



## Harvey E. Najim: A Spirit of Generosity that Gives Hope

By Deyanira Romo Rossell, Hope for the Future

Heading a company he created in 1980, now with revenues of \$1.2 billion, Harvey E. Najim, finds some of the greatest satisfaction from a binder that rests on the credenza behind his desk. It is overflowing with hand-written letters of hope and gratitude from the hundreds of Catholic school students he has sponsored through Hope for the Future with his Harvey E. Najim Family Foundation.



“I have read all of them,” he says. “If other people could read the letters that I have read, they would see that you can really make a difference in the lives of these children.”

Najim has donated \$500,000 over 2 years to Hope for the Future which provides tuition assistance to hundreds of disadvantaged students each year to attend the Archdiocese of San Antonio Catholic School of their choice. Hope for the Future is one of 131 grants and pledges that the Najim Family Foundation and Najim, personally have awarded totaling approximately \$25 million.

He established his Foundation in December 2006 to help children’s charitable organizations in the greater San Antonio area. Najim has donated more than \$82 million to the Foundation, which supports various public charities that advance children’s education, children’s medical treatment, medical research for illnesses and diseases affecting children. Among the other charities he funds are Seton Home, a shelter for pregnant teens; St. Pj’s Children’s Home, an orphanage; Brighton Center, which provides services to children with delays or disabilities; and SAMMinistires, a homeless shelter. Recently, he awarded \$100,000 to the YMCA of San Antonio for the Harvey E. Najim Family Foundation Y-land south of downtown, a childcare facility and indoor playground for children in need.



These sorts of ribbon-cuttings are part of a wave of philanthropy, generosity and charity that is rising to new levels in San Antonio, propelled by the generous grants awarded by Najim, through his foundation. While the Harvey E. Najim Family Foundation’s contributions are exemplary, an equally generous spirit of community comes with the financial boost. His personal devotion to each cause sets him apart as he raises the bar

in San Antonio for philanthropy that is far-reaching in its impact upon a large portion of the community. While his grants help pay the bills, his compassion, exuberance and true commitment to the causes he funds provide a contribution to local charities that is both hard hitting and inspirational.

"I personally have made a hundred visits to the different organizations we support. I think that it is very important. When I see how much fun the children are having, I know we are making an impact," Najim said.

Naming his company after the brightest star in the universe, Najim is Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Sirius Computer Solutions, Inc. Prior to starting his own company, Najim spent thirteen years in various technical, marketing and management capacities for IBM Corporation. His innovative business vision has led Sirius to become a nationally recognized technology provider with 2010 revenues over \$810 million, more than 1,000 employees, and 80 locations across the United States. His model for success begins with a great idea and hard work.

"First of all, you have to go work for a large company to learn how they operate, then come up with a business idea that is unique, have a mentor, financial backing and hire great people and work harder than you ever have in your life," he says.

He shares this work ethic with the 200 inner city students, known as Najim Scholars, he supports through his grant to Hope for the Future. An energetic and straightforward businessman, Najim finds great joy in meeting the students who receive financial help as a direct result of his generosity. He steps into Catholic school gymnasiums and cafeterias, easily blending in to meet these children personally, who quickly soak in his warm advice.

"I'm not Catholic, but it doesn't make a difference to me what church I belong to. The reality is that the best schools in San Antonio inside Loop 410, excluding Alamo Heights are the faith-based schools that Hope for the Future supports, like Holy Cross, Central Catholic, Providence and others. We have to put God back in the classroom," he says emphatically.

His message of traditional values like avoid drugs, work hard and stay in school, is delivered with a mixture of humor, love and firmness that captures the attention of young students.

"To our Catholic school students, Harvey Najim is like any parent, teacher or administrator at the school, who cares about them and takes the time to give them sage advice. He is so kind and funny, that it makes our students feel comfortable sharing their Catholic school story with him," said Julie Seguin, Director of Hope for the Future.

Najim is at the forefront of a movement in San Antonio to give parents state funds to place their children in the school of their choice. He says, "Parents should have the opportunity to send their children to a faith-based or special needs school with funds

from the state to defray the cost of their tuition."

On his long list of volunteer posts, he is a member of the Board of Trustees of St. Mary's University, and is an Advisory Board Member of SAMMinistries. Najim has served on several task forces with IBM, and was a member of the 2006 VARBusiness Editorial Advisory Counsel. Formerly, he served on the board of directors of J.P. Morgan Chase Bank in San Antonio, and was the Chairman of the Board of Directors of San Antonio Federal Credit Union. He also served on the boards of directors of both Junior Achievement and Respite Care of San Antonio, along with the American Society of Computer Dealers. Najim continues to be recognized for his outstanding leadership in campaigning for the United Way of San Antonio and Bexar County.

Najim was inducted into the S.A. Business Hall of Fame in March 2009. He was also inducted into the Texas Business Hall of Fame in November 2010.

Najim graduated from the University of Wichita with a B.A. in Mathematics in June 1964, and served his country in the United States Army as a First Lieutenant at HQ BAMC as the Assistant Chief of Data Processing. He attended the President's Class at the Wharton School of Finance in June 1990, as well as the Owner President's Class at Harvard University in October 1994.

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