

*Elita Caldwell, Owner*

## Funky Monkey



*Above: Elita Caldwell and family  
Center: First family dollar*



*Below: Funky Monkey store front*



Early in 2013, Friendswood resident, Elita Caldwell's entrepreneurial spirit, work ethic, and frugal nature attracted her to purchase the local consignment store, The Funky Monkey. Located in the heart of downtown at 607 S. Friendswood Drive, #27, The Funky Monkey has been a thriving and successful business since 2004 with a 3,600 square foot storefront and recently added an online eBay store. The boutique currently employs four persons and offers a wide selection of new and gently used women's and children's clothing and accessories as well as a variety of custom made items.

Elita discussed the benefits of owning a business in the city. "Having a business in Friendswood gives us a central location allowing us to draw a customer base from the surrounding cities such as League City, Pearland, Webster, and Alvin. Also, since Friendswood is a more affluent area, we have access to higher quality resale clothing from loyal Friendswood consignors who are committed to supporting local businesses. As a business owner and resident, her close connection to the community has enabled her to better understand what customers want which, in turn, has helped the business nearly double its monthly sales since taking over in June.

Elita was born in Colorado Springs, Colorado to parents in the Air Force Academy and lived primarily in San Antonio when she was growing up, but also lived in Germany and Sicily. She earned a bachelor's degree in interdisciplinary studies and a master's degree in educational administration and worked in the educational field for 13 years as a teacher, Assistant Principal, and Principal at Pearland ISD and Clear Creek ISD. Elita and her husband, Clay, met in college at Texas A&M University in Corpus Christi and moved to Friendswood in 2001. Elita said "we chose Friendswood because, as an educator, quality schools were the highest priority for me in choosing a place to call home and Friendswood is known for its excellent school system."

As a resident business owner, Elita feels like she has a unique connection to the community, her family attends a local church, and her two children attend Friendswood schools." In addition, she helps out by providing on the job training for special needs students at the Friendswood High School Transition Center and also helped sponsor FISD's Clinefest event that was held earlier this year.

