

# Education is key to involvement says Dallas Mayor Mike Rawlings

**N**o one recognizes it because we're such a segregated city — not just racially but socioeconomically," Tranchin said. "The truth is that the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer but unless you actually see it, you aren't aware of it."

And a general awareness of any city politics is what the city is missing. With just two percent of registered Fair Park voters showing up to the most recent City Council elections, the power of one vote can be shocking.

And the next election is one of the most important in the history of the city. With a record six open City Council seats, citizens will also be called upon to vote for mayor.

"We have a historic election for the city of Dallas," Tranchin said. "It is historic — that is not an overstatement — and we have one of the lowest turnouts in the country. Of the 25 largest cities, Dallas is 24th in turnout for mayoral elections."

And the first step to making a difference is getting educated, according to Dallas Mayor Mike Rawlings.

"If I'm interested in getting involved, I need to educate myself on what big issues are in Dallas or big opportunities in Dallas," Rawlings said. "Who's the head of your planning commission? Who's the police chief for your part of town?"

**Mike Rawlings**  
Mayor of Dallas



Knowing the people is a very important place to start to improve their neighborhoods."

Beyond neighborhoods, Rawlings believes everyone has a way of getting involved with the improvement of the city.

"Look up Dallas problems. Google it," Rawlings said, "and you will find 150 of them. Part of the process is not for me to lay out, 'here are the top 25 opportunities.' It's to research and find out. You need an access point for opportunities for the city. There a lot of doors to go through. Go through one door and don't overthink it."

**'YOU HEAR SO MUCH INFORMATION ON THE NATIONAL ELECTIONS AND THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS BUT LOCAL ELECTIONS ARE DIRECTLY AFFECTING LIVES.'**  
DALLAS CITY COUNCIL MEMBER  
**JENNIFER GATES**

And as Marksmen come of age to vote, engagement in city politics grows as well. Senior Elton McIntosh, whose mother led John McCain's North Texas presidential campaign in 2008, sees his own role in politics as a young voter as critical for the future.

"I think it's absolutely important that we as the next generation are aware of what is going on in the world today," McIntosh said. "I like to use the quote, 'my schooling is only part of my education.' In my mind, learning about the world around us and forming our own opinions and having discussions is vital in preparing us for lives as adults. Also, from a practical standpoint, those of us that are 18 play a huge role in selecting who will represent and lead this country."

However, while voting in statewide or national elections is also important, civic engagement at a local level

**Jennifer Staubach Gates**  
District 13 City Council member



should be fundamental to Marksmen's entering adult life.

City Council member Jennifer Gates aims to encourage students in her district — District 13 — which includes the campuses of St. Mark's, Hockaday and Ursuline, to appreciate the power of their political voice.

"You hear so much information on the national elections and the presidential elections but local elections are directly affecting lives," Gates said. "We determine all the funding related to quality of life. The trails that they might go get on and the roads that they might be driving on. It should be on the radar to go vote in the elections."

And while she feels there are a plethora of opportunities available, including assisting on campaigns or organizing focus groups, Gates believes voting is paramount.

"I would just encourage the involvement, encourage especially having the voice and when you have the opportunity to vote, get out there and make sure you're registered and vote," she said. "Council members and the mayor would welcome that activity. So don't hesitate, pick up the phone."

Tranchin, who considered himself one of the few liberal-minded Marksmen during his time here, believes that strictly adhering to party lines, especially as a young and uninformed voter, is a serious problem.

"Remember just growing up I took the Democratic Party platform as my platform," Tranchin said, "and I think the more simple you can make it, the more wrong you can be. You tend to find the facts and figures that prove why you're right instead of looking at the facts and figures to determine whether or not you're right. In high school, I wanted to prove I was right."

In reality, Tranchin believes that for city politics, it is not necessarily the candidate's party or their opinion on broad national issues, but rather the characteristics of the

candidate.

"Judgment, integrity and competence are the three attributes I look for in an elected official," Tranchin said, "because oftentimes, 95 percent of the important issues they're voting on as elected representatives aren't issues that are even coming into play during an election. You can't foresee an ebola outbreak, you can't foresee a humanitarian crisis on the border."

And the difference one vote can make on a local election is drastically higher than one cast on the national level.

"When someone is truly passionate about something and wants others to feel the same way, it can spread like wildfire," McIntosh said. "I think we can and should use our voice as young American citizens to hold our leaders accountable and challenge one another."

## Getting more involved

### How to attend a Dallas City Council meeting

**Where:** 1500 Marilla Street, Dallas

**Meetings:** The Dallas City Council regularly meets every Wednesday, beginning at 9 a.m. in Council Chambers, sixth floor, City Hall, 1500 Marilla. For exact dates, go to [citysecretary.dallascityhall.com](http://citysecretary.dallascityhall.com).

**Next meeting:** Wednesday, April 22.

**Before you go:** Be aware of the meeting's agenda since it is illegal to discuss topics not on the slate. Know the city council members and, if possible, their previous stances on your issue. Be ready to stay beyond the expected schedule — sometimes meetings can last an hour or more past their projected end time.

### Upcoming elections for the city of Dallas

**City Council:** May 9  
**Mayor:** May 9  
**Runoff:** June 13

### Preston Hollow area City Council member

**District:** Number 13  
**City Council member:** Jennifer Staubach Gates



## PEW RESEARCH INSTITUTE POLL

WHERE DO YOU LAND IN THE

# Political spectrum?

In a recent poll, the Pew Research Institute offered questions to determine where a person is classified in political typology — rather than just labelling respondents by likely political party affiliation. Here's how some campus figures came out after taking the poll.

### Where do you fit in?

Take the test at [people-press.org/quiz/political-typology/](http://people-press.org/quiz/political-typology/)



**Christian McClain**  
Sophomore

**When given the choice...** Society is better off if (1) people make marriage and having children a priority or (2) if people have priorities other than marriage and children

**McClain chose:** Option 2

**Classification:** Young outsider



**Nancy Marmion**  
Foreign Language Department Head

**When asked...** True or False? Too much power is concentrated in a few large companies

**Marmion answered:** True

**Classification:** Solid liberal



**Scott Gonzalez**  
Dean and Provost of Campus

**When given the choice...** The best way to ensure peace is through *military strength* or *good diplomacy*.

**Gonzalez replied:**

Good diplomacy

**Classification:** Solid liberal



**JT Graess**  
Student Council President-elect

**When given the choice...** Government regulation of business (1) usually does more harm than good or (2) Government regulation of business is necessary to protect the public interest.

**Graess chose:** Option 1

**Classification:** Business conservative



**Andrew Whigam**  
Sophomore

**When given the choice...** (1) Government is always wasteful and inefficient or (2) Government often does a better job than people give it credit for.

**Whigam chose:** Option 2

**Classification:** Faith and family left

### What do the labels mean?

**Solid liberals** are generally affluent and highly educated, strongly support the social safety net and take very liberal positions on virtually all issues. Most vote Democratic and strongly support President Obama.

**The Faith and Family Left** combine strong support for activist government with conservative attitudes on many social issues. They are very racially diverse and believe that government should do more to solve national problems. Most oppose same-sex marriage and legalizing marijuana.

**Next Generation Left** members have very liberal attitudes on many issues, including homosexuality, abortion, the environment and foreign policy and are generally young, well-educated and financially comfortable.

**Hard-Pressed Skeptics** tend to be deeply financially-stressed and distrustful of government. They have reservations about both political parties, but more lean toward the Democratic Party. In general, they want government to do more to solve problems, but have doubts about its efficiency.

**Young Outsiders** generally express unfavorable opinions of both major parties. They are largely skeptical of activist government, as a substantial majority views government as wasteful and inefficient.

**Business Conservatives** generally are traditional small-government Republicans. Overwhelming percentages think that government is almost always wasteful and it does too much better left to businesses and individuals.

**Steadfast Conservatives** constitute an overwhelmingly Republican group holding very conservative attitudes across most issues, including social policy and the size and scope of government.

**Bystanders** are on the sidelines of the political process, either by choice or because they are ineligible to vote. None are currently registered to vote.

View complete explanations at [people-press.org/quiz/political-typology/](http://people-press.org/quiz/political-typology/)