



Encouraging Women Toward Public Service | An Interview with Rachelle Price and Audrey Perry Martin

November 6, 2021

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As latter day saint leaders, we face very difficult conversations that put us at risk of saying the wrong thing that can do more harm than good. Many of these conversations relate to LGBTQ Latter day Saints. Have you had a fellow board member come out to you about their LGBT identity? Have you had LGBT neighbors? And you just don't know what to say to them so you ignore them instead. Have you wrestled with balancing love for your fellow men while still respecting the doctrines of the restored gospel? In order to help, leading saints is put together the LGBT saints library with more than 20 presentations featuring individuals who have a unique perspective or expertise around this topic. Three of the most popular sessions are available now to watch, simply text the word lead to four 747 four 7 to start watching now, or visit leading saints dot org slash LGBT. Leading saints is a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping Latter day Saints be better prepared to lead, and we do that through content creation, like this podcast, which we hope useful subscribe to. We also have a website at leading saints dot org with thousands of incredible articles all about leadership in the context of being a latter day saint, we host virtual summits, live events, and also have a weekly newsletter to keep you up to date on all things happening with leading saints. Visit leading saints dot org for more information. Today, we have two guests on with me today, Rochelle price and Audrey Perry Martin. Rochelle, how are you? I'm great. Thanks for having me today. Good. And Audrey, how are you? I'm doing great. Thanks for having us. You're good. Well, let's just put you two into context real quick here. Some of your background or you're located, Audrey do you want to start? With you? Absolutely. Well, first of all, thanks for having us. I absolutely love your podcast and it's such an honor to be here and chat about my favorite topic. So background on me, I am a political attorney. I've been working in politics for over 15 years. I've worked on several

presidential campaigns. I've worked for Congress for countless candidates and political committees. I live. Now I live in Northern California. I was in D.C. for a long time. Grew up in Utah and I've got three daughters and we live in Northern California and love it here. Well, I serve my niche mission in Northern California, so you have to get more specific than that. Oh, rockland, Sacramento area. Okay. Well, I was a Sacramento missionary, but I think that's in the Roosevelt mentioned. Yeah. Roosevelt. That's the competing mission. It seems like every mission needs to competitor. And that was ours for some reason. We're all on the same team, but now 19 year olds get. So Rachel, what about you? What's your background? Thanks for having me. I'm excited to be here as well. I grew up in small town in Idaho and I spent the last 20 years living in rockland as well. I'm the mother of 5 and a small business owner and am currently serving on my local school board as the vice president. So that's what brings me to the table with project elect today. Did you two connect since you're in that just because you're in the same geographic area? Yeah, absolutely. We were in the same ward and now we're in the same stake, so. Nice. Nice typical laterally seen experience. Absolutely. And that's not because one of you moved, right? No, the ward split, of course. Right, of course. So just introduce this project to like, I've heard you. You had a great interview on this weekend Mormons podcast that you went one direction with it. And we may go in a similar direction, but maybe with a little leadership focus, but who wants to maybe just unpack what project you're like is in the mission? Yeah, sure, I will. So project elect is a nonpartisan nonprofit and we've got a pretty simple goal. We want to get more latter day saint women elected in public service. And involved in public service and that kind of begs the question why do we need more latter day saint women in politics, politics is a mess nasty, you know? It's the worst. I've worked in politics for almost 20 years now. And I've definitely seen the dirty underbelly of it. And so why would we start this organization that encourages lighter day saint women to get involved in this mess? But there's several good reasons. The most important one is also the most obvious one. And it's because our church leaders have asked us to. LDS Church leaders have been clear and calling for more members to engage in political life, including by writing for political office. And we've heard prophets and apostles, telling us we need to be involved in our communities that we need to be serving.

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We need to be active in public affairs. We need to be educated about politics, and we need to be informed voters. We've been reading through all the church talks, church magazine articles, looking for quotes from church leaders about public service, and there are so many from back from the beginning of the church all the way and tell recent conference talks. And it's something we've really been told again and again that we need to be doing. But it seems like members and especially women members have kind of overlooked running for public office, which is really, we think a critical opportunity for godly service and it's even in the church's general handbook, which says church members are encouraged to consider serving an elected or appointed public offices in the national local and national government. And then we had president Oaks is amazing talk, you know, and in conference, a little while ago. And he said, we encourage you to run for office. And president Ballard said in a recent conference, church members, men and women should not hesitate if they desire to run for public office. So I feel like that's pretty clear,

right? So that's reason number one because we've been asked to do it. And reason number two, I think that letter recent women should run for offices because their communities need them. One day a few years ago, a woman in my state called me up and she told me about some problems she saw that were going on in the local school board. And she wanted my political advice on what to do. And I hate to say it, but I totally brush her off because I jaded political person. And I gave her all these cynical views on how she wasn't going to do anything. I wasn't going to make a difference. But she didn't listen to me, and she gathered other letter day saint women together and they all chipped in their own skills and resources to lobby the school board to get the changes they wanted. And what started out with just a few women members grew and grew and they brought in other community groups and turned it into this huge grassroots movement that would have caused thousands of dollars in the political world. And these women put it together with no money and no political experience and it really blew me away how effective they were able to be. And one day during this whole process, I was sitting in a school board meeting and a woman got up who was opposed to what the latter day saint group was doing. And she was really angry. She was emotional. She was upset. And when she was done speaking, she went back to her seat and she was kind of sitting by herself. And I was sitting right behind her. And immediately, one of the LDS women left her seat with her friends, and she came in, she sat next to this woman and she put her arm around her, and she said something along the lines of. Thank you so much for sharing your perspective. On this issue, you're really touched me. I really appreciate you telling us about your experiences. And watching that, I was almost in tears right there because never in my almost two decades work in politics had I seen someone manifest this clear and genuine concern and compassion for someone who disagreed with them. For someone who is actively fighting against them and who didn't treat them as an opponent, but as someone to better understand and to befriend and I had known that these LDS women were competent and talented and amazing, but to see them in action in the political sphere, it just became so clear to me that what an incredible impact for good they could do in the political community. And that's kind of what inspired the beginnings of project a lot. Awesome. Rochelle, anything you would add to that that was that a good synopsis. That's a great synopsis. I really appreciate just want to add a thank you really to Audrey who has decided really to see a need and step up. And we have amazing LDS women that have skills that they've been using in their church callings that are easily transferable to serving in their community. And so that's one of the ways that, you know, we really can be involved and look for opportunities because we've got these skills that we've already used. We're running meetings where we're speaking in public where organizing events we're talking to our neighbors were listening and have a deep sense of purpose already as women in the church, and we can use those skills to help contribute in our community as well. Yeah, awesome. And it's interesting. I mean, I love the focus and mission of project elect getting women in latter day saint women involved politics, but it's just sort of stepping back in general. I don't know if it is a latter day saint thing or in general or not, but man, you know, becomes no surprise anybody listening to this podcast. I have a deep passion for leadership, but like running for political office is like the last thing I want to do. You know, it's like I'll coach the little league team, I'll serve as bishop. I'll do all these other things, but political offer. I don't know if it's just me, if there's something about it, just in general as Latter day Saints that kind of makes it like off putting a little bit. Do you think what do you think is to that? Or is that just my experience? No, I think there's definitely something to

that. And I don't know if it's members of the church in general or because politics can, you know, it can get kind of nasty and a lot of women and men are reluctant to enter the political fray, you know, given how politics are.

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And I totally get that. That's a legitimate concern. But there's a couple things that I would say to people who are worried about that. And the first thing I would say is, first of all, local politics isn't always as controversial as state and national politics. That might not be true right now during COVID is Rochelle being on the school board can attest to. But it can be relatively benign. They're usually nonpartisan offices, right? And second, it's hard, but as LDS, people we as bloody saints, we really have the tools to rise above the fray. You know, we know who we are. If we're centered in the gospel, and in our faith, that can strengthen us when times get tough. And we interviewed a county commissioner the other a while back. And she had this great line about how she dealt with anxiety and politics and when she was getting beat up in politics. And she said, she just prayed her guts out. And I love that. You know, she found a way to kind of deal with that through going back to her faith. And third, I mean, as far as the women who are running, you know, project elect really wants to have your back. We want to be a place where we can build up leaders and where women can lift each other up and help each other run for office and really promote and strengthen each other and kind of be a community where women leaders can go to strengthen each other and ask questions like, you know, I'm getting beat up on this. How can I respond? What's a good thing to do? And just be there for each other. Yeah. With your mission is a mainly just you want to create more and more awareness that there's this group that is encouraging, so maybe there's a woman on the fence sort of like thinking, I don't know if I should do this, but then hear your message and think, oh, good, there's maybe some support and I can reach out to them and move forward or is there an active like recruiting mechanism? Do you encourage people to approach specific people and say, hey, you need to run for this because you're great and you do wonderful. No, that's a really good question. So we have three parts to our mission. And the first part is just education. And it's just educating members of the church at large men and women everybody about how important it is to have women more involved in public service. And so that is just outreach and talking to people and just kind of telling them, you know, we need more women involved. We need women of faith involved. We need their perspective. We need their leadership in their guidance. And what they can bring to the table. And then the second part is kind of encouraging each other to run for public office. And there's this saying in politics that says, you know, women have to be asked 7 times before they're a run for office. And I think maybe LDS women have to be asked twice that many times. So it's just kind of telling people, you know, you need to be asking these amazing women you know to run for office. You need to be constantly telling them Tapping them on the shoulder and saying, hey, I think you should run for city council. I think you would be great on the school board. You know, I think you need to be on the parks and rec commission. And just bringing that to the forefront all the time. So it's in their minds and people are thinking about it more. And then our third is to our third part of our mission is to support each other in participated in public service. And that is kind of like our mentorship program and we have these

training videos and training calls that we do where we talk about public speaking skills and fundraising and all of those things that are so intimidating to people when they're running first running for office, where we try and give them a little boost up in learning how to start their first campaign. Michelle, anything do you want to add? I just feel like there's a lot of power in the tap on this shoulder. And like Audrey said, you know, it takes several times. And that actually was my experience. I had never planned in being in a an elected official. I spent most of my years raising my young kids volunteering in the school. I did all the field trips in the classroom parties and all of those things. And loved being involved on that level. And I saw a an email for the junior high that was asking for parents to be on the site council. I passed it by thinking, you know, it was another invitation and something that maybe I didn't really have time for in that season of my life. And it kept nagging at me, and I ended up calling the school and getting more information and becoming involved in that. And then I because of that was able to do strategic planning for the district and became the parent club president and just got more and more involved, and it wasn't until a leader in our stake asked me if I'd considered running for the school board that it gave me a pause and an opportunity to consider this season in my life for sure there's times when it wouldn't have worked as well. I still had 5 kids at home, although they were older, but because he asked I perfectly considered it at that time. And so I'm really grateful and I do, I agree. There's sometimes it just takes a little bit of urging. And sometimes it's not for something that's selected.

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Sometimes it's just, hey, would you consider getting involved in the things that you're already involved with and watch for needs in your community and step up and contribute in those small ways as well? Yeah. So I'm Kirsten, get your perspective on what you think the local leaders role as you mentioned state president or bishop or stake relief study president, whatever it is. Because we often make the statement of president Nelson profit of the church. He's profit of the whole world, even though even for members not of the church or the bishop is the bishop for everybody in a ward, right? And so I would hope that local leaders are mindful of the state of politics in their area and they want to see an improvement there. They want good influences there. And we have the strong tradition of extending callings and whatnot. But I mean, what's appropriate for a bishop to do per se? Well, we have some ideas and we've got some resources specifically for church leaders that we've developed on our website. But one thing that church leaders, there's quite a bit they can do while still abiding by the church's policies of political neutrality. And, you know, they could help by encouraging women in their congregations and men too to run for office by reading a nonpartisan letter each year that encourages members to consider political service. They could call members to community service. When women church leaders are released from time and energy intensive Collins, they are often left with two assets that are critical to community service. They have more free time, and they have all these leadership skills that they've developed in their colleagues. And, you know, these assets could be used in larger communities and not always just the local congregations. And we've heard of a presidency of Wednesday who decided to do just that and adopted a policy to not call newly released release society presidents or young women's presidents to another calling for a full

year. And instead, ask them to devote some of their freed up time and skills to local volunteer organizations of their choice. So in fact, they were called to serve in their communities. And the primary benefits of this aren't political, they've benefited the greater the greater community, the create greater interfaith unity and energized communities. But this can encourage women in their efforts to run for office by helping strengthen their connections to organizations outside of the church community. And also, leaders can just give church sanction permission to develop experiencing relationships that strengthen their abilities to be good candidates. You know, board member positions, committee leadership positions. You know, release society presidency bishopric ward council could decide to help them make space for this kind of community service. And members and leaders can encourage women like we said to just run for office, just tap them on the shoulders, say, hey, I think you would be great running for office. And point to all the skills that people have gained in their colleagues, who knows that better than the church leaders. And so I think, you know, I'm sure Rochelle has more to say about that and how she decided to do it. But I think some things they can do is just send this podcast episode to some people in your ward who you think would be great running for office or sign up on our website to get weekly emails with tips on what to do and how to encourage women to run for office. And also just pray about it. I mean, I think leaders and members can pray about who to tap on the shoulder if it's their time to run and really take it to prayer and ask and see what answer they get. Yeah. Yeah, go ahead. Rachel. You know, we know that our leaders are so busy and are pulled in so many different directions. I think that I wanted to share a couple of examples that our steak has done. One is they've really relied on their communications council. And that's my calling as well. And so they are really dialed in with what the needs are with what is happening in our community. So, for example, we had some local commissions coming up. And they talked to us about it. We reached out to the bishops and said, hey, do you know anybody that has maybe planning experience to be good for the local planning commission as anybody in your ward interested in the parks and rec commission? And that was really helpful in addition. We have state conference this week and a member of the state presidency asked me to come and speak for just a couple minutes to not even to the bishops to the release study presence and others current presidents to lighten the load on those bishops just to share with them the importance of especially right now of being informed and educated about the issues that we're facing in our community and in our state. So I feel like there's some small things that we can do to help our members encourage them to be involved and also be educated on issues. Yeah, I love that idea of getting them involved in the public relations with their communications, right? And it's not that we're sitting people down like, listen, you're a very capable person. We need you on the school board, go for it, but opening the invitation of we'd like to call you on the communications get familiar with the area.

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It gets familiar with the community. And then as opportunities open up, maybe that transition is a little more smooth or natural or have more confidence because they're like, oh yeah, I do know a thing about what's happening in my community. Absolutely. And the communications council what used to be called public affairs, the mission is to build relationships in the community. And

so by calling somebody to that, then they're going to have those relationships that are just critical moving forward as we work to unify and build bridges. Yeah, yeah, for sure. And so if this is a non issue, but I'll ask and see where it goes like do you extend some level of immunity as far as from church callings because a lot of these people running for office would probably make great relief society presidents and it's sort of hard to not extend that and say, well, can you kind of do both? What should leaders consider as far as like dumping more responsibility on them if they are going to run for office? I think if you want something to happen, you ask busy person, right? Obviously. No, I really feel like I feel like our leaders are really powerful about what families what the needs are for women. There are different seasons when you know they can contribute more or less we have a grandma in our state who was on the school board for years and has a different schedule right now and can be involved in a different way. I talked to a friend this morning and she has little kids, but she said, hey, I can be involved my school is redoing our library and ask for a few hours for library input. So I do think people have especially as busy latter day saint mothers and women in the church and I still think we've got to ask them, right? For sure, yeah. And that's our tradition. We're at community of invitations of callings and I just feel like we can maybe step out of the typical mold of these callings that we do extend and say, you know, this may not be an official calling or you don't have to do it, but I really feel strongly that someone like you could have some great influence in our community. And there is this thing, then we need to talk more about it on leading saints, but there is this sort of feeling of when you're released as a stake relief society president, for example, or a young woman's president, I mean, it is a relief to some extent, but man, that feels your heart in some way that when it's gone, we sort of congratulate them, but we don't realize that the emptiness that can follow that the vacuum of purpose that has to be filled somewhere. And so let individuals know, especially women of these opportunities that are out there in the community or what not to step into and continue that passion that they feel so strongly about. Yeah, I love how you said that. I think that's so true. And, you know, we've all had it. We've had colleagues that we've loved that have been hard and stretched us and, you know, it is a relief on our time, but also, there is an empty feeling because it's we love the people we are serving. And I think it is a great idea to encourage them to say, hey, you know, you can still serve, and all these other ways you can serve in the community, even though you don't still have this calling. And I think sometimes we're a little tunnel vision about colleagues and don't really look outside of our church community for opportunities to serve as much as we could. Yeah. So I have a good friend up in wasilla Alaska who's actually in the process of running for I think it's a school board. And the way that she found out is there was somebody on the school board, a latter day saint woman who I don't know if she's just moving on for whatever reason. I don't remember the details, but she saw that. My friend saw that and thought, oh, we can't just let that seat, you know, go somewhere else. So she felt that pull and she jumped in the race and is actively campaigning for that. But I mean, where do people even begin to find out what they should run for? And maybe is it just getting involved in the community and then waiting for that opportunity to open up? It is a little bit of the second. I mean, there are so many boards and commissions you can apply to beyond school councils, park and rec commissions, planning commissions. You know, there's just so many things in every community is different in how they're set up. And so there's not like a list of things that we can give you and say, oh, go apply to this because, you know, the deadlines are all different and the openings are all different in every community is completely

different. So it takes a little bit of digging and it also is just being out of your community and talking to people and finding out what opportunities are available. And I think church communications councils can be a part of that, too, even and kind of look into those and see, okay, we know what is going on in our community. And we know what openings there are and we think these people might be good and kind of be a part of that and organize it a little bit because and also, you know, like you said, a lot of times there are Latter day Saints on this on these boards and commissions on the school board. And if they, as they're leaving or if they think they're going to leave, can say, you know, help find a replacement or help find someone to run for that office or apply for the board position.

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We've had that happen several times in project elect and it's been great because there's, you know, they can kind of help walk them through the process and give them ideas of what to expect in all of that. And it's really helpful to have that mentorship going on as well. It makes it a lot less intimidating. Anything in bad Rochelle. Yeah, that reminded me of an article that I read in the church news where the later she became the mayor of Las Vegas, but she was a student at BYU and she wrote a letter to Jeffrey R Holland and she was really frustrated with the state of the world and that she wanted some answers because she had been raised in a household where public service was just what they did. She had a dad who'd been the chief of police and a mom who worked in the Chamber of Commerce. And Alder Holland was the president of BYU, and so she asked him why the church wasn't more open about political and social issues. And she says, the answer that she got changed everything. He was kind enough to write back and say, we've got to step up as individuals. We can't think it needs to be somebody else, it's up to us. And I love that I love that example. And I think as one of the unique things that we offer a project elect is mentorship, which when I was stepping into this felt completely inadequate, in many days, still do this is definitely out of my comfort zone. But I had a local man in the community who literally just took me under his wing and helped me step by step with that. And we've got that on our website, the ability to match up with somebody who can help you and we've got training. So you can get on. This isn't natural stuff. We don't know how to fundraise. We don't know where necessarily to start with all of the details of running a campaign. But we do have mentors, which I think is just a huge blessing. That's a really helpful. Use the phrase like from that experience that public service was something in their home that it's just what they did, right? And that's sort of and you've touched on this a little bit, but what do you say to those that are in the stage of life with lots of family stuff and kids and whatnot? Do they need to wait a little bit till life gets more simple, but I mean, I can just hear a lot of women say, but what about the kids? You know, what about the home? What about all of my responsibilities that I do have? How can I make time for this? I say, I hear you. It is a lot. I mean, I had 5 kids in 8 years and I get it. It's a lot. And it definitely, I think, is our priority, right? Or choosing good better best, always, and we're evaluating. And yet, when heavenly father needs us to step up, he magnifies us and strengthens us and I have seen that in my own life, I wasn't raised in a home where this is what we did. But I feel like heavenly father is definitely helped me and given me opportunities and blessings. And I do think it's possible. But I would say start small. You know, don't start off

with running for president, right? Start small with the things that you're involved within your community. I coached my kids played baseball, so I coached a special news baseball team. And I saw a need with our community that was going to donate some Christmas trees. And so I started doing that every year. Just watch for opportunities and heavenly father will prompt you with where you are needed with your unique skills and spiritual gifts that will build the kingdom and strengthen our communities. That's really helpful. Anything they had, doctor? I really do. We talked a little bit about seasons and in your life. And I really love the concept of seasons, especially in a woman's life. I mean, I, you know, wouldn't have considered running for office when my kids were all babies, but now my youngest is in first grade. And there's a little bit more space opening up, right? And I think we do have seasons in our lives where sometimes it's more possible than others, but I would say, you know, I hope women will look at public service through that lens, and even if they can't manage it right now to keep it in their minds for the future and also just like Rochelle said there are lots of things that you can do that aren't necessarily running for office that can be a step towards that direction or a step in the direction of public service or doing public service now like these boards and commissions or at your schools or all great opportunities to network with people and serve others. I mean, you can donate to people's campaigns. You can volunteer on somebody's campaign. That's a great experience and gives you a lot of good exposure. And you can often do it on your own time or just when you have an opportunity during an election season. It's not a huge commitment. And also, you know, running for office doesn't have to be a lifetime commitment. You can run for office, serve a term or two, and then recruit somebody else to take your place, you know? And I think our communities would benefit by that kind of attitude instead of having politicians who are in there forever. And so I think having that kind of perspective is also very healthy. Yeah. You know, this is this topic, I think is so important in the context of just in the context of raising a family having kids see you make a difference because you know, we sometimes default to the David own with K quote, the David O McKay did not say he was actually quoting somebody who said it, you know, no other success can compensate for failure in the home, right? Again, David and MK did not say that.

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He was quoting somebody. Anyways, but I just feel like so much we feel like, well, what that means is I have to be super present. I have to be at every little league game. I have to be every bed night story reading, right? But I think there's power and I experienced this my own experience growing up. And something I'm trying to model for my children that sometimes had dad does have to leave. Her mom does have a committee meeting or whatever that night. And in the moment it feels like but the child's crying and they need me. And yeah, I have been gone a lot. But by the time they get to 1617, 18 and they start to develop a new adult, they remember those moments and then I feel like it'll click and being like, oh, mom was making a difference in the community. I want to be like mom. And it's less of this, well, my mother was never there for me. She loved our community more than me. I think it rarely goes there. Obviously, there's extremes on both sides. But I just really feel like the more we can sometimes step out of our child's life in the moment and make a difference that's gonna have a lasting effect on our

children than just being every little league game and every dance recital or whatever it is. Anything to add to that or that's my little soapbox Michelle? I appreciate it. It was good. I totally agree with you. You know, I wanted my kids to learn early on that life doesn't revolve around them, right? For sure, very, very important to me. And they're my priority. But we have lots of responsibilities and where much is given much is required, right? I want to share an example with you that your comment made me think of, I have twins that are juniors in high school and are involved in student government. And the share of the school is redoing their dress code. And they asked the students their opinion. And I'm not sure that I'd like to hope that they've seen me really have to speak up and give my opinion. And sometimes in uncomfortable times and ways, right? And so they voiced their opinion. They went in the class. They talked and gave their opinion about the dress code, and then they talked privately with the adviser as well. And they saw some positive results from that. And that was just a huge lesson for them about learning to speak up at times when it can be really difficult, but I feel like it's just a blessing. Amen to that. Anything else that around that topic under it and well, I mean, I think it's obviously our families are the most important thing to us. But we, we've gotten lots of great stories from women who run for office who have gotten their families involved in their campaigns and it's been really a blessing to their families. You know, taking their kids door to door, knocking with them in their communities. And getting them involved and I know Rochelle did a lot of that too and just teaching their kids to serve. And what a great opportunity it's been for them to teach that principle and lesson in their family kind of what we've been saying. And also being on a local school board or city council is also you're helping take care of your family. You're helping take care of the community that your family is a part of. And I think it all kind of comes together in some amazing ways when you're doing that and when you're serving in that way. Yeah, I love that really approach it from our families doing this rather than mom is doing it, right? Yeah. And running a campaign is a full on family event. My kids were out knocking doors for hours and hours and putting in yard signs, but it was so great. It really was. So unifying because when I went, they all felt like they went, which was awesome. That's cool. That's awesome. Anything you would say as far as just the like you mentioned earlier, there's a lot of drama that comes up in politics and even in local politics now. And it's like, you know, I'd rather just avoid the conflict. I'm not, you know, I want to make a difference, but I don't know if I want to step into that mess. Anything as far as even in the quote unquote politics of award where, you know, maybe some people in the inner ward aren't gonna vote for you and I don't know, does any of that come to the surface or is it easy to keep those things separate? The school board right now, especially, I'll just speak to school board is heated and it is ugly and it is uncomfortable. And I'm yelled at and sworn at and called names, especially this last year with the pandemic and with should kids be in school or should they be in school at mass and vaccines and all of that? And you know, I learned a lot from sister Nelson's book. And sister Nelson's book to heavens are open. She talks the first probably chapter is about contention.

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And it was such an eye opening read to me because president Nelson does not tolerate contention. As in, if he's watching a sports game, and there's a necessary competitiveness or

fighting he will turn it off. And, you know, this is a contentious time actually. But it's also been a really great time to try to Billy a bridge builder and a peacemaker and we need that. Our communities need that, our country needs our world needs that we need more respect and civil discourse. And I feel like as latter day saint women, that is a unique natural skill that we have and that we can step into a room and make a friend or find something that we have in common, which is always the case, right? In schools, we have our kids in common in our community. We want our communities to be safe places to raise families. And so I feel like as women that is, that is something we really can easily add. Yeah, really good. Anything to add to that Audrey here. I mean, you're right, so often politics is about winning the battle on Twitter or coming up with the quippy sound bite for cable news, right? And self promotion and all of that instead of service or leadership and community building. And Latter day Saints, though, they know how to lead by lifting others up. And the type of leadership, you know, we're taught that from a young age. And we know how to work as a community to accomplish a goal, service is part of it's part of our DNA. It's part of our identity and public service is just an extension of that. And so like rachel said, we really need our communities need that type of leadership and service that Latter day Saints can bring to the table and letter day saint women particular can offer. And so I think it's just so even though it's hard, I think is just so important that we step up and become engaged in political service. Yeah. You know, I just love this focus because we can get so sucked into the drama of politics and typically that's happening on a national scale. And it feels there's so much hype there and drama that it feels like when your guy or gal doesn't win on the national levels, like, well now the world will change forever. You know, in reality, it's like two weeks later you're like, oh, yeah, I guess we're still okay. All right. But so we often get hyper focused on national elections. But I've always had this and I need to put it into more catchy slogan, but if you want to create influence like look towards the leadership closest to you, right? And that's why I feel so passionate about the mission of leading saints is because we're talking about local leadership. You know, we're not here to tell the corm of the 12. Well, you could have done that a little bit different. Obviously, that's not our place nor our mission. But the more we can just bring up issues that I'll be helpful for local leaders, which are church leaders, the better. And so that goes to the same for the leadership closest to us in a community. That's what will change our world in two weeks after an election making sure we have good people there. Maybe I'm off but anything to add to that? Yeah, and I think especially after all the things that have gone on during COVID, I think people are recognizing that their local leadership does have a big impact on their life and it is very important to pay attention to what's going on in their communities and their local leadership and be engaged and know what's going on because the local leaders, you know, we found have a lot of say in a lot of issues that influence our day to today lives. And hopefully that will encourage people to get more involved in local politics in their local communities. And I think that that does seem to be happening. And I think as far as church leaders and how they can local church leaders and how they can get involved and to help people and encourage them to be more involved in public service, you know, I think sending and this episode of the podcast to their church members that they think should run for office would be a great way to do it. And, you know, if you know a woman who would be a great public official or who should get involved in her community, send them this episode and have them listen to it or sign up on our website on project elect website, project dot org, project elect women dot org and get weekly emails that encourage women to run for office and have training and tips and all

of that. And pray about it as a leader as a member, pray about how you can encourage women to get involved or whether it's the right time for you to get involved in public service and what you can do. Awesome. If you're in front of the leader, a church leader, and they're like, okay, I hear you too. I want to be a good influence of supporting and encouraging women to be involved in politics. Just summarize, what are some various things that they can do as leaders at this point? So as church leaders, I think there's a lot you can do. I think just being generally supportive of the idea of members getting involved in public service and talking to members about the importance of being involved in your community and getting involved.

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Rochelle talked about communications counsels and having and calling people to those colleagues who you think might be great in public service and letting them have the opportunity to get involved and learn more about their communities and network within their communities, giving people the space and the time to do that and just emphasizing that not all service has to be within the congregation that there's a lot of benefits to the church to the membership in being involved in service outside of the church community as well. And so those are some of the things I think just Tapping women on the shoulder and saying, hey, I think you would be a great in this position or running for office or on this border commission, I think it really has a lot of power to it, especially if it's a church leader who's doing that and asking them and telling them they think, you know, the skills that they have qualified them to run. Awesome. Well, Rochelle, I'm going to have you give us the last word here. Just reflecting on your time in a local political position on the school board. Reflecting on that leadership opportunity, how has that leadership opportunity specifically helped you become a better follower of Jesus Christ? Oh my goodness. This opportunity has made me rely more on my heavenly father. And I've really had really stretched and grown in ways that he had intended for me personally, and I've had to rely on him in moments that are really challenging and heated and difficult and always had a prayer in my heart. And so I'm grateful for this opportunity because it has brought me closer to him as I've relied more on his will for me and on how to use the spiritual gifts that I've been given to strengthen my community and serve in a way that he would have me serve. That concludes this episode of the leading saints podcast. We'd love to hear from you about your questions or thoughts or comments. You can either leave a comment on the post related to this episode at leading-saints.org or go to leading-saints.org/contact and send us your perspective or questions. If there's other episodes or topics you'd like to hear on the leading saints podcast, go to leading-saints.org/contact and share with us the information there. And we would love for you to share this with any individual you think this would apply to especially maybe individuals in your word counsel or other leaders that you may know who would really appreciate the perspectives that we discussed. And remember, text the word lead to four 747 four 7 in order to access the three free sessions of the LGBT saints library. It came as a result of the position of leadership, which was imposed upon us by the God of heaven who brought forth a restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ and when the declaration was made concerning the own only true and living church upon the face of the earth. We were immediately

put in a position of loneliness. The loneliness of leadership from which we can not shrink or run away. And to which we must face up with boldness and courage and ability