

Dawn Ullrich

President & CEO, Houston First Corporation



Dawn Ullrich grew up in Barron, Wisconsin and attended the University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire, majoring in political science and business administration. During college, she worked summers at Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico where she met her husband, Lee, a native Houstonian. Following graduation, she moved to Houston and received a law degree from the University of Houston in 1982.

While attending law school, she began working as a legal assistant in the City's

Legal Department. Upon receiving her law license, she became an assistant city attorney in the Corporate Section. Her responsibilities included oversight of the City's legislative program as well as negotiation and drafting a variety of City contracts and regulatory ordinances. Those tasks entailed many assignments related to the Convention & Entertainment Facilities Department and led to an opportunity to join the staff as the assistant director in 1992.

In 2002, the Mayor appointed Ullrich as the Department director and the City

Council confirmed that appointment shortly thereafter. In 2004, Ullrich also became the President of the Houston Convention Center Hotel Corporation, the local government corporation which owns and operates the Hilton Americas Houston. In July 2011, the Hotel Corporation became Houston First Corporation as a result of the consolidation of the Department and the Hotel Corporation. Ullrich's titles and the scope of her responsibilities remain unchanged. In July 2014, Houston First realigned its efforts with the Greater Houston Convention & Visitors Bureau. Ms. Ullrich is President and CEO of the aligned organization.

The Corporation is responsible for the management and operation of the Hilton Americas-Houston, George R. Brown Convention Center, Miller Outdoor Theatre, Wortham Theater Center, Jones Hall, Talento Bilingue de Houston, Jones Plaza, the Theater District Parking garage, and a host of smaller municipal properties. The Department also serves as the City's contract administrator for agreements with Bayou Place, Hobby Center, Toyota Center, The Aquarium and others.

Dawn is a member of the International Association of Venue Managers, Texas Bar Association, and First United Methodist Church and on the boards of the Greater Houston Convention & Visitors Bureau, Alley Theatre, Houston Children's Charity, Hotel & Lodging Association of Greater Houston, and Central Houston. Ms. Ullrich also serves as an ex officio member of the Buffalo Bayou Partnership, The Heritage Society and the Houston Downtown Management District.

She has been married for 38 years and has three children. Dawn enjoys Western history, reading and knitting.

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Houston First Corporation
701 Avenida de las Americas, Suite 200
Houston, TX 77010
Dawn.Ullrich@houstonfirst.com