



February 2006

*Join us on our
special meeting
date: February 7!*

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January Photos

Photographer, activist to speak at Feb. 7 meeting

Photographer and homeless awareness advocate Hal Samples will be the featured speaker at the February 7, 2006, meeting of the Dallas County Young Democrats. Samples' work has brought attention to the plight of homeless people across the United States — including the over 6,000 members of our own community who are without a home.

Also at this meeting, more details will be discussed regarding the April 18, 2006, fund raising event with Senator John Edwards. Members interested in attending the rally with Senator Edwards should come to this month's meeting to learn more about the schedule and plans.

As is standard with our organization's February meetings, we will also be electing officers for the coming year on February 7. A list of the presently-nominated candidates can be found at our website: DallasYoungDemocrats.org.

About Hal Samples

Two years ago, Hal Samples had never owned a camera and had rarely used one. Samples' personal descent from top-ranking salesman to homeless person to a recovered life off the streets provided the impetus for his new career — photographer and homeless awareness advocate. His story isn't rags-to-riches — Samples went from riches to rags — from hero to zero.

His work was recently featured in an exhibit titled "Hero to Zero" which is an effort to raise money and awareness for a segment of the population that's invisible but unavoidable in today's society. Beginning with subjects in Dallas' 6,000+ homeless population, to recent trips to New York, London, and the New Orleans area to photograph Katrina's victims, Samples' work literally put a face to the homeless problem.

Thousands of people have been touched by Samples' images of the often-grim life of the homeless of the world. "I realized I lived my life entirely selfishly, always rooted in my expectation of others. It was time to find out what I could do (to help)."

"Hero to zero" is a phrase he used around the office at Dallas' Prestige Ford, 3rd largest dealership in the United States, where he was a high-rolling salesman for almost a decade.



An example of Hal Samples's photography

At the time, he was referring to monthly sales figures. "Last month's hero, this month's zero," he used to say. "At the end of the month you start all over. Everyone is at the bottom."

The phrase took on a new meaning in his life a few years later. Due to his involvement with drugs and alcohol, Samples lost his job at Prestige, his wife, his apartment, his 401(k), his Harley, his ability to use one of his eyes and part of his mind. He went from hero to zero.

Back in Dallas after time in a rehab center, he met Duane, a homeless man, who, when asked what he desired most in life — no limits — just wanted the power "to be visible." The Hero to Zero project was born soon after. Samples' photos are fascinating, because the homeless they picture aren't far removed from being your neighbor, your brother, your best friend. By partnering with a number of organizations to raise money for the homeless and educating the public about their plight, sale of his photographs makes it possible for Samples to collect money to help the people who are the subjects of his photos. By letting the rest of the world see the pictures, he heightens awareness of a problem that's big and getting bigger.

The DCYDs are working with Mr. Samples to create community service projects to be conducted over the coming year.

Katy Hubener running in Feb. 28 special election

In 2004, Dallas County Young Democrats member Katy Hubener came just a few points from defeating longtime Republican incumbent Ray Allen in the race for State Representative, District 106. After the narrow victory, Allen declared that he would not win again — and now he's left the legislature all together, unwilling to go to Austin for another special term.

With a special election scheduled for February 28, Katy now has the opportunity to win against an inexperienced Republican opponent and take office in time to be part of this spring's special session on education financing.

"There is one issue and one issue only in this election -- solving the public school finance crisis," Hubener said. "That will be the focus of the upcoming special session, and that will be the focus of my campaign."

Hubener said she will work with a bi-partisan coalition in the House to put more money into Texas classrooms, raise teacher pay to the national average, and cut property taxes for families in her district.

Hubener said she is running to be an independent voice in the Texas House.

"The last thing our community needs is a rubber stamp for the failed leadership in Austin," commented Hubener.

Hubener is a strong supporter of public education and vowed to vigorously oppose a plan pushed by Austin leaders to siphon billions of tax dollars out of public schools for a private-school voucher scheme.

"As a former educator and college administrator, I know it is wrong to rob funds from our cash-strapped public schools in order to subsidize wealthy private schools. I will stand up for our public schools and say no to vouchers."

Katy has a long history of party activism and involvement with the Dallas County Young Democrats.

With her election just weeks away, she will need all the help she can get from the members of our organization.

To join in Katy's campaign and help her bring change to Austin — and help our party go into the November elections with another incumbent — contact David Wilkins at david@katyfortexas.com.

For more information about Katy's campaign, see www.katyfortexas.com.

DCYDs submit bid to host 2007 YDA convention

Every two years the future leaders of American have a national convention. Many members of the Dallas County Young Democrats were able to attend the 2005 YDA convention recently held in San Francisco. While those who attended found the experience worthwhile, they couldn't help but think that Dallas could put on an even better gathering. So, we've thrown our hat into the ring and submitted a bid to host the next YDA national convention to be held in 2007.

The bid committee, led by its elected chair, Juan Ayala, has developed a strong proposal and laid the groundwork for an exciting convention. The committee identified a host hotel (the Adams Mark), developed a budget and fund raising plan, and reached out to Democrats in Dallas and throughout the State to build support for our effort. The bid proposal, submitted on February 1, 2006, details our plans for the convention, showcases the City of Dallas, and includes innovations to the traditional convention plan such as a recycling policy and community service commitment.

We received letters of support on the State level from Charles Schoeting, State Party Chair, from State Reps. Rafael Anchia and Mark Strama, as well as Mike Apodaca, the president of the TYDs. In addition we received support from Mayor Laura Miller, City Councilwoman Angela Hunt and City Councilman Ed Oakley, County Party Chair Darlene



DCYD members attend the 2005 YDA Convention in San Francisco

Ewing and the presidents of the Tarrant and Collin County YDs. We also received commitments of significant financial support from the Texas Young Democrats and a corporate sponsor.

We will present our bid to the site selection committee in Philadelphia at the next National YD meeting in February. In June, YDA National Assembly members will cast their votes to decide which city will have the honor of hosting the next national YDA convention. Please join us at our February 7, 2006 meeting so you can view a copy of the bid proposal and learn how you can get involved.

DCYDs to host rally with John Edwards, April 18

Senator John Edwards will be coming to Dallas on April 18 for a busy evening here in Dallas that will culminate in a rally with members and friends of the Dallas County Young Democrats. We'll be raising funds at this rally for operating funds, to support interns during the fall election, and to fund our community service projects.

Since leaving the Senate in 2005, John Edwards has been working with One America PAC, a committee concerned with issues relating to economic opportunity and justice.

Our rally will be held the evening of April 18, at the Gypsy Tea Room. Doors will open at 7:00pm and we expect the Senator to arrive around 8:30pm. Before Edwards speaks, area bands and young leaders of our party will speak.

More details about the Edwards event will be available at the February meeting.

January Event Photography

From the first meeting of the year to marching in the Martin Luther King Jr. Day Parade to hosting a happy hour at Pueblo Arribas, January 2006 was another exciting month for the DCYDs.

To see more photographs, visit our website at www.DallasYoungDemocrats.org!



*Join the DCYDs for our February meetings,
this month one week early!
We're meeting at Monica's Aca Y Alla,
2914 Main Street on
February 7 at 6:30PM*

Photographer and homelessness awareness activist
Hal Samples will be our featured speaker.
The business portion of our meeting will begin at 7:00PM.

The Dallas County Young Democrats
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*JOIN US ON FEBRUARY 7,
OUR SPECIAL MEETING DATE
FOR THIS MONTH!*

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