



THE TEXAS FOREST TRAIL REGION PARTNERS WITH THE PALESTINE EDC & PALESTINE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE TO OFFER TEXAS FRIENDLY TRAINING

PALESTINE, TX, January 13, 2014: On February 17, the Texas Forest Trail Region (TFTR), in partnership with the Palestine Economic Development Corporation & Palestine Area Chamber of Commerce, will offer a Texas Friendly Customer Service workshop for local businesses. The workshop will be held from 9:00--3:00 p.m. at the Ben E. Keith Hospitality Room, 2019 W. Oak Street in Palestine.

"This program is a great opportunity for Palestine businesses and employees to learn some very valuable tools to better serve their customers and clients," said Marc Mitchell, Executive Director of the Palestine Area Chamber of Commerce. "These customer service skills learned in this program can be used from the front line employee to the management staff."

Texas Forest Trail Executive Director, Marty Prince a certified hospitality trainer, will teach participants about the fundamentals of customer service, opportunities for tourism development, and ways to make the Palestine area a tourist-friendly place. All participants will be "Texas Friendly" certified at the conclusion of day. "Offering excellent customer service to your customers is the best and easiest advertising your business can do for itself," says Prince. "This workshop will give employees the skills they need to keep customers coming back and bringing their friends."

The second session will focus on Positively Palestine: a local initiative on destination training. Attendees will be given the opportunity to network with one another, learn about happenings throughout the city and information about the history and culture of the area. "Positively Palestine is an initiative to inspire community members and hospitality industry employees to become knowledgeable, trusted ambassadors for our visitors," stated Breezy Lake-Wolfe, Marketing Manager for the City of Palestine and TFTR President Elect. "When an employee knows the history of their community, the attractions and happenings, they have provided a positive

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experience that will entice visitors to stay longer and to keep coming back. Partnering with the Texas Forest Trail Region and using their resources is a vital key to us becoming a “Texas Friendly” destination and to help spread the word about our great community.”

The cost to attend the workshop is \$10 per person. Registration is required and payable to the Palestine Area Chamber of Commerce by cash or check. Cost includes workshop, all workshop materials, and lunch. Participants may pre-register through February 13, online at www.texasforesttrail.com/toolkit or by phone or in person through the Palestine Area Chamber of Commerce at 401 W. Main St. in Palestine; 903-729-6066.

The Texas Forest Trail Region is a regional tourism initiative developed by the Texas Historical Commission that fosters regional economic development by promoting heritage tourism through the preservation of cultural and historic resources and regional partnerships. The Texas Forest Trail Region encompasses 35 counties in East Texas including Anderson, Angelina, Bowie, Camp, Cass, Cherokee, Franklin, Gregg, Hardin, Harrison, Henderson, Houston, Jasper, Jefferson, Marion, Montgomery, Morris, Nacogdoches, Newton, Orange, Panola, Polk, Red River, Rusk, Sabine, San Augustine, San Jacinto, Shelby, Smith, Titus, Trinity, Tyler, Upshur, Walker and Wood.

For more information about scheduling a Texas Friendly Hospitality Training session for your community or organization or to receive information about the February 17 workshop, contact Executive Director Marty Prince at 936/560-3699 or txforesttrail@gmail.com or visit www.texasforesttrail.com/toolkit.

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