

Campus | Elect Her

National training program for women in government comes to TWU

By AMBER GAUDET

Add women,
change everything.”

According to Nancy Bocskor, Director of TWU’s Center for Women in Politics and Public Policy, these words, first spoken by Marie Wilson of the White House Project, reflect the spirit and purpose with which the non-partisan training program “Elect Her” was founded a decade ago. TWU’s Center for Women in Politics and Public Policy is partnering with the University of North Texas to host the free event aimed at educating college women on the significance and skill of political leadership, Friday, Jan. 25. Created by non-profit Running Start, the interactive seminar will be held from 1 to 4 p.m. and feature keynote speakers at the student and professional levels. The half-day event ultimately culminates in attendees devising a comprehensive plan to run for student government.

Bocskor, who is a long-time board member of Running Start, said Elect Her began with a simple mission: to increase representation for women in government by empowering them at the college level.

“We knew from studies that women who ran for student body president or sorority president had a greater propensity to run for higher office someday,” Bocskor said. “We

are trying to show women that they too can step up, and they have a right to serve in government,” Bocskor said.

Bocskor said she has seen interest in Elect Her grow steadily since the program’s inception, signaling increasing interest in political leadership among women.

“When this program first started, we started out on 10 campuses and this year, we will be on almost

100,” Bocskor said. “So it’s been growing every year to reach more women.”

With boasts of a 90 percent success rate among attendees according to Running Start’s website, the program services women at all stages, providing tools intended to guide them through the political process from platform creation to election.

“For many students who are coming, this may be

the first time they’ve actually thought about ‘How do I run for office?’” Bocskor said. “It’s open to all levels.”

Following a meet-and-greet and networking session from noon to 1 p.m., Elect Her Facilitator Angelica Erazo and Bocskor will address participants. Attendees will participate in exercises focused on developing key skill areas for candidates throughout the day and will hear inter-

views with SGA presidents from TWU and UNT. 16th Judicial District Court Judge Sherry Shipman will also make an appearance to discuss her experiences running for office.

“It’s very interactive; it’s not going to be speakers just speaking at you all day,” Bocskor said. “You have group activities, and we talk about, ‘What are these issues that you care about?’ so we really teach those skills.”

Bocskor said she feels it is important for women to be involved in the political process to bring their experiences to the table.

“Women look at challenges in a very different way,” Bocskor said. “Let’s have more women at the seat [of the table], so it’s not other people making decisions for you...you are fully there to have your voice heard.”

The public event is open to men as well, and those interested in registering can do so via the Eventbrite link on Pioneer En-gage.

