

美玉是雕琢出來的


美麗在時下的定義已經不僅在於外表，是一種發自於內，整體所散發出的獨特的氣質與精神，每年的華埠小姐選拔，年輕的女孩們在舞台上展現儀態和機智，她們的表現是多方面的努力所並發的才情，美麗是往往是磨練的結晶。中國人向來認為美玉是雕琢出來的，華裔的下一代，有如美好的璞玉，他們正在被雕塑著。

許多華人移民美國一個最長聽到的原因就是，為了孩子的教育問題。

八月份旅美專家協會舉辦一場如何準備升大學的座談會，中國人活動中心的大禮堂擠了將近200人，家長帶著子女，認真聽取台上名牌大學的學生，或是即將進入同等級大學的學子們的入學心得。這些孩子們一致經驗，大學準備要及早，從高一就開始，參加社團要從多所選擇到後來專精幾項，從活動中學習做事經驗，而且每位家長們表示，孩子們的成就都是自動自發的學習。

“最佳拍檔”是本刊新專欄，合作的範圍可以有夫妻、部屬與長官、合夥人，兄弟、姊妹…等。

常湘演和盛穗楚是夫妻檔的事業夥伴，他們有不同的性格，卻讓這層互補作用充分發揮，打理好家庭與事業。

華工商婦女企業管理協會美南分會是美國設立的第一個分會，今年成立20週年，她們活躍於休士頓主流和僑界的慈善和公義事業，在工作的領域也常是個中翹楚，恭賀她們的20年有成。 




總編輯 鄔逸卉

Many Asians immigrate to America because of the issue of education. In August, during a conference on how to prepare for college, the Chinese Activity Center's large auditorium was filled with at least 200 people. Parents brought their children to listen attentively to the student speakers that had all gotten accepted by top schools.

The essence in all the advice is to prepare early as a freshman. Focus on a few clubs and work on grades, and anyone can get into a good school. Most importantly, the students need to enjoy their extracurricular activities to achieve a more efficient high school career.

In “The Best Sidekick,” we show the many facets of cooperation in creating a successful business. Even with different personalities, compromise often leads to the best results at home and in the workplace.

Established in Houston, the Global Federation of Chinese Business Women in Southern US is its first American branch, and this year is its 20 anniversary. They participate in the volunteer and social activities in Houston, and we congratulate them for an excellent 20 years. 

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對地產或投資理財有關問題，也歡迎來函詢問，我們會請專家作答，解決您的問題。

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最佳拍檔 盛穗楚和常湘濱

兩人連手打拼，穩坐休士頓電腦業界第二把交椅

文/鄔逸卉



Directron.com 創辦人 盛穗楚和常湘濱

老婆創業 老公支援

原來在電腦公司上班的盛穗楚，1991年起以Houston Computer Center 為名，開始販售電腦零件，至1994年起在車庫裡全職工作，一個月之後，成長的業務迫使她必須租個辦公室。為了協助太太，有二年時間常湘濱每天工作十三個小時，下午三點下了班回到公司幫忙作帳、發貨，隨後正式加入。

上個月Directron.com被休士頓商業週刊列為排名為第二的電腦零件批發商，第一名為全國連鎖店的Micro Center，如果排除他的連鎖特色，Direc-

tron.com在休士頓當屬第一。

成功之道反應靈敏

2004年Directron.com從42000英呎再度擴充至十萬呎的辦公大樓，營業項目有12000件以上。去年十二月Directron.com收購Axion Technologies, LP，這是休士頓第一家網上銷售公司，目前擔任公司總裁的常湘濱表示，Directron.com能夠日益成長的最重要因素是在能及時掌握時代脈動，反應靈敏。

1997年當時網路商業剛萌芽，他們立即加入，目前他們使用雅虎網站作平台，對電腦提供全面服務，從網站設計到整個系統安裝，凡是和個人電腦有關的業務都做，此外也代理IBM、HP的產品。他們的公司過去十年，每年以25%的比率成長，個人電腦市場過去幾年競爭激烈，許多公司經不起考驗結束營業，但是Directron.com認為他們仍有可為，只要有人需要安裝、修理或更新自己的電腦，無論是為了樂趣、省錢甚至是挑戰；大系統的使用者不能提供滿意的售後服務給客人，他們的市場就在。

員工比老闆認真

目前他們的分工是，常湘濱負責新業務的發展，盛穗楚作營運管理。

從化學轉行到電腦，如何做得這麼出色？

曾在殼牌石油公司和Goodyear工作六年的常湘濱表示，其實他雖然不是學的電腦，但是他有良好的專業團隊，而且管理和溝通的基本概念是一樣的，



盛穗楚漂亮、活潑、善於人際關係，與常湘濱的一流商業頭腦，組合成完美搭配。

大公司做事需要爭取單位主管的認同採用你的建議，和經營事業是相同的。

常湘濱認為他們很幸運有非常好的團隊，當時網路商業也是員工們的建議，大家齊心合力才使公司掘起，他的員工有的已工作長達八、九年，甚至比老闆還認真。

不想讀書會開公司

常湘濱說他們夫妻有如人的大腦，兩人依個性各自掌管一邊。

擁有化學博士學位的常湘濱說，A級學生現在給C級學生服務，盛穗楚畢業於國內大學的外語系，曾任職翻譯，她說當時老公要辭職把部門主管嚇一跳，做得好好的怎麼要不做了呢？

盛穗楚個性直接了當，當年到美陪讀，在艾阿華小鎮上十分無聊，但是又不想念書，她說“別人看我不順眼，走在路上問你讀那個系，什麼學位？”答曰“沒有系，什麼都不是”。

在電腦公司她擔任秘書和業務，做了兩年覺得這些業務她也可以做，於是就這麼開辦起公司。說做就做的個性一直持續至今，“每天把該做的事做好”她說，“對經營從未做過計劃，我們好像沒有碰到太難的時候，不過也不算好，不忙的時候就想辦法”。

完美組合：人際高手+一流商業頭腦

常湘濱形容太太的特長是，人際關係高手，對數

字敏感，十多年的客人都會跟著盛穗楚。她的業務能力高強，對銷售的觀念是，為客人著想，不要太強迫，讓客人感到舒服，和客戶維持信任、關心的關係。

目前Directron.com擁有自己的棟辦公大樓，朋友問她是不是每天在自己的大樓上班有一種成就感，她說“一點也沒有，反正就是上班嘛！”老公說，因為她不管大樓的事，哪裡要修，哪裡要做什麼都不知道。

她是這樣看常湘濱，聰明、有科學觀，商業頭腦一流。

盛穗楚打破創業規則

常湘濱說太座不會瞻前顧後，屬於行動派。盛穗楚說，“現在公司擴張，還是要有一些科學的方法，都是他管囉！”，他們一體的關係不僅以互補作用存在於婚姻，事業上也循著相同的軌跡，有人說經營的事業是要你所喜歡的領域才能持久，而盛穗楚卻打破此一定律，她說“一點也不喜歡電腦”，而且也不太了解，常湘濱在一旁補充，到最近幾年老婆才學會用滑鼠，因為有時點一下，有時點二下，而且左右不同功能。

對創業有何建議？

常湘濱說，選對行業，而且花時間對它熟悉，創業機會仍然很多，如果把經驗、興趣和目的畫成三個相交的圓圈，重疊的那一部份就是理想的事業，當然這三圈是可以改變和調整。

“The Best Sidekick” Interview with Vicky & Mike

The Founders of Directron.com

by Lotus Wu

Translated by Jack Hsiao



Vicky used to be the employee of a computer company – until she quit her job in 1994 and started her own business in her garage.

To help his wife, for two years, her husband, Mike Chang, would work for thirteen hours a day. Getting off of his day job at three in the afternoon, he would often help customers when he got back home. Eventually, he entered the business completely as well.


Today, their computer parts and accessories business, Directron, is listed under the *Houston Business Journal* as number two in retail sales

in the Houston area. With a PhD in chemistry, Mike quips that A students are now working for C students. When Vicky started the business, she focused on selling computer parts, and as business continued to grow, she had to adjust



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to the various changes in technology as well. Directron's reason for success is because it tapped into the changing trend of technology and made the appropriate reactions.

In 1998, e-commerce was just starting to rear its head, and Directron immediately dove in. Currently they use the Yahoo! template for their web page, providing full service and troubleshooting for computers. From web design to setting up a system, Directron can help you with anything computer related.

The work is split between Vicky and Mike in the following way: Mike is in charge of management and development, while Vicky takes care of business operations.

From chemistry to computers, how do you make the change?

Mike worked at Shell and Goodyear for six years. Although he did not specialize in computers, he had experience in working with good teams. The premise of management and communication is the same, Mike believes. In big companies, you need to convince your boss to take the suggestions that your team make. In that way, managing a company has many similarities. Directron is lucky to have started off with a good team of workers. Some of the employees have been working for Directron for eight to nine years.

Vicky's personality is very straightforward. When she came to America for schooling, she did not especially want to go to a university.

She became a secretary and salesperson in a computer company, and that is when she decided that she could work in this field. Her strengths are good communication skills and a knack with numbers; this is why many customers have stayed with Directron for at least a decade. Her mantra in sales is to think about the customer at all times. Don't pressure them too much, and allow them to feel comfortable.

With this motto, Directron certainly has thrived. They currently have their own corporate building. Even though they have come a long way, Vicky still retains a humble personality. When asked whether she feels special going to work everyday in such a large building, Vicky just shrugs, "It's still going to work..."

Some people may say that you must take up a job that you love, but Vicky has broken this stereotype. She does not like computers at all, and it was just recently that she learned how to use a mouse effectively. Perhaps her interest is in starting businesses?

Experience, Interests and Goals - The elements of Success.

Mike adds that to start an effective business, you need to spend time to research the subject. If you take experience, interests, and goals and put them together, the area where they all overlap is where you should focus on.

外商如何走進中國

想要到中國投資經營成功，先了解它的非經濟因素

文/鄔逸卉



Arthur Yan

中國大陸龐大的市場，多年來吸引外資進入，有的經驗豐富的公司累積長達廿多年歷史，他們根據西方學理調查，依據一系列投資分析，在中國做生意。

經濟又富科學的理論之外，投資人總有感覺不夠詳盡的地方，因為他們對中國的人情互動、生活機能了解不夠。

Arthur Yan是一家投資顧問公司的合夥人，他們的公司提供“非財務性”的條件分析，使外國投資人從中國的文化背景、行事邏輯了解中國，他們的

提供分析重點在於幫助你“知道”怎麼去做，而不是“要”你去怎麼做。

將他們提供的資料設定在整個投資評估的“補充性”地位，但實質上卻非常重要，Arthur說，全世界都把焦點放在中國，如何掌握機會，這就是他們所要做的，像是投資城市有沒有以英語為主的學校，可以就醫的醫療構機，如果這些因素不考慮進去，日後肯定會出問題。

這種型式的投資分析是否可以用在其他勞力密集國家，如印度、墨西哥？

他表示已經在和墨西哥進行商談，強調全世界只有一個中國，沒有其他國家可以取代。



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他們建議美國公司到中國經商幾個敏感問題不要主動觸碰，像是台灣、西藏、日本和天安門。無可否認的大陸上競爭激烈，有很多機會，看起來很好，但真正能掌握的還是要有充份準備。

他指出，美國商人到中國做生意比中國人更方便，因為他們已有客人，而且銷售技巧純熟。該公司特地針對能源公司到中國投資，因為公司另一合夥人 Dr. Kirk，在中國投資能源市場有廿年經驗，現在該公司所提供的服務就是他過去在感到不足之處。



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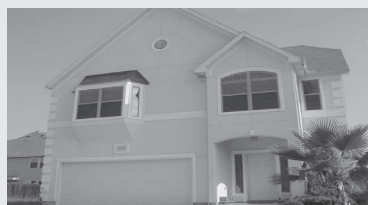
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要進好大學，需及早準備

旅美專協會所主辦的大學之道，請了五位大學將升入二年級或是今年的新鮮人參加。

By Lotus Wu

Translated by Jack Hsiao



左起Chen Zhang、Connie Yu、Michael Wei、Jenny Wei、Lihua Bai.

許多家庭移民美國的目的，是為了孩子的教育問題。旅美專協會所主辦的大學之道，請了五位大學將升入二年級或是今年的新鮮人參加，讓他們現身說法，談入學的準備。

如何進入好大學？

綜合五人的經驗，在十二年級的時候，所有準備入學的工作都已經完成，SAT、學校成績定案，這個階段要做的事情是填寫大學入學申請表格，知道你想申請的學校。

高中起該如何開始準備？

他們表示，家長要明瞭小孩真正喜好，SAT很重要，但是也不要忽略課外活動，高中和初中完全不同，首先要適應高中環境，參加社團不在多而在精，高一或高二的時候可以多加入不同社團，等到以後選二、三個真正喜歡的參加，從活動當中學習，到了十一或是十二年級就可以成為社團裡的幹部，如財務或是會長之類頭銜，練習領導技巧，Jenny Wei認為寫作非常重要。

華裔家長通常在暑假時都逼著孩子補SAT，這個成績固然重要，其他動也很重要。

Lihua Bai說，申請大學是一種學習過程，在入學申請表格上會有一欄問你在夏天的活動。這個問題真正目的是在了解學生的喜好和才能，如果就填上補習班那是很乏味的，她自己喜歡跳舞，有一年跟著老師到北京去，她據實填報，這才是學校也想知道的，只要孩子有興趣的東西都可以鼓勵在暑期時參加。此外選課很重要，課外活動也很重要，並且和老師保持一定的熟悉度，如果沒有這樣的關係，申請入學時要請老師寫推薦信，老師也寫不出深刻的內容。進大學時有無任何期望，讀了一年之後，對大學的感覺有沒有落差？張晨說，進了史丹佛驚訝學校和高中完全不同，克里門高中有很多人比你強，

讓你養成謙虛面對。就讀德州大學奧斯汀校區的Michael Wei說，大學和高中有很大不同，大班制，和老師都還不熟。到芝加哥讀書的Jenny說，她的學校卻剛好相反，班上只有十多人，和百利高中的卅多人不一樣，逼著自己在課堂上要表現，一開始很害怕，現在感覺不是那麼困難了。

出乎意料的理由，多半是沒有什麼選擇下的結果，他們幾乎都是早期申請學校的期間取得入學資格。將前往麻省理工學院讀書的Lihua說，許多學校的網站都做得很漂亮，而且在網站上說出你心中的話，她從未去看過學校，憑著感覺決定，看你喜歡這個學校的一點是否符合自己的期望。Michael的成績可以進入加州柏克萊大學，但是一年要四萬的花費，使他選擇離家三小時車程的奧斯汀。

華裔家長望子成龍的心理，父母和子女如何看待這個問題？

Lihua說，家長告戒子女的話常深怕他們不懂，重複再三，其實小孩也有自己的想法，家長在傳達時要有說話技巧，才能讓孩子接受，如果要求太高，他們會乾脆放棄，她告訴大人們，退一海闊天空，選校的事還是讓小孩自己做決定。

Jenny說，子女從真正喜歡的課程上才能學到東西，當醫生的媽媽在高中時常對她灌輸做醫生觀念，可是她不喜歡。她說，讓子女們自己做決定，大人不要考慮所選學校科系是否適合、是否合於未來，他們要的是有興趣的科目，而不是被大人左右。

Michael說中國家長在孩子高中常有很多限制，什麼晚上十點以前不准打電話這一類，一旦進入大學完全獨立

後，反而不知道該如何是好。

Connie Yu說，她的父母對她全然地尊重，並且把家裡情形讓她充份了解，使她能夠分擔責任，想清楚她所要的學校，花了一整年申請獎學金。

Chen Zhang說要讓孩子有時間思考，中國家長常想得太遠，因為一次考試不理想，對一個八年級的孩子說，書讀不好將來會找不到好工作，還會對不起你老婆。他的話引起台下哄堂大笑。

Chen Zhang說高中是一個長大的過程，一些同學幾乎和父母無話可談，其實親子溝通很重要，即使大人有缺點，子女們也能理解。最後十分窩心的說，他所有的優點都是來自父母遺傳，缺點都是自己的，讓台下響起如雷掌聲。



參加的家長和子女全神灌注 都是隨女兒的意思，以後如果不好會不會怪父母當時沒有給她意見。她建議家長放鬆心情，讓子女選擇。麥克的父親魏慶義說，孩子在美國受教育多少會受到西方影響，父母不要對他們逼迫太厲害，父母子女是一個團隊組合。選校很難，名校不一定適合。

Connie的母親程錦表示，女兒讀書都是靠自己，她沒有花什麼時間在上面。對於選了史丹福之後她所思索的問題是，

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Jenny的母親廖仲星說，女兒小時她按照中國式的管教方式，週末上各種才藝課，平時在家要做算術習題，很少出去玩，不過也就是在小學時打下她日後學習基礎，培養良好閱讀習慣，中學、高中她因為工作和家中的小兒子已無暇顧及女兒，連大學申請表格她都沒看過。她所學習



Chen Zhang的父親張義

到的西方教育觀點最重要的是要培養子女的自信，孩子有的優點不要吝於誇讚，所以她一開始，就表示很驕傲的站在這裡，以台上的女兒為榮，但她同時也告戒家長，不要放棄中國的價值觀，一些寶貴的觀念就是華人移民賴以成功的因素。

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哈佛大學蕭天峻

就讀哈佛大學的蕭天峻，是識或不識的媽媽們口中的傳奇，他畢業於 Lamar Consolidated高中，以第一名成績畢業，GPA達到113分，順利的申請到哈佛，二歲到美國，中文和英文使用的一般自如，他的

SAT成績是1560分。許多家庭為了子女將來進入理想大學，都盡量考進所謂的“明星高中”，蕭天峻順其自然的到家附近，位在Rosenberg地區的一個普通高中。

高中四年各科平均發展，只要老師教得好的科目，成績就特別高，他在學校參加辯論社，四年裡經常出外比賽，從電腦上找資料，世界大事、頭條新聞都是他收集內容，作為他的資料庫，演講、辯論改變了他原本內向的個性，使他不怕說話，能夠與人溝通。

在哈佛，他在校友辦公室打工，哈佛的校友捐款豐厚，他申請到獎學金支付半數的學費，現在就讀私立名校並非富有家庭的專利，有一位室友就拿到全額獎學金。



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On the Road to College

The emphasis that the Chinese place on education is surprising for most Americans. A main reason why many Asian parents immigrate to the United States is because of educational concerns. In the conference about the “Road to College,” the organization invited five individuals to share their experiences with the public. These students are either incoming college freshmen or rising sophomores at their respective universities.

Question 1: How do you get into a good college?

Combining the five people’s experience, by the 12th grade, an applicant should have all the necessary materials in applying for college prepared. SAT testing and transcripts should all be complete, and the only thing remaining in this step is filling out the application and figuring out which college you would like to attend.

Question 2: How do you begin to prepare in 9th grade?

Parents have to understand their children’s interests and affinities. The SAT is very important but not so important to override extracurricular activities. High school and middle school is completely different. First, you must get used to the environment of high school. You should choose to focus on a certain number of clubs and activities as opposed to spreading yourself too thin and committing on none. During freshman and sophomore year, a good idea is to sign up for many different organizations before focusing on a few in the second half of your high school career.

To succeed, you do not really have to become president of the organization, but an officer position is better to hone leadership skills.

Jenny, one of the students interviewed, believes that writing is an important skill in the college application process. Chinese parents often push their kids to take SAT classes during the summer, but other activities are just as important.

Lihua states that applying for college is a learning experience. On the application there is this column that asks for your summer activities. This question’s true purpose is to understand a student’s interests and skills. If you fill in the column

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with summer school, that is not going to be very interesting for the admissions board. She herself loved to dance, so she went to Beijing with her dance teacher over one summer, and used this to fill in her summer activity column.

As long as kids are interested in a certain area, parents should encourage them to develop their interests. Along with appropriate extracurricular activities, choosing the right classes and staying in touch with teachers are very important as well. The teacher recommendation is another essential part of a college application. If you do not have a close relationship with your high school teachers, when it comes time for them to fill out a recommendation, they will not have anything special to say about you.

Question 3: College and high school have many differences, after a year in college, did you feel differently about it?

Chen Zhang maintains that the level of competition in college is much higher than in high school. A rising sophomore to Stanford University, he compares the students there to the students at his old high school, Clements. Everybody is smart at college, and it is a humbling experience.

Attending UT Austin, Michael cites the large classes and distant teachers as the main differences between college and high school. On the other hand, Jenny says that her school, the University of Chicago, is completely opposite. Having ten to fifteen students in one class is clearly different from the thirty or so class sizes at Bellaire High School.

Question 4: Why did you choose the school you attend today?

Surprisingly, many students choose their schools without agonizing debates. Heading off to MIT, Lihua reveals that the different schools' websites were the deciding factor for her. Many schools design elaborate websites to attract a variety of students. She never visited her school, but used her instinct to decide. With his grades, Michael could have attended UC Berkley, but a 40,000 annual tuition convinced him to attend UT Austin.

Question 5: How do children overcome the high expectations of their parents?

Lihua states that although parents keep repeating the same old lectures, teenagers have their own opinions too. When lecturing, parents need to use

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tact in order to get their children to accept their words. If a parent aims too high, then that will only turn away the child.

Jenny believes that students need to focus on their interests to be able to learn effectively. Her doctor mother often tried to convince her about the merits of medicine, but she just was not interested. Let the kids decide themselves what they want to do, she says.

Michael agrees on the fact that many Asian students may have a lot of parental restrictions while in high school. Once they reach college, however, they might not know what to do with their newfound freedom.


Connie, on the other hand, lauds her parents for respecting her and letting her take a place in family affairs.

The importance of letting kids think for themselves should not be underestimated, says Chen. High school is a growing up experience. Many parents and their students have trouble communicating with each other, but family communication is a very important aspect.

Connie's mother, Ging, states that her daughter

relied on herself to get good grades and get into a good college. After she got accepted at Stanford, she let Connie make her own decisions about her future. She suggests that parents should relax and let their children make up their own mind. After all, they are about to become adults.

Michael's father, states that children receiving an American education will likely be affected by Western traditions. Don't push them or control them too much. Parents and their children should be a group together in applying for college.

Jenny's mother places an addendum to that comment. When Jenny was little she taught her using the traditional Chinese method. On the weekends she would attend various arts classes and at home she would have to work on math. But the hard work during the early years contributed to a good base for Jenny's later years in high school. When Jenny got older, her mother started to let her loose a bit more. The most important aspect of Western education is to cultivate a student's self-confidence. Don't be hesitant to praise a child for his strengths. At the same time, however, the Chinese traditional way of teaching is important as well. 

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譚大偉談休市地產

Woodland, Medical Center, Pearland等區被看好



名建築師譚大偉

好地難求

在休士頓居住卅多年的建築師譚大偉，歷經休士頓地產的起伏興衰。

他表示，這五年事務所的設計案沒有停過，從供求的關係來看，商場面積似乎已經過剩，年年觀察，對這種關係感到有些奇怪，地價走俏，建築費漲價，相對收入沒有增加，他一直存有一個疑問，這種供求關係何時會走到無法平衡的局面？

到目前為止都還有很多人推出商場，東、西部前來的買家，加上油價上漲，買賣雙方已經呈現不合理的狀況，因為買了東西卻算不出回



收點。有的接手人會怕，寧願賣掉可以賺一筆為安。休士頓這二、三年買房地產的人很多，愈來愈難找到所謂的“好的地”，

幾乎全被搶購一空，地價貴到不合理但仍有人強進市場買去。

醫學中心工作穩定 房價不墜

東西兩岸買家的地都已蓋完，現在都是休士頓本地人的個案，很多越南人也學會地產投資操作。

目前他手上一個正在趕工的案子是黃金花園新城，原來的設計售價太貴，現在他們將設計單位減少，降低造價，售價可以便宜很多，所以他們的投資集寧願多花點錢在設計上。

80年代是休士頓地產業最谷底的時期，有三個地區的房價完全不受影響，他們是West University, Bellaire這一帶以及Woodland和Memorial，因為德州醫學中心是全美最大醫學中心，不斷擴展，工作人員不但職位穩定，而且需求增加，使得附近地區房價維持一定價位。

Pearland等地被看好