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COMPLETE

Collector: 2021DACAC (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, March 30, 2021 1:32:50 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, March 30, 2021 2:06:16 PM
Time Spent: 00:33:26
IP Address: 172.56.7.182

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Q1

NAME:

Ruth Torres

Q2

District 5

COUNCIL DISTRICT

Q3

YOU AND THE ARTS Give us a sense about your relationship with the arts (Some ideas to consider) • What art form or cultural organization do you particularly enjoy? • Are your family members involved in the arts? • Share favorite cultural experience in the last two years? • What virtual arts programs have you and your family enjoyed during the pandemic?

I love to dance, as a teen I was part of a dance group, for music artists and on tv.

My daughter was in a dance company for several years and currently attends Booker T, theatre conservatory.

Q4

ADVOCACY The support of our elected City leaders is important to ensuring arts and culture remain a priority at City Hall and part of the civic dialogue. **QUESTION:** How have you advocated for the arts community and/or how will you do that going forward?

I did advocate for arts and spoke against the lack of funding through Visit Dallas. I spoke at city council requesting a greater level of funding for arts across Dallas. I will aggressively pursue economic development that includes building a community center to enable artistic expression as well as use of parks and the black box at the library. We need to provide forums for families to enjoy, and develop skills and financially support our artists.

Q5

SUPPORT & RECOVERY Prior to COVID, the Dallas creative economy was on track to have an economic impact surpassing \$1B a year, a vital business sector. The pandemic derailed that momentum. Arts facilities were the first to close and will be among the last to reopen at full capacity. The city's nonprofit arts and cultural community has lost more than \$95M and over 1,000 jobs, and cultural tourism has virtually stopped. City support has been critical to keeping these institutions alive. Even in a tough budget year, this need remains. **QUESTION:** Will you work to see that City support continues and how will you ensure arts and culture play a key role in the Dallas economic recovery?

Yes, we need to get the vaccine distributed through many local providers and accelerate distribution and follow CDC guidelines so everyone can get back to work and play. We need to enable the arts using open green space.

Q6

EQUITY AND NEIGHBORHOODS The top pillar of the Dallas Cultural Plan is Equity, with a goal of ensuring arts and culture are accessible in communities that have been historically underserved. And we know when arts are purposefully embedded in the community, they can fight urban blight and create vibrant neighborhoods. **QUESTION:** How will you keep the focus on equitable access to the arts; and specifically where and how would you like to see art used to address challenges in your City Council District. (Some ideas to consider)• Murals• Underpass transformation• More opportunities for ALAANA artists in underserved communities• Popup cultural centers• Neighborhood performances• Economic incentives for developers to create affordable galleries, workshop spaces and artists' housing

D5 is significantly underserved and isolated, we need lots of community events to connect and encourage interactions. As I have attended forums with TREC and real estate PACs and developers, I've made it clear that D5 should be the affordable housing center for the city as long as we can have the quality of life, the wrap-around services and community center and activities for youth, families and seniors and these will be a requirement for receipt of economic incentives. We need to have events where the family can come out, take a class on painting or watch a performance and eat from food trucks. I fully support murals that convey unity and community. We don't have underpasses but these should be used for useful purposes. I am committed to dramatically increasing affordable housing and supporting entrepreneurs.

Q7

PARTICIPATION The Dallas arts and cultural community is diverse and growing and contains a range of genres, ethnicities, locations and more. Every group, especially those serving your district, is honored when elected officials attend a program, visit our organizations, or even stop by a monthly DACAC meeting to say hello. **QUESTION:** Will you commit to attending local programs (performances, exhibitions, classes) or meeting with a Dallas arts organization on a regular basis? What would that look like?

Yes. I'm very results oriented and a workaholic. So, I need invitations to force me to take a break and enjoy a show. The real attraction for me, to be honest, is if my time is solving something or giving me insight on an issue that someone needs my help on. If you need me, I'll be there. I'm not much of a spectator unless it's my kids performing or something that has a message behind it, I like to be involved.
