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Featured Texas Accounting Firm -

Gainer Donnelly & Desroches

Gainer, Donnelly & Desroches, LLP has been voted one of the Top 3 CPA firms in Houston by *Texas Lawyer Magazine* and has also been featured as one of the top 200 firms in the U.S. by *Inside Public Accounting*. In their more than 60 years of service in the Houston area, GD&D has grown to include over 150 employees while maintaining the quality and personalized attention that one would expect from a neighborhood CPA.

GAINER DONNELLY & DESROCHES

GD&D founder and partner, Sam Gainer, was featured in a PBS series profile where he described how he began his practice with a CPA certificate coupled with a law degree, and a philosophy of life and business that he gleaned from his father. His enthusiasm was apparent as he quoted his father, "You know, son, if you just treat people just based on the golden rule, it's amazing how that'll be a great thing for you." Sam went on to say, "So I always try to treat people the way I would like to be treated, and the same way with clients. If people understand that they're going to be treated fairly and that you're going to listen to them, then it's fairly easy to build a business."

In reflecting on Sam's many interests, including a passion for travel, woodworking, and photography, David Donnelly, one of the firm's partners, described Sam as a renaissance man who stays with his interests until he achieves a level of expertise he's happy with. As a tax specialist, Sam seemed equally passionate about saving his clients money by finding ways to turn their interests into business ventures that helped create, as Sam put it, "A home for deductions."

GD&D is a regional leader in accounting that serves the diverse needs of the construction, healthcare, manufacturing, nonprofit, real estate, and energy marketing industries. The firm carries forward Sam Gainer's enthusiasm and commitment to excellence for all its clients, both big and small. Based on this ethic, GD&D is a firm that can be expected to continue growing and serving Texas' business community for generations.

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We reached out to Earl Hersh, Director of Business Development for GD&D, to ask him a few questions about how the firm has become so successful based on delivering personalized service and honoring the golden rule philosophy of its founder, Sam Gainer.



Q&A

1. Sam Gainer mentioned the golden rule on more than one occasion in the PBS profile he was featured in. How does Gainer, Donnelly & Desroches continue to honor Sam's legacy and his father's words of wisdom in the way it serves clients?

Sam certainly worked hard to set the bar high in terms of client service, and one thing that makes Gainer Donnelly & Desroches stand out is our 'client first' approach -understanding our clients issues and needs. Our goal is to establish a relationship that will allow us to meet and exceed their expectations and add value to the services that we provide. We do this through everything from our 'Sandwich Session' seminar series, to the simple act of returning phone calls and correspondence in a timely manner. We realize that the role we fulfill as 'trusted advisor' comes with both privilege and responsibility, we want our clients to succeed, and that means knowing their businesses and industries inside out.

2. GD&D has demonstrated its philanthropy and civic responsibility by providing pro bono work to nonprofits, and as standard practice donates 1% of its gross revenue to charity through its Employee-directed Charitable Giving Program. Can you describe how this fits with the firm's overall philosophy?

At GD&D, we strive to give back to our community because we feel it has greatly contributed to our success. In addition to providing, tax, audit and consulting services to more than 100 qualified charities, all of our Partners serve as volunteers in the nonprofit community, many for more than one entity. Our firm also donates 1% of gross revenue to Houston-area charities through our unique Employee-directed

charitable giving program. Each quarter, employees nominate nonprofit organizations (client and non-client) that they are committed to. So far we have been able to donate over \$1,200,000 to local charities since this program began in 2000.

3. Many college hopefuls are now looking at degrees in accounting and are committed to following through to earn their CPA certificate with the hopes of establishing their own firms. What changes might an aspiring CPA and firm owner encounter in the accounting and professional services industry? What advice would you offer?

A constant influx of new technology and young talent means that the industry is more competitive than ever – this applies to everything from recruiting to practice growth and client retention. For a long time if you did good work then you felt that somehow that was enough, but these days buyers are becoming better informed and more discerning. You need to add value wherever possible, and work hard to get in front of the right people at the right time. Social media is playing an increasingly large role in everything from hiring staff to courting clients, so it's important to know what's out there and how to use each and every tool in order to optimize your chance of success. Gone are the days of an elderly gent with a ten key who never leaves the office and business simply "walks through the door," these days successful CPA's aren't just number crunchers, they have to be marketers, business developers and rainmakers too.