

Should you run for office?

Think about your honest answers to these questions:

- What are the specific changes you want to make in your community?
- Does an individual holding this office have the power to create these changes?
- Is running for this office the best way to make these changes?
- What office should you run for?
- What will you have to do as an elected official?
- Do you think you can do a better job than the people who represent you?
- Do you meet the basic qualifications for the office-- do you meet age, residency or experience qualifications?
- What legal obligations will you have to meet?
- Attend some meetings of the office you are interested in-- are you still interested?
- Do you have the time to serve?
- Do you really want this job?
- Do you have the time to run a good campaign?
- Do you have the family support to run a good campaign?
- What level of name recognition do you have?
- What is your fundraising ability/potential?
- Can you raise enough money?
- Do you have the required drive to win?
- Do you possess the speaking skills necessary?
- Are you already involved in your community?
- Do you belong to any civic or political action organizations?
- Are you involved with any political party organizations?
- What volunteer activities have you participated in?
- Are you the best person available to do this job?
- Are you absolutely healthy and sane?-- you will be under tremendous pressure.
- Does your partner/spouse/family think it's a fantastic idea?
- Do you have the time to run?
- Is this the right time to run?
- Can you do this to your family?
- Can you take the name calling, lies, and gossip?
- Can you win?
- Can you afford to lose?
- Can you afford to win?

Sources for this section:

<http://www.completecampaigns.com/article.asp?articleid=13>
http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m2519/is_n1_v14/ai_14345461
http://www.gp.org/organize/howtorun_mass.pdf

You've decided to run. What do you do now?

- Review the Michigan Secretary of State site's information for candidates:
http://www.michigan.gov/sos/0,1607,7-127-1633_8721---,00.html
- Be able to clearly articulate why you are running.
- Commit yourself fully to the effort. You should be willing to work harder than any of your supporters.
- Find key team members for your campaign.
- Raise seed money.
- Study how to run a campaign.
- Organize your core team.
- Hire/appoint the right campaign manager.
- Write a campaign plan.
- Seek endorsements.
- Raise more money.
- Implement your plan.
- Work your butt off.

Source for parts of this section:

<http://www.completecampaigns.com/article.asp?articleid=104>

You're an ally of the LGBTQ community. Who can help you out?

Seek the endorsement and support of Triangle-Pride PAC, Michigan's oldest and most respected LGBTQ PAC:

<http://trianglepridepac.com/about/contact.html>

Seek the endorsement and support of Michigan Equality PAC:

www.michiganequality.org

Publicize your campaign through Michigan's LGBTQA weekly newspaper, Between the Lines:

<http://www.pridesource.com/>

Seek the support of national organizations, including:

The Victory Fund: http://www.victoryfund.org/run_for_office

The Human Rights Campaign: <http://www.hrc.org/>

The National Gay & Lesbian Task Force: <http://www.thetaskforce.org/>

Seek the support of local political party affiliates who may endorse and support you:

A Michigan Stonewall Democrats organization is being created. Contact: (202) 625-1382 or field@stonewalldemocrats.org

University of Michigan Stonewall Democrats: www.umich.edu/~umsd/index.htm

Michigan State University Stonewall Democrats: www.geocities.com/msu_stonewall/

Stonewall Democrats Saugatuck-Douglas: www.stonewalldsd.com

Log Cabin Republicans of Michigan: <http://www.lcr-mi.org/>

Contact the Michigan political parties for support:

Michigan Democratic Party: <http://www.michigandems.com/>

Michigan Green Party: <http://www.migreens.org/>

Michigan Libertarian Party: <http://www.lpmich.org/>

Michigan Republican Party: <http://www.migop.org/default.asp>