

Ryan Blackburn

Independent Study and Mentorship

Evan Speice

8 December 2017

Busy Beginnings

Mentor Visit Assessment 1

Mrs. Dody Brigadier

Director of Constituent Outreach

Pat Fallon for Texas Campaign Headquarters, 2416 N. Griffith Drive, Prosper TX 75034

7 December 2017

3:30 - 5:30

Assessment:

In preparation for my time with Mrs. Brigadier this week, we were working closely to incorporate current work in State Representative Pat Fallon's campaign for State Senate to my knowledge of political processes, culminating concepts such as upcoming constituent interaction throughout Texas Senate District 30. Because of the unproportional work seen on the campaigning side when representatives are not in session, I had prepared to dive into a world of

contact, engagement, and debate; however, this very quickly proved not to be the case. As Mrs. Brigadier explained to me, it is most crucial in the campaigning season to prepare well in advance, and guided me through the procedures used to efficiently prepare for public appearances.

On December 8, Representative Pat Fallon is holding town halls in cities throughout the Dallas/Fort Worth metroplex so to expand the breadth of his campaign to voters. Mrs. Brigadier mapped out their path through District 30, and I was amazed to see that much of their trip takes them to areas of the district I have never visited; she explained to me that, unlike gubernatorial or national elections, candidates have much more time to talk to and visit their constituents, as (although with a similar timeline) they have much less ground to cover. I began to see that the campaigning aspect of public office is just as complex and critical as the legislative duties of a representative: ensuring your constituents understand your policies and feel a personal connection to their representative is a value often forgotten about when elections are discussed. Indeed, in seeing this firsthand perspective to the organization of such a critical event, I began to understand that this process is done in such a manner that it addresses the foremost concern of constituents above all else in working to provide a personal relationship with your elected official; this personal bond is critical to running a successful campaign.

Just as the election season began to pick up speed, I too accelerated into action: with the help of Mrs. Brigadier, I learned to take part in expanding the virtues of civic engagement through materials similar to what is used in the campaign. At the site, Mrs. Brigadier showed me examples of materials made to give to constituents or to bolster the concepts Pat Fallon champions; some included donation envelopes to use at events, or brochures and notes

discussing what type of representative Pat Fallon hopes to continue to be. These physical assets, in having such easy access to this information, encouraged me to learn more about his views and proposed legislative adjustments. This facility in understanding what a candidate can accomplish and believes was facilitated very effectively through these tools, and provided the audience with the ability to become more invested in what matters concern them. In exposing me to the professional level of materials used in campaigning, Mrs. Brigadier encouraged me to incorporate concepts into my own campaign for my Original Work, and prompted a drive within me to create these outlets of communication for this project.

This introduction to the ever-moving habits of campaign season have inspired a motivation in me to incorporate such aspects in appealing to citizens; whether with a personal relationship or via professional materials, appealing to the needs of the constituency is key to championing a cause. I hope to be able to utilize this knowledge to expand the breadth of my Original Work to more Denton and Collin County citizens, and aim to use my experience with Pat Fallon for Texas to advertise the movement. Truly, equipped with this knowledge of appealing to the common citizen, I am both anxious and excited to blend the lessons learned from both campaigns into my political thought and professional future.