



NATIONAL U.S.-ARAB CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

غرفة التجارة الأمريكية العربية الوطنية

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اضغط هنا للنسخة العربية



U.S.-ARAB CHAMBER'S EIGHTH ANNUAL "HIGH TECH ROAD SHOW" CONCLUDES IN TEXAS

*Houston, Austin, and Dallas/Fort Worth Showcase
Opportunities for Transfer of Technology and Knowledge*

*George P. Bush: Meeting Road Show Delegates was
"Refreshing and Productive. Texas is a Land of Opportunities."*

Austin, Houston, and Dallas / Fort Worth, Texas – The National U.S. - Arab Chamber of Commerce (NUSACC) has just concluded the 2015 High Tech Road Show (HTRS), the eighth year in which this prestigious tour has visited the United States. Over the years, the HTRS has attracted hundreds of companies from 17 different Arab nations to explore tech opportunities in the United States. This year, for the first time, the delegation visited three metropolitan areas in Texas: Houston, Austin and Dallas/Fort Worth.

"In recognition of NUSACC's growing presence in Texas, and in recognition of the growing importance of Texas as a hub for innovation and technology, the time was right to bring the High Tech Road Show to the Lone Star State," noted David Hamod, head of the delegation and the U.S. - Arab Chamber's President & CEO.

Jamal Bafagih, Director and head of NUSACC's office in Houston, highlighted the warm, historic relations between Texas and countries of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. "The



NUSACC President & CEO David Hamod welcomed businesses at each of the three Texas City seminars.

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foundation of the relationship was built on oil & gas, but that relationship has diversified significantly over the years,” he said. “The Road Show enabled us to offer a clear picture of this region’s potential, and HTRS delegates are already engaged in serious discussions about Texas / MENA business opportunities.”

Road Show delegates had the privilege of meeting with senior government officials and top business leaders in all three Texas jurisdictions. In Austin, for example, delegates met with The Honorable George P. Bush, the recently elected Land Commissioner of Texas. It was his first meeting with foreign dignitaries since taking office in early January 2015. “Meeting with members of the U.S.-Arab Chamber of Commerce was refreshing and productive,” Commissioner Bush said. “Texas is a land of opportunities. It was my honor to extend some Texas hospitality during the Chamber’s visit to Austin, and I appreciate your interest in exploring how we can work together more.”



Texas Land Commissioner George P. Bush warmly welcomed the HTRS delegates to his office in Austin.

In her words of welcome to the HTRS delegates, The Honorable Annise D. Parker, Mayor of Houston, said, “It is my pleasure to welcome you on behalf of the people of Houston. We are delighted to have you visit our city to promote trade relations.” She went on to say, “Houstonians take great pride in the diversity of our city and in our international ties. I am confident that the High Tech Road Show will lead to increased cooperation between our respective citizens.”

Not far away, in the Dallas/Fort Worth area, Frisco Mayor Maher Maso welcomed the HTRS delegation to the city that was recently judged “best in Texas” for young families. “We found great value in meeting with delegates from the U.S. - Arab Chamber of Commerce,” said Mayor Maso. “The leadership and residents of Frisco take great pride in having a



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diverse community that values safety, education, and a business climate that fosters entrepreneurship and innovation. We welcome the U.S. - Arab Chamber back to discover more about the business and tourism opportunities that Frisco has to offer.” Frisco was the fastest-growing city in the nation from 2000 to 2009, and the Dallas Cowboys recently announced that they will build their new World Headquarters, “The Star,” in Frisco.

Delegates Highlight MENA Opportunities

Countries represented during this year’s High Tech Road Show included the Kingdom of Bahrain, the Kingdom of Morocco, the State of Qatar, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Republic of Tunisia, and the United Arab Emirates. In Chamber seminars held in Houston, Austin, and Dallas/Fort Worth, Arab delegates had an opportunity to highlight business opportunities in their respective countries.



HTRS delegates each presented their respective regions and briefed local businesses on opportunities available to U.S. companies in the MENA.

BAHRAIN



Bahrain’s Economic Development Board (EDB) – responsible for attracting inward investment into Bahrain and supporting the growth and diversification of Bahrain’s economy – has joined the High Tech Road Show before.



Adel Hameed of the Bahrain Economic Development Board briefed Houston businesses on Bahrain’s commercial opportunities.



According to Adel Hameed, EDB's Manager for Business Development, the Kingdom of Bahrain:

- Boasts the freest economy in the Arab World for 20 consecutive years, according to The Heritage Foundation / Wall Street Journal Index of Economic Freedom 2014.
- Offers the most favorable tax regime in the world, according to the World Economic Forum, with no corporate income tax.
- Maintains the top regulatory environment for financial institutions in the Middle East.
- Enables companies established in Bahrain to enjoy 100 percent foreign ownership.
- Offers the lowest priced utilities in the MENA region, according to the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU).
- Provides very competitive rates for doing business in the region, with costs approximately 40 percent lower than others in the region.
- Enjoys a robust Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the United States.

Ms. Vivian Jamal, Executive Director of the Business Development Department at the Bahrain EDB, noted, "Part of the EDB's mandate is to meet with potential investors in order to highlight the numerous opportunities available to them in the Kingdom. The HTRS 2015 provided us with an excellent platform, which allowed us to engage directly with interested parties in the United States, one of our key target markets. HTRS also gave us the opportunity to meet state trade offices and to learn more about recent developments in the industry, which enabled us to gauge more clearly the potential available."

She concluded, "Thanks to the tremendous efforts of the NUSACC team on this Road Show, we were able to meet our goals for this trip, and we look forward to further cooperation in the future."

MOROCCO

The Kingdom of Morocco has long been considered a major commercial bridge linking Europe and Africa, and the Kingdom has negotiated trade agreements and invested billions of dollars in infrastructure over the past decade to strengthen this position. This includes a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the United States, the first FTA of its kind in North Africa, which went into effect in 2006. In addition, Morocco has:



- Eliminated the minimum capital requirement for limited liability companies to do business in the country.



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- Streamlined the procedural process to start a business, pay taxes, get credit, and trade across borders, which positions Morocco as a key business gateway to the United States, Europe, and Africa.
- Enacted judicial and administrative reforms in 2014 to further improve the country's business climate.
- Promoted its National Human Development Initiative, which has provided job training to thousands of rural Moroccans since 2005 and which continues to promote economic growth through the development of the Kingdom's skilled workforce.



AMPA delegate Lina Naciri (left) with David Hamod, NUSACC's President & CEO.

By the end of this year, Morocco plans to invest at least \$15 billion to upgrade its infrastructure. The Kingdom also unveiled a plan recently to invest \$25 billion in environmental solutions over the next 15 years.

“The High Tech Road Show was a great follow-up to two recent events highlighting the U.S. - Morocco commercial partnership,” said Lina Naciri, representing the Association of Moroccan Professionals in America (AMPA). “One was the Morocco Trade & Investment Forum, held in Dallas in October, and the other was the Global Entrepreneurship Summit, held in Marrakesh in November. Against this backdrop of growing

commercial ties between Morocco and the USA, and in preparation for the high-level Maghreb delegation that NUSACC is bringing to Texas in April, AMPA was delighted to support this important tour of high tech hubs in Nevada and Texas.”

QATAR

In the past decade, the State of Qatar has emerged as an increasingly important hub of commerce in the Arab world. Winning the right to host the 2022 FIFA World Cup has helped to put Qatar on the economic map for many in the United States, and increasing numbers of Americans are expressing an interest in this massive and multi-dimensional development project.



- Through at least the year 2016, Qatar is expected to remain the fourth largest market in the MENA region for U.S. goods and services.
- The World Economic Forum has named Qatar as the most competitive economy in the Middle East on a number of occasions in recent years.
- Qatar is the world's richest country by per capita income.



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- In recent years, Qatar's annual GDP growth has been among the highest in the world, outpacing China.
- Sitting atop the North Field, the world's largest non-associated natural gas field, Qatar controls approximately 15 percent of the world's proven gas reserves, which will help to promote economic growth and development in Qatar for generations to come.

Qatar plans to spend more than \$200 billion between now and 2022 in preparation for the FIFA World Cup. Technology is at the heart of this boom, which revolves around transportation infrastructure, including new roads, rail and light rail systems, and upgrades to airports and ports. The Qatar Tourism Authority plans to invest about \$20 billion into the hospitality industry in coming years in anticipation of serving 3.7 million tourists by 2022. The State of Qatar plans to add as many as 150 hotel properties to accommodate the 400,000 fans who are expected to visit the country for the FIFA World Cup.



Talal Al Maghaiseb of the Qatar Olympic Committee detailed Qatar's plans to spend more than \$200 billion between now and 2022 in preparation for the FIFA World Cup.

Engineer Talal Al-Maghaiseb, one of the delegates representing the Qatar Olympic Committee, said, "The High Tech Road Show holds unparalleled value for investors in technology because the HTRS included executive access to world-renown companies. Overall, I am very satisfied with the tour, and we look forward to participating next year to explore even more technologies with a focus on sports-related companies." Engineer Al-Maghaiseb, who first joined the High Tech Road Show in 2011, concluded, "We thank NUSACC for such a meaningful and well-structured program for entities visiting from the MENA region, particularly for Qatar."

(To see the Qatar Olympic Committee's PowerPoint presentation, please click [here](#).)

(To see the Qatar Olympic Committee's video clip, please click [here](#).)

SAUDI ARABIA

The largest economy in the region and a key member of the G20, Saudi Arabia has just undergone a leadership change. Despite recent changes at the top, there is a great deal of continuity as the Kingdom undergoes an extraordinary economic boom. Massive public investment, rapid private sector growth, and new sectoral initiatives are driving an expansion that is on track to offer more than \$1 trillion in trade and investment opportunities over the next decade. Some of the benefits of exploring the Kingdom's diverse economic opportunities:





Sheikh Ali Al Jeraisy of Al Jeraisy Group and Ms. Hala Al Abdulwahed from the Saudi Consulate in Houston highlighted the abundance of opportunities available to Texas firms in Saudi Arabia.

budget, but the Government of Saudi Arabia is diversifying the economy significantly.

- Low interest rates and increased access to credit for private companies have made Saudi Arabia an increasingly attractive market.
- Well-developed domestic industries, strong business clusters, and strategic value chains offer opportunities for economic growth and/or cost savings.
- A high GDP growth rate and macroeconomic stability in Saudi Arabia help to boost consumer confidence and domestic demand for goods and services.

Sheikh Ali Jeraisy, President of [The Jeraisy Group](#), the top IT integrator in the MENA region, said, “Jeraisy Group was proud to participate in the 2015 High Tech Road Show. It was our first experience with the Road Show, and I’m pleased to say that the visit to Texas exceeded our expectations. We met a wide range of companies and gained a first-hand appreciation for some of the latest technologies and expertise that the United States has to offer.”



The Saudi delegation led by Sheikh Ali Al Jeraisy of Al Jeraisy Group (center) found the B2B meetings very useful and helpful in identifying potential commercial opportunities in Texas.



“Jeraisy Group has begun to build commercial ties to some of the U.S. companies that we met during the Road Show, and we are optimistic that these new relationships have great potential,” he concluded. “Many thanks, once again, for inviting us to part of the 2015 High Tech Road Show.”

TUNISIA

Tunisia has historically boasted one of the best-educated and most literate populations in the MENA region. That international sophistication, coupled with the fact that Tunisia has been a constitutional republic for more than five decades, helps to explain that nation’s deep commitment to transitioning successfully from an autocracy to a “start-up democracy,” in the words of Tunisia’s outgoing Prime Minister. Tunisia’s recent elections represent one of the most tangible successes of the Arab Spring, ushering in a new era for that Republic:



- Over the years, Tunisia has maintained one of the highest per-capita GDPs in Africa and the Middle East, and the World Economic Forum has historically ranked Tunisia among the Top Ten most competitive economies in Africa.
- According to the U.S. Embassy in Tunis, investors find Tunisia attractive because of that nation’s relatively low-cost yet highly skilled labor, as well as the country’s access to EU and African markets.
- In the aftermath of the revolution that swept Tunisia in 2011, Tunisians have expressed a strong desire to enhance their trade and investment ties to the United States. In 2013, despite Tunisia’s revolution, U.S. exports to that nation grew to \$870 million, an increase of 41.7 percent from the previous year.

[Servicom](#) is a medium-sized Tunisian company specializing in HVAC services, elevators, and ICT – including mobile phones produced locally in Tunisia. The firm offers a range of infrastructure products and services in France and across North Africa. “This is the third time that Servicom has joined the High Tech Road Show, and the experience has been very rewarding and valuable for our business,” noted Mourad Dimassi, Deputy General Manager. He concluded, “The USA is a market leader, and getting a glimpse of the future of high tech is a mind-opening experience. The tour of Texas cities and meeting with business leaders there was very valuable. I would like to thank NUSACC for organizing this excellent program, and I look forward to joining the HTRS in 2016.”



Mourad Dimassi of Servicom Tunisia talked about opportunities in Tunisia.

(To see Servicom’s PowerPoint presentation, please click [here](#).)



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UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is the largest destination in the region for U.S. goods and services, with U.S. exports to the UAE topping \$22 billion in 2014. The MENA region, coupled with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) nations, represents the fifth largest market in the world and one of the fastest-growing destinations around the globe. The 2014-2015 *Global Competitiveness Report* of the World Economic Forum ranks the UAE 12th among 144 countries and the top country in the Arab world. In part because of its competitiveness and excellent services, the UAE serves as the regional headquarters for over 25 percent of the top 500 companies in the world.



The World Expo 2020 will be held in Dubai, with the theme: "Connecting Minds, Creating the Future."

Five years from now, the Emirate of Dubai will be hosting Expo 2020, a world's fair that is expected to attract more than 25 million visits. This marquee event will generate its own infrastructure and tourism boom in coming years.

(To see the Expo 2020 video clip, please click [here](#).)

The Dubai Silicon Oasis (DSO), a repeat participant in the High Tech Road Show, is a government-owned free zone that was established to promote technology-based industries, research, development, and solutions within a fully integrated planned community. In seeking to attract U.S. technology companies interested in accessing the MENA market, the DSO offers:

- A high-tech ecosystem with state-of-the-art infrastructure.
- Low operating costs in relation to ROI, zero corporate tax, and zero income tax.
- Technology investment incentives, entrepreneurial support, an incubation center, and venture capital.
- Access to a regional pool of talent.
- Ease of setting up a new legal entity.
- Ease of visa and work permit processes.

(To see the Dubai Silicon Oasis Authority's PowerPoint presentation, please click [here](#).)

(To see the Dubai Silicon Oasis Authority's video clip, please click [here](#).)

Dr. Juma Al-Matrooshi,
Dubai Silicon Oasis
Authority





Dr. Juma Al-Matrooshi, Executive Vice President (Commercial) at the Dubai Silicon Oasis Authority, noted, “I am very delighted to be joining NUSACC for the second time on the High Tech Road Show, which provides an excellent platform and engages an outstanding network in the technology sector.” He went on to say, “We consider DSOA’s support for and participation in the High Tech Road Show to be part of the successful implementation of our MOU with NUSACC, and we look forward to doing more together in 2015.”

Texas as a Business Destination

In recent decades, Texas has emerged as a top commercial hub and business destination in the United States. With a Gross State Product of over \$1.5 trillion, Texas – if it were a country – would boast the 12th largest economy in the world. Texas is by far the largest exporter in the United States, with \$289 billion in exports in 2014.



Some other Texas “firsts”:

- In 2014, CNBC named Texas “America’s Top State for Economy and Infrastructure.”
- *Chief Executive* magazine has named Texas the “Best State for Business” over ten years in a row.
- Texas is home to 52 *Fortune 500* companies.
- The state has no personal income tax, and The Tax Foundation ranks Texas among the Top 10 states for lowest overall tax burden.
- Texas leads the nation in crude oil and natural gas reserves, and Texas is the nation’s top natural gas producer.
- The Lone Star State is the nation’s top wind energy producer, with more than double the installed wind power capacity of any other state.
- Texas is the only state with its own power grid, and the state is not subject to federal regulation over electrical transmission.
- Fort Worth’s Alliance Airport at the Alliance Global Logistics Hub is the world’s first industrial airport.

The new Governor of Texas, Hon. Greg Abbott, was sworn in just after the High Tech Road Show left town. But Governor Abbott’s pride and optimism about his state speaks volumes about his commitment to Texas as an international business destination.

“Texas is the place where the improbable becomes the possible,” he said. “Texas truly is the land of opportunity, the place where anyone can achieve anything . . . As Governor, I will ensure Texas remains the state that provides that brand of opportunity for every Texan.”



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“We must seek higher ground that will continue to elevate Texas, not just as a leader in this nation, but as a leader in this world,” Governor Abbott concluded. “Because as goes Texas, so goes America, and as goes America, so goes the world.”

Snapshot of Houston

Houston is the largest city in Texas and America’s fourth largest city, boasting some 6,000 manufacturing establishments that employ almost 250,000 workers. The city is bustling with culture and energy and, according to *Forbes* magazine, Houston is on track to become “America’s next great global city” within a decade.

Houston, which bills itself as the Energy Capital of the World, is home to more than 3,700 energy-related establishments. Sixteen of the nation’s 20 largest petroleum products and crude oil pipeline operators have corporate or divisional headquarters in the Houston region.

But Houston is much more than just energy. It is home to the world’s largest medical center complex, The Texas Medical Center, which contains 54 medicine-related institutions. The city boasts over 190 life science companies, over 100 hospitals and health clinics, and some of the country’s top research facilities.



Harris County Sheriff Adrian Garcia (fourth from left) and Saudi Consul General Sultan Al Angari (third from right) were among the senior officials who joined the HTRS seminar and lunch in Houston.



Event host Ambassador Chase Untermyer moderated the panel on Houston business opportunities.

Houston is also home to more than 150 companies involved in aircraft or space vehicle manufacturing, space research, and technology. Houston’s total trade in aircraft, spacecraft, and parts exceeded \$1.5 billion in recent years, making this Houston’s 16th largest internationally traded commodity.

The Port of Houston is a 25-mile (40-kilometer) complex of diversified public and private facilities just a few hours’ sailing



time from the Gulf of Mexico. The Port has ranked first in the United States in foreign tonnage for 18 consecutive years, and it has been first in import tonnage for 23 consecutive years.

HTRS Seminar in Houston

Eight partner organizations supported the High Tech Road Show visit to Houston: Arab-American Cultural and Community Center, Greater Houston Partnership, Greenspoint Economic District, Houston Technology Center, National District Export Council, Office of the Mayor, Rice Space Institute (at Rice University), and the U.S. Commercial Service. These entities played a prominent role in supporting a NUSACC seminar, held at the JW Marriott Hotel, which focused on synergies between Houston and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. The host for the seminar was Hon. Chase Untermeyer, a Houstonian and former U.S. Ambassador to the State of Qatar.



Harris County Sheriff
Adrian Garcia

Keynote speakers at lunch included Hon. Adrian Garcia, Sheriff of Harris County, and Hon. Stephen Costello, representing the Houston City Council.

Sheriff Garcia noted, “Technology opportunities are in abundance in Houston, and technology is our future.” He explained how the Harris County Sheriff’s Office has leveraged technology to make the city / county a safer place. At the same time, he suggested, his office’s combination of technology and sound business practices saved taxpayers more than \$100 million in government operational expenses. He concluded, “We are proud of the investment that the National U.S. – Arab Chamber has made in our community, and nothing is more significant for you – and for us than to see business relationships grow.”



Houston City Council
Member Hon.
Stephen Costello

City Council Member Steve Costello, a “transplanted” Texan, told his story about how he arrived from New York over 30 years ago with just \$500 to his name. Today, he said, he is co-owner of an engineering firm that employs 130 people. “Houston has great respect for entrepreneurs, and great ideas are rewarded with great investment,” he noted. “There is a remarkable ‘can do’ entrepreneurial spirit in Houston, a city of opportunity . . . We are a growing city with great momentum.”



The Houston seminar panel was moderated by Ambassador Chase Untermeyer (left) and included; (from right to left): Bruce Haupt, Consultant with City of Houston, Bill Prout, Senior Vice President Commercial Banking, Bank of Texas, and Regina Lindsey, Chief Development Officer, Greenspoint District.

Site Visits in Houston

Site visits in Houston took advantage of the city's long-standing commitment to science.

The first stop was [Rice University](#), where delegates met with leaders of the [Rice Space Institute](#) and the [Smalley Institute for NanoScale Science](#). Delegates also toured the [Oshman Engineering Design Kitchen](#), a haven for entrepreneurial engineers, and the [Haptic Interfaces Robotics Lab](#). The visit to Rice University concluded by attending a presentation and dinner hosted by the Bioscience Research Collaborative.

The second stop was to the [Texas Medical Center](#), the largest medical complex in the world. Delegates visited the [Methodist Institute for Technology, Innovation & Education](#) (MITIE) at the [Methodist Hospital](#), where they were introduced to [Pumps & Pipes](#), a collaborative venture among the Texas Medical Center, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), ExxonMobil, and other leading industry, academic, and scientific institutions from the region.

“Pumps & Pipes is a Houston-based initiative that brings together professionals in three of this city's leading sectors – medicine

Dr. David Alexander, Director of Rice Space University (standing fifth from left), led the HTRS delegates on a tour of Rice University.





HTRS Delegates visited Methodist Hospital's MITIE, where they were briefed and shown the latest imaging technology.

(cardiovascular), oil & gas, and aerospace – and inspires dialogue aimed at identifying concepts that could be of value to these three industries and beyond,” noted Dr. Alan Lumsden, a founder of Pumps & Pipes and Chairman of Cardiovascular Surgery and Medical Director at the Houston Methodist DeBakey Heart & Vascular Center.

The third stop, designed in part for the Qatar Olympic Committee (QOC), was to Dynamo Stadium, home to [Houston Dynamo](#), a Major League Soccer (MLS) franchise. Engineer Talal Al-Maghaiseb,

one of the delegates representing the QOC, noted, “This year, NUSACC customized visits to a number of Texas-based soccer clubs, including the Houston Dynamo and FC Dallas. These were excellent additions to the schedule, and it was personally exciting to meet with a number of large, small, and medium-sized companies that are doing fantastic work in the sports industry.” Al-Maghaiseb and Mohammed Aziz Al-Abdulghani, representing the QOC’s PR & Marketing Department, had much to discuss with Dynamo management about the 2022 FIFA World Cup.

The fourth stop, a focus of the Bahrain Economic Development Board, was to the [Houston Technology Center](#) (HTC). Named by *Forbes* magazine as one of “Ten Technology Incubators Changing the World” and one of “Twelve Business Incubators Changing the World,” HTC is the largest technology business incubator and accelerator in Texas. Each day, HTC staff and partners work closely with entrepreneurs and startup companies to provide them with in-depth strategic and tactical business guidance, fundraising advice, and connections to opportunities. Since 1999, HTC has provided feedback to well over 1,000 companies and coached more than 250 companies.



Qatar Olympic Committee delegates toured the BBVA Compass Stadium, Houston Dynamo soccer club's home ground.



The last site visit in Houston revolved around the [Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership \(BAHEP\)](#) and the [National Aeronautics and Space Administration \(NASA\)](#). BAHEP, a member-driven organization that promotes regional economic development and employment, briefed HTRS delegates on the Partnership's 270 investor companies and BAHEP's initiatives to enhance the quality of life for the 740,000 people who live and work in the region.

The BAHEP briefing was followed by a VIP tour of the [Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center](#), NASA's center for human spaceflight training, research, and flight control. This facility has played a vital role in America's space program for decades, well before "Houston" was the first word spoken by U.S. astronauts on the moon on July 20, 1969. Today, the facility employs 14,000 Houstonians.



A behind-the-scenes tour of NASA provided the HTRS delegates a good picture of Houston's role in the history of space.

Snapshot of Austin

Austin, capital city of the State of Texas, has a reputation as a thriving, vibrant, and high tech business community. Companies in Austin revolve around advanced technology and manufacturing – software, hardware, semiconductors, and more – as well as education, music, healthcare, and film. In part because it is the center of government activity in Texas, Austin is a magnet for business, new projects, expansions, and relocations.



There are over 4,000 tech companies in the Austin area, dubbed “Silicon Hills.” Driven in part by this tech boom, Austin has been named America’s Fastest Growing City by *Forbes* magazine for four years in a row. With local universities “churning out engineers and computer scientists,” according to *Forbes*, “the five-county area has a robust workforce – 38 percent college-educated.” The capital city also offers a highly regarded entrepreneurship ecosystem that benefits significantly from higher education in the Austin area.

There are more than 30 universities and colleges within 15 miles (22.5 kilometers) of Austin, the most famous of which is the [University of Texas](#) (UT). This is the fifth-largest university in the United States, with an enrollment of over 50,000 graduate and undergraduate students, and UT boasts the third largest university endowment (over \$20 billion) among schools in the USA.



Downtown Austin, TX

Eight partner organizations supported the High Tech Road Show visit to Austin: Austin Chamber of Commerce, Austin Technology Council, Austin Technology Incubator, City of Austin, CleanTX, National District Export Council, U.S. Commercial Service, and the World Affairs Council of Austin. These entities played a prominent role in a NUSACC seminar, held at the Renaissance Austin Hotel at the Arboretum, which focused on growing tech opportunities between Austin and the MENA region.

Site Visits in Austin

Site visits in Austin began at the Austin Chamber of Commerce, where the Office of the Governor and Chamber officials briefed HTRS delegates on Austin’s prodigious economic growth. This briefing was followed by an hour-long session with Hon. George P. Bush, who was recently elected Land Commissioner for the State of Texas – the first member of his well-regarded family to win his first election.

The Texas General Land Office is a state agency that manages state-controlled lands and mineral rights properties. The office has an outsized influence on Texas because it negotiates and enforces leases for mineral rights on millions of acres of land owned by the State of Texas. Royalties from these mineral rights supply the state’s \$34 billion Permanent School Fund, which helps to cover public education costs in Texas.



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A former energy consultant by profession, Commissioner Bush knows the MENA region well. “I look forward to opening a dialogue and serving as a resource to you,” he told the HTRS delegates. “I’m here to serve the people of Texas,” he concluded.



The delegation toured the headquarters of NUSACC member, Ultra Electronics, in Austin.

Site visits in Austin revolved around that city’s famous entrepreneurship ecosystem. The ecosystem includes such well-known entities as the [Austin Technology Incubator](#), the [CleanTX Foundation](#), [Austin Ventures](#), and others. Austin has historically been attractive to startups because of that city’s high quality of life, relatively low living costs, the widespread availability of cutting-edge technology, and a talented pool of highly educated workers. The University of Texas, for example, maintains the largest computer science department in the United States.

HTRS delegates were privileged to receive VIP tours of two of Austin’s most successful entrepreneurship centers, the Capital Factory and Tech Ranch.

Leadership at [The Capital Factory](#) contends that startups today spend too much time fundraising. “By the time they finish one round and collect all the paperwork, it’s time to start raising the next one,” they say. “Fundraising isn’t just distracting. It drives startups increasingly to non-profitable models . . . Startups selected by Capital Factory won’t have to waste time fundraising; once they are in, they have enough funding to get to profitability, and they can focus their efforts on what matters: product, revenue, and scale.”



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Across town, [Tech Ranch](#) is working to create an especially nurturing environment for early stage entrepreneurs. According to the Tech Ranch leadership, “Our core purpose is to accelerate the success of technology entrepreneurs and cultivate a collaborative, connected community. We connect aspiring founders with programs and classes to increase their knowledge and encourage continuous transfer of information and insight amongst the group. The result is increased insight and innovation that has the potential to impact our most critical global challenges.”

During their stay in Austin, HTRS delegates also made site visits to a number of highly regarded businesses in the area. Delegates were particularly pleased to receive a VIP tour of [Dell](#), a local success story – now known all over the world – with deep roots in the Austin area.

In 1984, at age 19, Michael Dell founded “PCs Limited” with \$1,000. He soon abandoned his studies at the University of Texas at Austin to devote all of his time to growing the business. According to *Forbes* magazine, Dell today is America’s third largest private company, with revenues exceeding \$57 billion.



Visiting the Dell headquarters was one of the highlights of the Austin leg of the HTRS.

Snapshot of Dallas / Fort Worth

In the past decade, the population of Dallas / Fort Worth (DFW) has grown to become the nation’s fourth-largest metropolitan area, behind only New York, Los Angeles and Chicago. The current population of 6.5 million persons has more than doubled in the past three decades.

The DFW Metroplex is the fifth-largest global exporter in the country, with computer and electronics goods accounting for over 16 percent of the area’s exports. The economy is well diversified with a pro-business culture that consistently spurs growth.



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The central location and world-class transportation infrastructure of the DFW Metroplex attract companies looking to do business locally, nationally, and globally. [DFW International Airport](#), for example, is home to [American Airlines](#) and offers non-stop flights to major U.S. cities. The airport also features direct routes to multiple points in Europe, Australia, South America, Asia, and the Middle East, including non-stop flights to Dubai (Emirates Airline), Doha (Qatar Airways) and Abu Dhabi (Etihad Airways).



The Dallas / Fort Worth panel, moderated by DFW World Affairs Council President Jim Falk (right) included (from left): Dan Ogden, Chair Emeritus, National District Export Council; Mike Skelton, Director, Mayor's Office of International Business, City of Richardson; and David Berzina, Executive Vice President of Economic Development, Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce.

As a transportation hub, the Dallas / Fort Worth area boasts major headquarters, logistics, distribution, and supply chain operations. DFW is one of the top regions in the nation for business, thanks to its business-friendly environment and low cost of living.

DFW generates more manufacturing activity than any other metropolitan area in Texas, according to the Governor's Economic Development Office, and manufacturing constitutes nearly ten percent of the regional economy. Some of the top manufacturing operations in the DFW area include General Motors in Arlington, Lockheed Martin in Fort Worth, and Texas Instruments in Dallas.

Dallas is home to 18 *Fortune 500* companies and 12 of the top private companies listed by *Forbes*. Nearly 40 firms among the *Fortune 1000* companies call the region home.



Hon. Maher Maso, Mayor of Frisco, TX:
"It was an honor to have the delegation visit our city."



Site Visits in DFW Metroplex

Eleven partner organizations supported the High Tech Road Show visit to the DFW Metroplex: City of Dallas, City of Frisco, City of Richardson, Dallas Regional Chamber of Commerce, Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce, International Chem-Crete, Metroplex Technology Business Council, National District Export Council, Town of Addison, U.S. Commercial Service, and the World Affairs Council of Dallas / Fort Worth. These entities played a prominent role in supporting a NUSACC seminar, held at the InterContinental Dallas Hotel, which focused on growing tech opportunities between the DFW Metroplex and the MENA region.



Bill Sproull, Metroplex Technology Business Council CEO, gave keynote remarks at the DFW seminar.

The keynote speaker during the seminar's luncheon was Bill Sproull, CEO of the [Metroplex Technology Business Council](#). He reeled off an impressive list of statistics about the DFW Metroplex:

- The Dallas metro area is the fastest growing metro area in the United States.
- DFW is the third largest technology region in America and sustains the second largest tech workforce in the country.
- There are more than 2,000 companies in the DFW area focused on Information & Communications Technologies (ICT).
- Texas ranks #2 in video gaming companies in the USA, including more than 40 gaming companies in North Texas alone.

Following lunch, the delegation headed North to Frisco, Texas, where they toured FC Dallas, a Major League Soccer (MLS) Club. There, they were hosted by Dan Hunt, President of the Club and son of Lamar Hunt, whose contributions to sports and the State of Texas are legendary. In a tour of Toyota Stadium, home of FC Dallas, Hunt highlighted the latest sports technologies employed by the Club.

As part of the stop in Frisco, courtesy of Mayor Maher Maso, delegates toured a state-of-the-art mobile command unit devised and operated by the Frisco Fire Department. Said Mayor Maso, "It was an honor to have the delegation visit our city to see our world-class MLS facility, Toyota



City of Frisco Mayor Maher Maso and Police Chief Cameron Kraemer gave the HTRS delegates a tour of the city's high-tech mobile command unit.



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Stadium, and to learn more about the high tech tools and mobile command unit that the city's first responders use to manage a public-safety system that is second-to-none."



The DFW Seminar was attended by business executives from all around North Texas.

The last stop on the 2015 High Tech Road Show was a visit to American Airlines Center, where delegates were hosted by the Dallas Mavericks, one of the best-loved teams of the National Basketball Association. Professional basketball has a growing following in the Arab world. This is especially true in the State of Qatar, where the Qatar Olympic Committee and its highly respected Secretary General – Sheikh Saoud bin Abdurahman Al Thani – promote sports at every level of society and play a key role in Qatar's efforts to promote diplomacy through sports.

Much to the delight of HTRS delegates, the Dallas Mavericks defeated the Denver Nuggets that night by a score of 97 – 89.



Dan Hunt, Club President of FC Dallas (center front), led the delegation on a tour of Toyota Stadium.

The National U.S.-Arab Chamber of Commerce, widely regarded as the voice of American business in the Arab world, is in touch with business communities across the United States and serves as the U.S. point of contact for the national chambers of commerce in the 22 Arab nations. On a daily basis, NUSACC works closely with leaders throughout the Arab world, as well as high-level decision makers in the U.S. business community, public policy research centers, multilateral institutions, nongovernmental organizations, media, and the U.S. Government.

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