

PATRON

ART / CULTURE / DESIGN



Home in Harmony

Dance Fever:
Texas Ballet Theater &
Dallas Black Dance Theatre

The Nasher's Composer-in-Residence

CHARITABLY CHIC

Influencers shine the spotlight on their favorite causes with the new NorthPark Center Luxury Ambassador program.

Philanthropy has always been a hallmark of the city we live in, and Dallasites are famed for giving back with a generous combination of money, time, and spirit. Launching this December, the new NorthPark Luxury Ambassador Program allows those who have refined charity into an art the opportunity to garner further exposure for their favorite causes. Conceptualized by NorthPark co-owner Nancy Nasher and chaired by Kimberly Schlegel Whitman, the program is a logical extension from the legendary shopping center's "50 Years of Giving" birthday celebration in 2015.

Says Whitman, "When I came on board, this is something they proposed to me that I could spearhead, and I loved the idea of it. Of course, I love anything that has a philanthropic angle. This is a neat way for NorthPark to get to the root of the people that keep (the center) alive, these wonderful and active shoppers."

Starting with a list of 100 influencers, Whitman

helped narrow the first year's final roster down to 12 participants (two more of which you'll find on patronmagazine.com), a task that initially seemed as daunting as these magnanimous multitaskers settling on a single cause. "It was so hard to narrow it down, but these are people we really felt like we could kind of guess what nonprofit they would pick," says Whitman. "They are very active in two or three nonprofits, but they're very devoted to those. We picked people who really want to make a difference."

Each yearlong ambassadorship offers the opportunity to partner with NorthPark for events such as shopping nights that will benefit their favorite North Texas nonprofit institutions. However, the goal remains quite singular according to its chairwoman: "We want to be supportive of the ambassadors and their nonprofit needs. I hope the program always evolves to be relevant to what's going on in our city."

THE REGAL LEGAL

Kathleen Wu

An advocate for women in the workplace, a winner of the “Women of Spirit” Award from the American Jewish Congress, and winner of the Justice David Wellington Chew Award from the State Bar of Texas, powerhouse lawyer Kathleen Wu is a fixture on “Best Lawyer” lists—both locally and nationwide. Known for her work in diversity and inclusion, this New-Yorker-turned-Texan takes a personal approach in her propensity for giving.

“I was adopted and a foster child in foster care,” she explains. “A lot of amazing things that have happened in my life are a credit to how I was raised and the generosity others have given me along the way. I’ve been given so much, when you get to a phase in your life you have the opportunity to give back, I look for places where I can really add value and have impact.”

For Wu’s Ambassadorship, she’s narrowed down her choice to the United States Tennis Association Foundation, where she serves on the board. The organization, which brings tennis and education together to change lives, reaches more than 225,000 under-resourced youth throughout the country, awarding scholarships, providing grants, and helping develop skills both on the courts and in the classroom. “It brings tennis to kids who are under-represented and under-served,” says Wu. “The focus is really on creating the whole child using tennis as a vehicle. It helps keep them safe and become productive citizens.”

Wu says one of her earliest memories was standing outside a tennis court in her local park, watching with interest but not enough confidence to ask for lessons. Because of her work, a new generation of kids won’t have to stand on the sidelines, in the playground, or at the halls of learning. “Ninety percent of the recipients of (USTA) scholarships attend college for four years, and the Dallas program is one of the most successful ones in the country,” says Wu. “It’s combining health and fitness with education, and I get to see how we can strategically improve people’s lives—both on the national level and here in South Dallas.”

