

Mark Strama

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Director, Annette Strauss Institute for Civic Life

Professor of Practice, Moody College of Communication, University of Texas at Austin

2023 - Present

I lead an institute working to educate and engage the next generation of civic leaders, and teach classes in the Department of Communication Studies as well as in UT's Plan II Honors Program.

Google Fiber, General Manager, Expansion Markets

2013 - 2023

I held a variety of positions at Google Fiber, starting as City Manager when we launched the Austin market, later as General Manager overseeing all operations in Huntsville, Nashville, and Atlanta. When Google Fiber announced a [new round of expansion markets](#), I oversaw the team [negotiating our agreements with cities](#) and standing up our operational capacity in those markets.

Texas House of Representatives (D - Austin)

2005 - 2013

I served five terms in the Texas House in a highly-competitive swing district. Received Honorable Mentions on Texas Monthly's *Best and Worst Legislators* list in three of my five legislative sessions; was named one of the [Top 10 Rising Stars in the Democratic Party](#) at the 2008 Democratic National Convention; and one of the [Top 10 Good Men in Politics](#) by The Good Men Project. Focused legislative efforts on public education, renewable energy, and political reform.

Sylvan Learning Centers of Austin, Franchisee

2007 - 2016

My wife and I owned and operated six retail Sylvan Learning Centers in the Austin/Round Rock area, providing tutoring services to students grades K-12 in reading, writing, math, and study skills. Managed a staff of over 200 with annual revenues exceeding \$5 million. Sold to Houston-based investment group in 2016.

Accenture eDemocracy Services, Consultant

2003 - 2004

Accenture eDemocracy Services was created when [Accenture acquired Election.com, Inc.](#) It was the first company in the voter registration technology space with the backing of a global systems integration firm. I led business development for the company.

Election.com, Senior Vice President for Public Elections

2000 - 2003

Election.com, Inc. was a New York-based company that acquired NewVoter.com. In May of 2000 Election.com was named to *Red Herring's* list of the [Top 50 privately held companies](#) in the world.

NewVoter.com, Founder and CEO

1999 - 2000

NewVoter.com was [the first company](#) in the nation to enable websites to offer their users the ability to fill out a voter registration form online. Over 700,000 Americans used our technology to register to vote in the 2000 election cycle.

CharityGift.com, Co-Founder

1998 - 1999

CharityGift was an Internet start-up that enabled users to make a donation to charity as an alternative to traditional gift-giving. Charitygift was eventually acquired by Kintera.

Rock the Vote, Director of Programs

1995 - 1997

Rock The Vote is a non-profit, non-partisan organization founded by the music industry and dedicated to the political empowerment of young Americans. I managed national programs and served as spokesperson for the organization.

Texas State Senator Rodney Ellis, Chief of Staff

1991 - 1995

Ann Richards for Governor, Researcher and Writer

1990 - 1991

EDUCATION

B.A., Brown University, 1990

Concentrations: Philosophy and Political Science

CIVIC ACTIVITIES

Commissioner, Texas Ethics Commission

Board Member and Immediate Past Board Chair, United Way for Greater Austin

Board Chair, Happy Lungs Project

Member, Texas Advisory Committee, Resilient States Project, Common Ground USA

AWARDS

Community Empowerment Award, Texas Civil Rights Project, 2017

Honorable Mention, *Ten Best and Worst Legislators*, Texas Monthly Magazine, 2013, 2009, 2007

Distinguished Service Award, Girl Scouts of Central Texas, 2013

Walt and Elizabeth Rostow Leadership Award, The Austin Project, 2012

Legislative Hero, Texas Freedom Network, 2013

Advocate of the Year, Texas Association for the Education of Young Children, 2011

Community Leadership Award, Texas Business Symposium and Gala, Austin Asian American Cultural Center, 2011

Top 10 Good Men in American Politics, The Good Men Project, 2010

Texas Technology Champion, TechAmerica, 2009

Top 10 Rising Stars, Democratic National Convention, 2008

Wind Champion, Texas Wind Coalition, 2008

Distinguished Statesman, Texas Renewable Energy Industries Association, 2007

ARTICLES

M. Strama, "Opinion: Texans Don't Vote Enough," *Dallas Morning News*, November 2, 2024

M. Strama, "Opinion: A Texas Tradition I Wish Washington Would Embrace," *Austin American Statesman*, May 31, 2023.

M. Strama, "Op-Ed: Strama's Plans for Future, Reflections on Service," *Austin American Statesman*, July 10, 2013.

M. Strama, "Don't Lower Texas Educational Standards," *Austin American Statesman*, April 21, 2013.

M. Strama, "Two Key Reasons I Voted Against HB 5," *Dallas Morning News*, March 31, 2013.

M. Strama, "STAAR Tests Still Need Improvement," *Austin American Statesman*, Sept. 1, 2012.

M. Strama and M.E. Webber, "Praying for Rain Is Not a Water Plan," *Austin American Statesman*, May 20, 2012.

B. Auguste and M. Strama, "The Biggest Tax is Debt," *Boston Globe*, Nov. 3, 2003

M. Strama, "Overcoming Cynicism: Youth Participation and Electoral Politics," *National Civic Review*, July 2003.

M. Strama and I. Frishberg, "Canary in a Coal Mine: Youth Activism and American Democracy," *Tikkun*, July/August 1998.