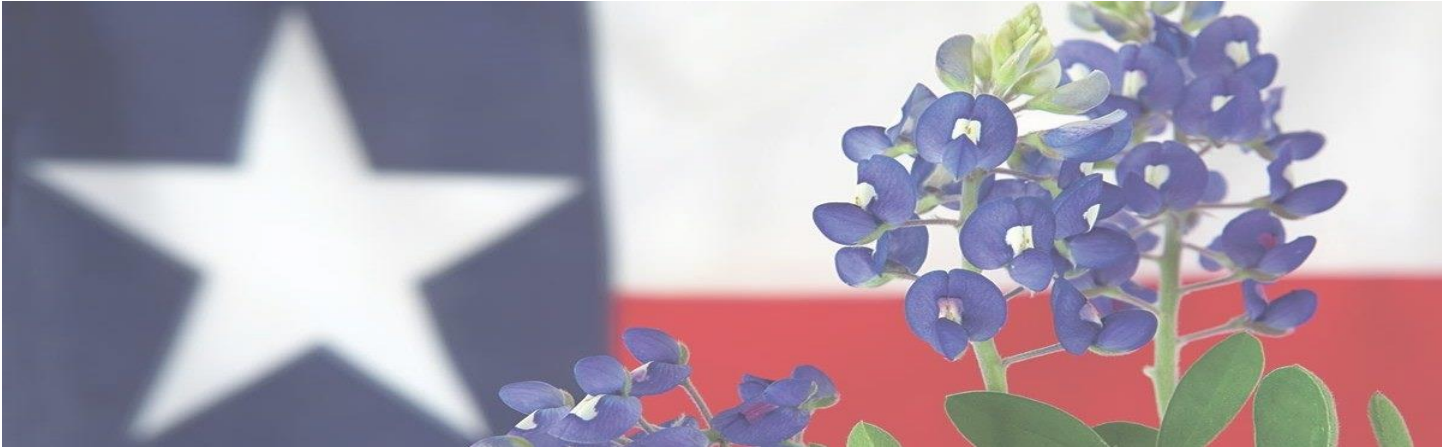
Check out this article by our **amazing** WISE member, Bhuvan Mittal! [Girls Need More Moms as STEM Role Models](#)



Want to truly succeed? Lift others up while you climb.

Watch this inspirational, inspiring [TED Talk](#) by Amber Hikes.



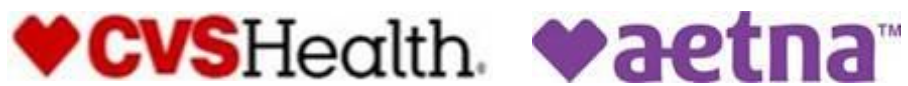


We're in this together!

We in TX WISE are mourning the lives lost in recent mass shootings, including the lives lost in the horrific Robb Elementary School shooting.

If you need support, please reach out, seek help, and [take advantage of our internal resources.](#)

We'll get through this together – We just have to be WISE.



WISE Women Inspiring
Success and Excellence

