

Ryan Blackburn

Independent Study and Mentorship

Evan Speice

26 January 2018

**Campaign Tools - Connecting with Constituents**

**Mentor Visit Assessment 2**

Mrs. Dody Brigadier

Director of Constituent Outreach

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

11 January 2018

3:30 - 5:30

**Assessment:**

Soon after looking a comprehensive look at the campaigning scene under Pat Fallon's Office, I soon found that the resources and materials found in any political campaign are both intricate and deliberate in their effect on the constituency; with the help of Mrs. Brigadier, other campaign officials and volunteers, I looked to delve deeper into each of the mediums campaigns use to connect with their voter base. With this came an understanding of each outlet's most efficient use, and how campaigns compile and appeal to a summative average of constituent values to best promote their candidate.

When setting up this mentor visit, I hoped to address the first of these two lessons foremost: the processes, materials, and resources the average campaign would use to contact their constituents, as well as their impact and relative consistency in relaying messages of a candidate's values to voters. Because of the looming primary elections this upcoming March of 2018, these materials abounded in the campaign's office, and allowed me the ability to see firsthand what would be sent out, what values would be conveyed, and how the candidate as a whole would be viewed by the general population. At the office, I was given the opportunity to talk with volunteers about what their routine encompassed whenever they would assemble materials for the campaign, and was surprised to find that the majority of their work was already done for them; at most, the processes associated with this volunteer work were simple tasks, such as matching names of attendees at a town hall event to their respective letter from Mr. Fallon. I continued by discussing with Mrs. Brigadier the importance of each procedure, and how she believes the process will impact voter turnout and political participation. I learned that these methods created a personal connection with the voter and the candidate, encouraging voting to support their candidacy well into their tenure and promoting others to do so as well; the processes create multiple advocates for the candidate to ascend to public office in hopes of successfully spreading views on policy and governmental action.

Concurrent with the utility of each of the campaign's materials, the organization's aspirations of relaying Mr. Fallon's beliefs and views on policy issues also looked to reach the majority of the voting population for his election. Some promotional materials, such as cards and flyers for Pat Fallon, look to specifically discuss his triumphs in the Texas House of Representatives and values he holds closely to his tenure as a public official, including a atmosphere of charisma through personal connection to his constituents. With the majority of Denton County and the city of Frisco voting conservatively, the campaign looked to hit on topics and relevant issues at the state level that appeals to a variety of conservative voters. This is critical in campaigning for the March primary elections, where the contentious race between incumbent Craig Estes and representative Pat Fallon will look to appeal to the voters of multiple counties across the northern Dallas-Fort Worth area. The race, as I learned from my visit, is one that focuses specifically on the conservative voters in the region in order to first gain the party's endorsement for the general election for Senate District 30 in November. In continuing my exposure to the realm of public policy, I look forward to continuing this growth in understanding of preparation needed for the primaries, and am hopeful this experience can complement the growth of my final product towards improving voter turnout in all elections.