

Fort Bend/Katy

Fort Bend's ONLY Business News Source

Business Journal

Volume 28 • No. 10

THE BUSINESS LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

OCTOBER 2010



Memorial Hermann Southwest sets the standard in laparoscopic surgical procedures

MEMORIAL HERMANN
Southwest

INSIDE STORIES

- Busy LaCenterra Plans Phase II Development
- Where Are You In Your Life?
- Fort Bend Chamber of Chamber Newsletter
- There's an Exciting Raceway in Katy

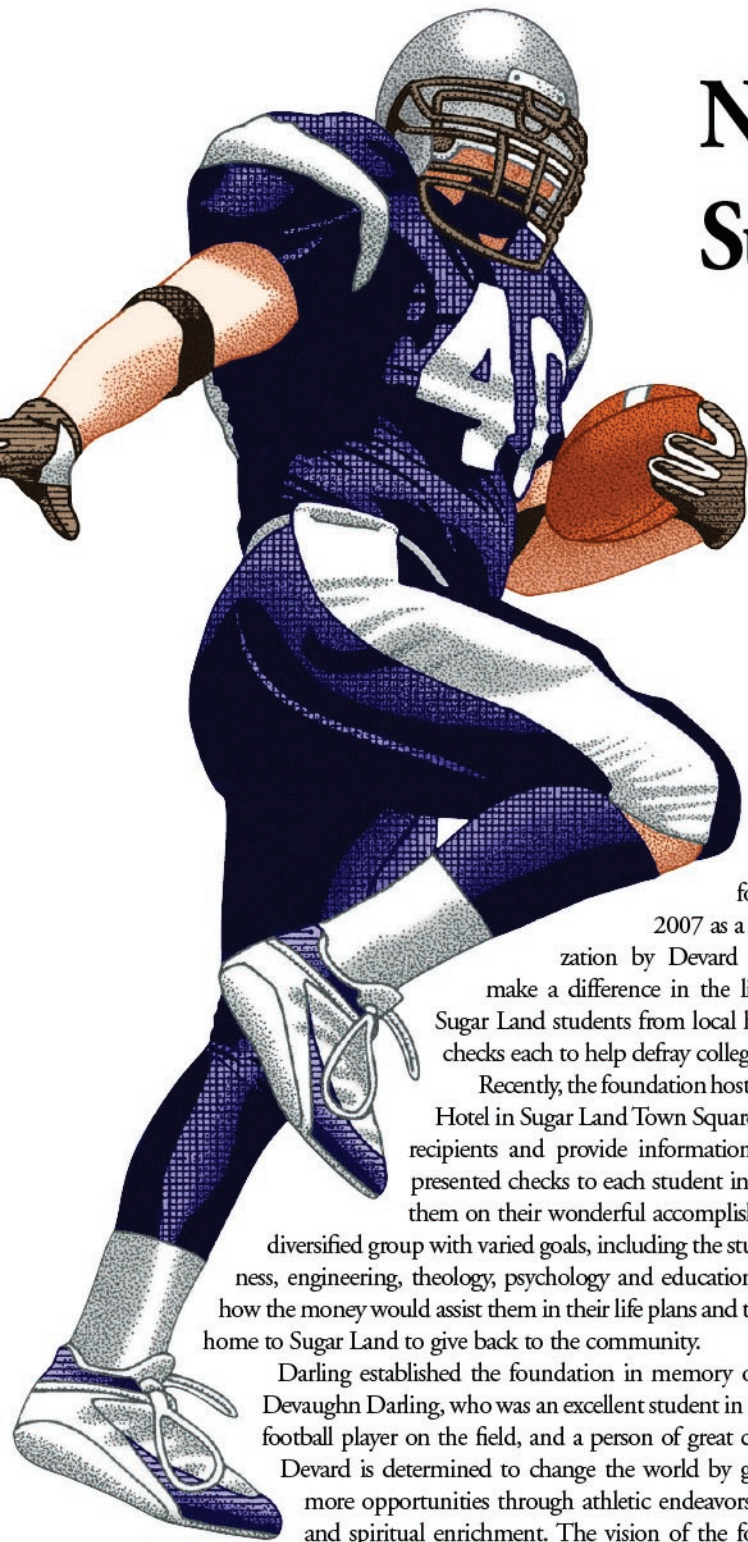
General surgeons George Peterkin, M.D., Guillermo Ponce De Leon, M.D., John Fisher, M.D., Charles Aramburo, M.D., Michael Kleinman, M.D., and Michael Todd Wood, M.D., celebrate HealthGrades ranking Memorial Hermann Southwest's General Surgery department in the top 5 percent of U.S. hospitals for three consecutive years.

Photo by Larry Pullen Photography

\$4.95

PRSRST STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 600
HOUSTON, TEXAS

NFL player rewards Sugar Land scholars



By Dori Wind

This is the second year the As One Foundation rewarded local scholars for their civic as well as academic achievements. The foundation was created in

2007 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization by Devard Darling and his family to make a difference in the lives of others. This year 10 Sugar Land students from local high schools received \$1,000 checks each to help defray college costs this year.

Recently, the foundation hosted a luncheon at the Marriott Hotel in Sugar Land Town Square to recognize the scholarship recipients and provide information about the charity. Devard presented checks to each student individually and congratulated them on their wonderful accomplishments. The students were a diversified group with varied goals, including the study of medicine, music, business, engineering, theology, psychology and education. Each student spoke about how the money would assist them in their life plans and thanked Devard for returning home to Sugar Land to give back to the community.

Darling established the foundation in memory of his identical twin brother, Devaughn Darling, who was an excellent student in the classroom, an exceptional football player on the field, and a person of great character. Through its works, Devard is determined to change the world by giving underprivileged youth more opportunities through athletic endeavors, educational programming, and spiritual enrichment. The vision of the foundation is to support and enhance youth development by providing youth-centered activities and opportunities to develop character, values, sportsmanship, responsibility and positive relationships through a foundation that is supported and valued both nationally and internationally.

The foundation celebrates the life of the twins. Until their actual birth, the doctor heard only one heartbeat. The logo of the foundation shows two hearts locked together as one. Born in the Bahamas, the twins watched American football on television, scrimmaged with neighborhood children and dreamed about the day they would play for the NFL. In addition to fostering educational objectives, the foundation also holds the Devard and Devaughn Football Camps for youth in the Bahamas during the summer.

When the twins were 12 years old, their parents moved to Texas and they began their football careers in middle school. They played at Austin High School in Sugar Land and

then received scholarships to play for Florida State University. While at FSU, tragedy struck when Devaughn collapsed and subsequently died from football-related complications. Controversy swirled around his death when the FSU coaches said his demise was related to sickle-cell anemia, but the official death certificate said it was overexertion from excessive, exhaustive workouts.

Devard explained: "Losing my brother was devastating. We had been inseparable until the day he died. I lost half of myself that day." To make matters worse, Devard was discouraged from playing football at FSU because the school was afraid he might also have medical problems. Devard knew he was healthy and that now, more than ever, he was determined to get to the NFL. He transferred to Washington State and continued playing football. Even though he was an excellent player, medical rumors continued to plague him. Would the NFL draft him or pass him over?

Finally, in a third round of the 2004 NFL draft, he was chosen to play for the Baltimore Ravens. He has played wide-receiver at Baltimore for four years (2004-2007); Kansas City for two years (2008-2009); and is currently signed with the Omaha Nighthawks. As Devard's dream to play professional football came to fruition, he took his brother with him in spirit and soul. He taped a picture of Devaughn, over his heart, underneath his football padding for every game.

As One is an acronym for Athletics, Spirituality, Opportunity Need Education. Funding for the charity includes donations from the Darling family, NFL charities and numerous individual contributors. For more information about this philanthropic organization, to obtain scholarship applications, or to make a tax deductible donation, contact Executive Director Tomia Austin by phoning 832-308-9984, emailing Tomia@AsOneFoundation.org or visiting the website at www.AsOneFoundation.org. In addition to contributing online through the website, donations can be mailed to 6725 S. Fry Rd., Ste. 700#296, Katy, TX 77494.