



Petra Cares Executive Director, Brian Meza

## WELCOME FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

BRIAN MEZA

*"We are so grateful to be able to help so many in our backyard of Houston, and we look forward to the future as we know we have only just begun!"*

We are filled with great anticipation and excitement as we welcome all the amazing young people who will enroll in Petra Cares in 2024! This will be a year of growth and expansion as we add new cities and classes, all to reach more of these precious young people that need a viable pathway forward in life. Petra Cares is committed to removing obstacles and providing top notch training to provide onramps for our students to graduate and enter the work force, and ultimately support a family of their own.

We are doing this at a pace that is catching the attention of others in the foster care world in Texas and beyond. It is now common for us to receive inquiries asking how Petra Cares can start in "their city," as word is travelling in the CPS world. While that's nice to hear, it truly is the fuel that keeps our fire going, as we know there are thousands of young people across this country that need something like Petra Cares. We are so grateful to be able to help so many in our backyard of Houston, and we look forward to the future as we know we have only just begun! Your continued support and belief in our mission makes all this possible, and that makes all the difference in the world!

Sincerely,



## CLASS HIGHLIGHTS

We started 2024 with a bang! Our first class commenced in January with 9 students. 7-weeks later, we graduated 8, and placed 7 of them in fantastic jobs! Big shout out to Fred Haas Toyota Country for hiring 6 of our students. The sky is the limit!


Our 2nd class of Spring is in full swing! We have 10 new bright and eager students enrolled and are brimming with optimism to learn how to become a level 1 auto tech! We can't wait to share with you in the coming weeks where they will be placed as they complete the training program. One thing we know for sure is they will have a solid career path ahead of them, and a certificate of completion they can use anywhere for employment to ensure a brighter future with career advancement opportunities. This is truly a life-changing opportunity!

## PETRA CARES LOS ANGELES

We are excited to announce that Petra Cares will be launching in Los Angeles, California this Fall of 2024! An amazing door has opened for us to expand our reach and impact, as Puente Hills Ford owner, Brady Schmidt has offered to house the program at his dealership! The dealership has ample classroom space and a bay to train and gain experience working under the hood. We will be hiring a local professor and program director from the LA area. The program will be a turnkey operation mirroring our Houston chapter. Stay tuned as we will be providing more details as we approach the start date.

# A LIFE TRANSFORMED

Watch this amazing journey for one of our first students at Petra Cares.

 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UKV8TiRnwKI&t=10s>



## PETRA CARES GALA HIGHLIGHT VIDEO

The inaugural Petra Cares gala, Pathway to The Future, was a huge success! It was a wonderful evening filled with laughs, great food and music, and a stunning artistic painting, all while enjoying a panoramic view of our great city, raising funds for a worthy cause. But the best part of the evening was meeting Richard and hearing his story. He left a lasting impression on us all. To all our supporters, volunteers, and staff, you made this evening one for the books! Here's to next year and meeting our next Richard.

[Watch our video](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C5tGy6Rx65U>

## IN THE NEWS

Community Impact March 2024;  
Automotive News Magazine (insert link).

[Read the Article](#)

<https://www.autonews.com/service-and-parts/turning-foster-system-kids-automotive-technicians>

## AGING OUT INSTITUTE

Listen to our Executive Director on the Aging Out Institute Podcast. If you have some time to spare, this will give you a look under the hood, if you will, to the dilemma of youth aging out of foster care, and how Petra Cares is reaching out to these individuals.

[Podcast](#)

<https://agingoutinstitute.podbean.com/e/episode-090-interview-with-brian-mesa-with-petra-cares-cypress-tx/>

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### GRADUATION

Join us for our spring graduation at Lone Star College, honoring our first two graduating classes of 2024!

Please RSVP to:  
Petra Cares Spring 2024 Graduation Ceremony

**Date** | Friday, May 10th 2024

**Location** | Lone Star College, University Park Campus,  
Visual Performing Arts Center  
930 University Park Campus Dr. Houston, Texas 77070

6:30pm – Doors open

7:00pm – Ceremony Begins

8:30pm – Dessert Reception following ceremony

### SITE VISIT: LUNCH AND LEARN

“Come and See” what happens in a Petra Cares class! We want to invite you to our first Lunch and Learn, where you will get to see one of our classes in action and meet the students! We will gather for a quick lunch at Petra, and hear about the vision of Petra Cares, while hearing a testimony from a former student who is currently employed and excelling in life.

**Watch your email for upcoming dates and times!**