



Allison Austin Helps North Texas Charities Fight Cancer

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Every year since 2011, ORIX employee Allison Austin has volunteered at [Camp iHope](#), a weeklong summer camp in Anna, Texas, for pediatric cancer patients and their siblings.

“The kids get to just be kids instead of cancer patients,” Allison says. “It’s amazing to see their smiles and know that you’re creating a lifetime memory for them.”

This annual tradition is just one volunteer opportunity that Allison takes part in through her involvement with [Young Texans Against Cancer](#) (YTAC), an organization she discovered after losing her mother to cancer in 2010. “I wanted to find an outlet to celebrate her life and help others who were dealing with cancer in their lives,” Allison says.

An all-volunteer group comprised of young professionals, YTAC has branches in Houston, Austin, San Antonio and Dallas, each with the mission of raising money for local cancer charities and research. The Dallas branch is 500 members strong and has helped fund organizations like Leukemia Texas, Mary Crowley Cancer Research Center and 1 Million 4 Anna—a foundation dedicated to fighting Ewing’s Sarcoma, a form of childhood cancer.

Since its inception, YTAC Dallas has raised more than \$1.5 million through fundraising events like its Chili Cook-Off For A Cure, held in April; Young Texans Race Against Cancer, a family-friendly 5k/10k coming in May; and the organization’s

largest annual fundraising celebration, Bubbly Q. Held in October, Bubbly Q is a culinary event hosted at the Ritz Carlton's Fearings Restaurant. Celebrity chefs like Dean Fearing and about a dozen other top local chefs prepare sample dishes for guest to try.

While YTAC Dallas welcomes volunteers to help out at its many events throughout the year, becoming a member has its perks-think discounted pricing for the signature fundraisers, happy hours with other young professionals and the chance to take part in a check presentation. On Feb. 9, a membership drive will be held at the [The Rustic](#) from 6 – 8 p.m. for anyone interested in getting the full scoop on the organization.

"It's because of our volunteers that we can give so much back to our local cancer community," says Phuong Tran, current president of YTAC Dallas. "We have no salaries to pay and a group of young professionals who are passionate about our causes – that allows us to give our supporters the best value for their donation since we work so hard to keep our costs low and make an impact on the local community."

Since joining YTAC Dallas in 2010, Allison has served on its board of directors in a variety of capacities: as president, treasurer, BubblyQ silent auction chair and now a member-at-large. "Since her beginnings as a committee member to her term as president, Allison has served YTAC with passion and grace," Phuong says. "Allison was instrumental in getting YTAC Dallas to the level of fundraising we are at today.

Allison plays a key role at ORIX as well as a Director in Real Estate Americas Group. When she's not originating debt and equity investments, you might find her skiing, cooking or hanging out with her fur babies – two Labrador Retrievers named Florence and Grits. Travel tops her list of favorite pastimes too, as evidenced by her

recent trip to Austria, Germany and Italy with her husband and her new extended family. (She just got married in September!)

When it comes to volunteering, Allison says it's something she's done all her life and she values the different perspectives you gain from giving back to others.

"My mom didn't win her fight, but it's heartwarming to help other people win theirs," Allison says.

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