

October 9, 2018

Question 1 Why are you seeking this public office? (Please be brief)	
Mitch Fuller	I'm running for the ACC Board of Trustees because I want to improve the operation and administration of ACC; increase enrollment and workforce programs; increase access to ACC for underserved communities; and ensure the employees of ACC have a shared voice in the governance of ACC.
Stephanie Gharakhanian	I am running to ensure that Austin Community College is an institution that is affordable and accessible to everyone and that it is an even stronger vehicle for equity and social mobility in Central Texas. I aim to lower tuition at Austin Community College, improve student success rates, expand accessible child care for students and faculty, and to make sure that ACC creates good jobs that pay fair wages and support families.
Barbara Mink	I am seeking to be re-elected to the ACC Board because I have a lifetime commitment to the values of advancing social justice and economic equity. I have served three terms on the ACC Board (2000-2006; 2006-2012; 2012-2018) and have seen substantial positive growth not only with new facilities, but also with increased services to support student success. I continue to advocate for policies and practices so that ACC can support all students while at the same time valuing our employees. The democratic and inclusive mission of the community college is what I have dedicated my professional life to advancing.

Question 2 Please tell us why you are seeking the endorsement of SDA. Do you consider yourself to be a Democrat? Do you have a history of involvement in Democratic politics and/or LGBTQ issues? If so please briefly describe this history.	
Mitch Fuller	Unlike my opponent I voted in the 2018 Democratic Primary- voting is a minimum requirement to be a member of a Party. I was a delegate to the 2018 Texas Democratic Convention and currently serve as the the Third Chair of the Western Williamson County Democrats and I am active in the Party and have contributed financially and volunteered for several Democratic candidates—Beto O'Rourke for US Senate, Meg Walsh for State Senate, John Bucy for State Rep, etc.
Stephanie Gharakhanian	I consider myself to be a Democrat, I am committed to anti-oppression work, and in my personal, professional, and, hopefully, public life as an elected official, I aspire to be a strong ally of the LGBTQ community. For these reasons, I would be honored to have the endorsement of SDA.
Barbara Mink	Yes, I am a lifelong Democrat. I have always supported the inclusive principles of the Democratic Party in my professional and volunteer work. I am a member of various local Democratic clubs. I participate in campaign activities such as addressing mailings, distributing candidate literature, doing block walks and participating in issue forums. I regularly attend conferences and seminars on the topic of advancing Inclusion and have most recently arranged for this be the topic of the October 2018 Meeting of the group 'Elected Women in Central Texas' (a group that I and a member of the Austin City Council started 10 years ago).

October 9, 2018

Question 3	Do you believe LGBTQ individuals should be protected against discrimination in employment on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression?
Mitch Fuller	Yes. It is ridiculous that in 2018 this remains an issue; it is long past time that the LGBTQ community has equal protection under the law, a fundamental Constitutional right.
Stephanie Gharakhanian	Absolutely. All people deserve to be treated with dignity and respect on the job.
Barbara Mink	Absolutely.

Question 4	What proposals would you suggest to make coming out on the job safer for LGBTQ employees?
Mitch Fuller	ACC's Office of Equity and Inclusion (OEI) should ensure LGBTQ employees have an advocate and voice for their concerns as OEI currently does for racial diversity and inclusion.
Stephanie Gharakhanian	LGBTQ employees at ACC have told me that they would like to see ACC adopt additional administrative policies that affirm ACC's commitment to nondiscrimination. I would be eager to work with ACC staff and faculty as a Trustee to further develop and adopt policies to ensure that ACC fulfills its goals of being a welcoming institution of all employees, regardless of their gender identity, gender expression or sexual orientation.
Barbara Mink	Some structural changes are needed such as gender neutral bathrooms and some interpersonal changes such as asking all colleagues how they want to be referred to (he/she/they/other) before assuming how a person wishes to be addressed. We need to make sure that "sexual orientation and gender identity" are categories for which all organizations propose equal opportunity or oppose discrimination. Similarly, extending employee benefits to a same sex marriage partner just as organizations do to an opposite sex marriage partner would be a step forward (following similar steps taken by the City of Austin). Organizations should also ensure medical and counseling assistance to an employee transitioning.

Question 5	Do you think ACC is doing enough to ensure equality for its LGBTQ employees? For example, how would you address organizational issues such as transgender employees transitioning on the job?
Mitch Fuller	ACC can do a better job ensuring equality of its LGBTQ employees through the OEI. The Department of Defense (DoD) has effective programs for transgender members of the Armed Forces and ACC should look at DoD and other institutions and how they address transgender employees.
Stephanie Gharakhanian	ACC can do more to ensure equality for LGBTQ employees, particular employees transitioning on the job. One place to start is by creating policies and protocols that guideline particularly how ACC can support transgender employees (and students) through their transition.

October 9, 2018

Barbara Mink	ACC regularly works to review and revise equity policies. I would support the ideas that I outlined in item #4 above. ACC has an LGBTQ Equity Committee that was established Spring 2014. Since that time, this Committee has: educated faculty and staff on LGBTQ themes; provided print materials to students, faculty and staff on gender and transgender issues; administered a LGBTQ Campus Climate Survey and has used those results to advocate for LGBTQ students, faculty and staff; and developed and implemented “ACC ALLY” training. The ACC Board Policy on Safe and Healthy Teaching Environment includes gender identity and gender expression.
---------------------	--

Question 6	Are you familiar with the organization Out Youth? If elected, what would you do to help this organization and others that provide services to LGBTQ youth?
Mitch Fuller	I'm familiar with Out Youth through conversations over the years with my my 19-yr old daughter and 17-yr old son who have friends in the LGBTQ community. As a Trustee, I would be a strong advocate for Out Youth—it is vital that anyone in involved in K-12 or higher education advocate for all students.
Stephanie Gharakhanian	Yes, I am familiar with the work of Out Youth and had the chance to collaborate with Out Youth on a local campaign seeking to expand access to state-issued IDs back in 2014. As Trustee, I would hope to collaborate with Out Youth to reduce any barriers to enrollment at ACC that LGBTQ youth face and to ensure that LGBTQ youth who enroll at ACC, particularly LGBTQ youth from traditionally underserved and at-risk populations, receive the wrap-around services and academic support they need to be successful.
Barbara Mink	Out Youth is an organization for youth ages 12-18 who are questioning their sexual orientation, and providing them a safe environment and assistance in doing so. Just as ACC provides our students with references to community services, this needs to be added to the list of references.

Question 7	Describe a step you would take, or have taken, or a proposal you would make, or have made as a member of the Board of Trustees that would <u>specifically</u> benefit LGBTQ students.
Mitch Fuller	I would expand the scope of OEI to include LGBTQ students and I would meet with LGBTQ students and employees to hear their concerns and seek their recommendations.
Stephanie Gharakhanian	While ACC students who are LGBTQ have told me that they appreciate the work of ACC’s LGBT eEquity Committee, others have mentioned that more can be done to publicize the programming of this committee so that other LGBTQ faculty, staff, and allies can engage in, affirm, and uplift their work to promote a more inclusive culture at ACC. As Trustee, I would be interested in amplifying such efforts, in addition to developing the policies mentioned above to support transgender students during their transition.
Barbara Mink	I am (and will be) working with the Office of Inclusion to have a ‘center’ that focus on supporting LGBTQ students in the same way that ACC has centers that focus on Hispanic students, African-American students, Asian American students. I support the efforts of ACC Student Life in their efforts such as holding the upcoming forum on “LGBTQIA+: Myths, Terms and Facts”.

October 9, 2018

--	--

Question 8	Do you believe that public schools should institute rules and policies to prohibit harassment and discrimination against LGBTQ students?
Mitch Fuller	Absolutely yes. I've learned so much from my children and their generation who are much more tolerant than previous generations but society still has a long way to go to achieve equal protection under the law.
Stephanie Gharakhanian	Yes. I think that public schools should be safe, welcoming, and supportive of all students.
Barbara Mink	Absolutely. And I was pleased recently by the action of an AISD principal who changed the Homecoming 'King and Queen' elections to be elections of Homecoming Court Members.

Question 9	In the 85th Texas Legislative Session, legislation was filed that would prohibit people from using bathrooms based on their preferred gender identity. Similar legislation is certain to be filed in the 86th Texas Legislative Session. Would you be willing to
Mitch Fuller	Yes. I've testified several times over the years on a variety of policies. The so-called bathroom bills were a waste of time and an example of how flawed the Republican-led Legislature is and were discriminatory and demagogic and opposed by the business community.
Stephanie Gharakhanian	Yes.
Barbara Mink	Yes.

Question 10	If elected, how would you stay informed of the concerns and interests of your LGBTQ constituents?
Mitch Fuller	I would meet with LGBTQ students and employees to get their feedback and get involved with Out Youth and attend more Stonewall Democrats meetings.
Stephanie Gharakhanian	By being in relationship with LGBTQ students, faculty, and staff, as well as local organizations like Out Youth, SDA, Equality Texas and others that advocate for the local LGBTQ community.
Barbara Mink	Yes, with meeting with LGBTQ students as well as with organizations such as the Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce. And also keep current on health and wellness issues in the LGBTQ community.

Question 11	Have you attended functions in Austin's LGBTQ community and, if so, which?



October 9, 2018

Mitch Fuller	I've attended Austin Pride events and will pledge to do more in the future.
Stephanie Gharakhanian	Yes. Most recently, I attended the "Planned Parenthood After Dark" fundraiser at Cheer Up Charlies featuring Drag Out HIV.
Barbara Mink	Yes, various social functions (one recent example being the BAD and Stonewall social hour) to engage in conversations with individuals to better understand the LGBTQ community. I support functions also such as the AIDS walk, etc. In my professional work I plan national meetings for university students and professors. I always check to see that the venue does not have discriminatory LGBTQ practices and has gender neutral bathrooms and I always have an LGBTQ and Allies meeting in the formal schedule.