

Stephanie Rawlings-Blake was sworn in as Baltimore's 49th mayor on February 4, 2010. She had served as City Council President since November 2007. Rawlings-Blake was first elected to the Baltimore City Council in 1995 at age 25, the youngest person ever elected to the City Council. She represented the Council's 5th District from 1995 to 2004 and the 6th District from 2004 to 2007, serving communities throughout West and Northwest Baltimore.

She also served as Council Vice-President from 1999 to 2007. Before Rawlings-Blake was elected President, she chaired the Council's powerful Budget and Appropriations Committee, where she advocated on behalf of the City Council during budget negotiations with the Administration, ensuring that constituent concerns had a strong voice in the City's annual budget process.

From 1998 to 2006, Rawlings-Blake was an attorney with the Baltimore Office of the Public Defender. She is a member of the Federal Bar Association and the Maryland State Bar Association. Rawlings-Blake is also a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Epsilon Omega Chapter and a former at-large member of the Alliance of Black Women Attorneys.

Born on March 17, 1970, Rawlings-Blake is a 1988 graduate of Baltimore's Western High School, and in 1992 she earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from Oberlin College in Oberlin, Ohio. She received her Juris Doctor from the University of Maryland School of Law in 1995.



As Council President, she chaired the City's Board of Estimates, which conducts formal hearings on City agencies' operating and capital budget requests and is also in charge of awarding contracts and supervising all purchasing by the City.

Mayor Rawlings-Blake has served on numerous boards and commissions, including the Baltimore Convention and Tourism Board; Hilton Baltimore Convention Center Hotel Corporation; Baltimore Museum of Art; Baltimore City Human Services Commission; Live Baltimore; Maryland Science Center, National Aquarium in Baltimore, Baltimore Substance Abuse Systems, Inc.; Living Classrooms Foundation; Waterfront Partnership of Baltimore and the Parks and People Foundation.

Rawlings-Blake has been honored with numerous awards. Recently the National Congress of Black Women named her a Shirley Chisholm Memorial Award Trailblazer. In 2007 she was selected by The Daily Record as one of "Maryland's Top 100 Women." The National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs named her one of Baltimore's "Young Women on the Move." She has also received the "Hearts of Love Recognition Award" from Aunt Hattie's Place, and the "Passing the Torch Legacy Award" from Baltimore African American Real Estate Professionals.

Rawlings-Blake is a member of Douglas Memorial Community Church. She lives in Baltimore's Coldspring neighborhood with her husband Kent Blake and their young daughter Sophia.

Legislative Initiatives

Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake has set a thoughtful and ambitious agenda for Baltimore City, promoting legislative and policy initiatives that improve people's lives: safe streets, quality public schools, and neighborhoods that are strong, vibrant and engaged. Her father, the late Delegate Howard "Pete" Rawlings taught her the value and sacred trust of public service, impressing upon her that with great power comes great responsibility. For the past four years as City Council President she has worked to make Baltimore's government work for its citizens, making the legislative process more open and accessible to all city residents.

In four terms on the City Council, Rawlings-Blake's many accomplishments include passing laws and initiating policies in a wide range of areas such as public safety, community development, public education, business development, hospitality and tourism and arts and entertainment. Included among her accomplishments are:

Youth And Education

In 2007 Rawlings-Blake created the City Council's Education Committee, dedicated exclusively to addressing the challenges facing the Baltimore City Public School System and exploring innovative solutions to address those needs.

Rawlings-Blake supported funding to expand the Teach for America program in Baltimore City Public Schools, doubling the number of Teach for America teachers in city classrooms. Teach for America is a national corps of outstanding recent college graduates who commit two years to teach in urban and rural public schools.

Rawlings-Blake called upon the CEO of the Baltimore City Public School System to provide teachers with the tools to recognize gang-related violence, to identify youth most at-risk for gang recruitment, and to provide the necessary intervention resources and law enforcement interaction to insure the safety and security of students, school personnel, and school property.

She also urged the school system to develop a "transitional years" intervention program to provide services and engage incoming students to City middle schools and high schools, a transition period when at-risk students often become disengaged.

Rawlings-Blake convened a hearing with Baltimore City Public Schools CEO and other school system officials to brief the City Council on principal and teacher vacancies, status of facilities management, progress of capital improvements, and development of a uniform suspension policy.

Neighborhoods And Community Development

As City Council President, Rawlings-Blake worked on behalf of communities and the Liquor Board to strengthen enforcement and penalties for violators of liquor license regulations in Baltimore, and investigate the legitimacy of establishments claiming to be tavern operations and establishments operating with bottle licenses.

She introduced legislation that improves enforcement of the City's illegal dumping ordinance. Signed into law in June 2009, the legislation provides for stiffer penalties for illegal dumping and creates a hotline for citizens to report dumping violations. The measure also mandates that all city contracts contain an illegal dumping clause, where, if violated, contractors doing business with the City will be considered to be in breach of contract.

In 2007 she launched and hosted citywide "Baltimore's Top Neighborhood Moms" and "Baltimore's Top Neighborhood Dads" contests to allow communities to recognize and honor men and women doing exceptional work to make their neighborhoods better, safer and stronger. Since the event was launched in 2007, Rawlings-Blake has honored over 120 individuals nominated by their communities as "Top Moms and Dads."

Public Safety

Rawlings-Blake introduced legislation mandating pawnshops to report transactions in an electronic database to assist Baltimore City police in recovering stolen property more easily.

She has advocated continued investment in the City's police CCTV crime camera network to double the number of actively-monitored crime cameras by 2015. She called for the use of homeland security and criminal justice grants, asset forfeiture funds and a portion of undesignated surpluses to expand the program by 100 new cameras every year for 5 years.

In 2009, she encouraged Baltimore's Police Commissioner to launch a citywide text messaging system to alert residents and businesses about criminal activity. As a result, Baltimore City Police now send electronic crime alerts via Twitter, Nixle and Facebook.

She also called on Baltimore City Public Schools to create a hotline for parents, teachers, and students to report and help prevent violence occurring in Baltimore City Public schools. The City School system implemented the "Student Safety Hotline" 410-396-SAFE in December 2008.

In 2003 Rawlings-Blake introduced legislation creating Baltimore City's Operation Crime Watch program, which in 2004 received the Governor's Award for "Outstanding Proactive Crime Prevention Programs in Maryland."

Economic Development

Rawlings-Blake called on Baltimore Development Corporation to expedite zoning legislation for a video lottery terminal facility to fund education, create new jobs, reduce property tax and fund community revitalization projects.

She helped secure a \$1 million grant for Healthy Neighborhoods, Inc., an independent non-profit organization committed to creating more homeownership, improving property conditions rehabilitating homes and building equity for longtime Baltimore working families.

Rawlings-Blake introduced legislation to enhance Baltimore's arts and live entertainment venues. The bill, passed in 2009, allows live entertainment and dancing as a conditional use in certain business districts in the City. The effort grew out of the work of a task force of business and community leaders created in 2007 by Rawlings-Blake to develop strategies to grow Baltimore's entertainment, cultural and hospitality economy.

As Council President she created a Special City Council Committee on Property Tax Relief to examine long-term solutions to Baltimore's burdensome property tax rate, which has long been the highest in Maryland and more than twice as high as neighboring jurisdictions.

Rawlings-Blake developed a legislative package to create new opportunities for small businesses in city contracts, develop a citywide plan to create 'green collar' jobs in Baltimore and expedite city payments to small businesses for services rendered.

Personal

Born in Baltimore, Maryland, March 17, 1970. Daughter of the late Howard "Pete" Rawlings, former Maryland Delegate, 40th District. Married to Kent Blake, one daughter. Member, Douglas Memorial Community Church, Baltimore, Maryland.

Education

1995 University of Maryland School of Law, Baltimore, Maryland, Juris Doctor
1992 Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio B.S. Political Science
1988 Western High School, Baltimore, Maryland

Political Career

2010-present Mayor of Baltimore
2007-Feb 2010 President, Baltimore City Council and chair of City Board of Estimates
2004-2007 6th District, Baltimore City Council; Chair, Budget and Appropriations Committee; Member, Judiciary and Legislative Investigations Committee; Member, Public Safety Subcommittee.
2000 Delegate, Democratic National Convention
1999-2007 Vice President, Baltimore City Council
1995-2004 4th District, Baltimore City Council
1990-1998 40th District Baltimore City Democratic Central Committee

Professional Career

1998-2007 Staff Attorney, Baltimore Office of the Public Defender
1997-1998 Administrative Law Attorney, Legal Aid Bureau

Professional/Board Affiliations

Member, Federal Bar Association
Member, Maryland State Bar Association
Member, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Epsilon Omega Chapter
Former At-Large Member, Alliance of Black Women Attorneys
Board Member, Baltimore Convention and Tourism Board
Board Member, Hilton Baltimore Convention Center Hotel Corporation
Board Member, Baltimore Museum of Art
Board Member, Baltimore City Human Services Commission
Board Member, Live Baltimore
Board Member, Maryland Science Center
Board Member, National Aquarium in Baltimore
Board Member, Baltimore Substance Abuse Systems, Inc.
Board Member, Living Classrooms Foundation
Board Member, Waterfront Partnership of Baltimore
Board Member, Parks and People Foundation

Awards And Honors

2009 Shirley Chisholm Memorial Award Trailblazer, National Congress of Black Woman, Washington, DC Chapter

2007 Maryland's Top 100 Women, The Daily Record

Baltimore's Young Women on the Move, The National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs

Hearts of Love Recognition Award, Aunt Hattie's Place

Passing the Torch Legacy Award, Baltimore African American Real Estate Professionals.