

**DALLAS, TX**  
**Mayor Mike Rawlings**

## **Dallas #BeGolden Initiative**

#BeGolden is a growing social movement in the City of Dallas, based on the Golden Rule, to build a more welcoming community for all, including residents born outside the U.S. The initiative calls for unity, civility and empathy and is a reminder to immigrants of their importance to the Dallas area community. Mayor Mike Rawlings, together with Bishop Edward Burns of the Diocese of Dallas, announced the #BeGolden campaign in April 2018 at the Dallas Festival of Ideas. Liz Cedillo-Pereira, Director of the Office of Welcoming Communities and Immigrant Affairs, participates on the #BeGolden Steering Committee, helping to bring together city, community, school and faith leaders around the #BeGolden philosophy. The Mayor has been joined by other public and private organization leaders in developing and promoting #BeGolden and the campaign is growing to include other Dallas leadership organizations. The major goals of #BeGolden include:

- A) Educate the community to better understand the positive impact of immigrants.
- When the initiative launched in April, downtown Dallas buildings were lit in gold to introduce #BeGolden. Dallas' golden skyline received substantial, positive media attention, including in the Dallas Morning News.
  - Facts, information and immigrant stories are shared on #BeGolden's website, [begoldenjourney.com](http://begoldenjourney.com), and social media. The campaign thus far has garnered more than 330,000 impressions and 13,000 video views.
  - The Belo Corporation is donating a significant amount in print and online ads to the #BeGolden campaign for this year alone, helping hundreds of thousands of households gain awareness.
  - Welcome Walls, which are displays of welcoming messages created by Dallas area residents, are currently displayed at the Dallas Public Library, Dallas Love Field and, soon, the Convention Center and other sites. These messages help people of all backgrounds feel welcome. News stories have helped to raise awareness of #BeGolden in nearly 200,000 households and in social media engagement.
  - #BeGolden Community Conversations are held with community groups, businesses, schools, churches, synagogues and mosques and are also included in conferences and panel discussions as possible.
  - #BeGolden outreach includes yard signs, stickers, decals and more which are spread across various communities that are supporting #BeGolden. Educational materials are also available to help teachers of students of all ages learn about the Golden Rule and gain a better understanding of what it could be like to be an immigrant in the U.S.
- B) Inspire residents to connect as neighbors, especially with those from other cultures. Share videos, organize events, and participate in peace walks, panel discussions, chamber of commerce meetings, training, cultural events and more. Bring forth the voices of those who can help to elevate the conversation on immigration and lift the stories of immigrants in the Dallas community.
- C) Generate action to build a more welcoming community for all people. Recognizing that the immigration system is broken, the initiative aims to bring focus on the people involved. By practicing the Golden Rule and building processes that are centered around human dignity, #BeGolden can make a meaningful difference, with advocates having productive, civil discussions with leaders who can help build a better, more inclusive way to welcome immigrants to the community.

#BeGolden aims to rise above the often political and contentious subject of immigration to focus on human issues. Challenges to be met include gaining enough momentum to impact the system to bring logical and compassionate changes to the way immigrants are welcomed and treated and creating the right messaging across different communities. Advocates are focusing on ways to build bridges in the local community and to be courageous in conversations to seek common ground on issues related to immigrants and refugees. The #BeGolden campaign, they say, is fueled by a great amount of goodwill – pro bono services provided by a prestigious advertising agency, donated print and digital ads in the Dallas Morning News, and joint coordination among the Steering Committee, the Office of Welcoming Communities and the Mayor’s Office. Advocates say the Mayor is an effective and compassionate leader on the subject, speaking extensively on the pragmatic and humanitarian approach to the welcoming work being done in Dallas.

A short animated video produced for #BeGolden is [HERE](#). Additional information on the initiative (Twitter: @BeGoldenJourney, Facebook: BeGolden) may be requested at [info@begoldenjourney.com](mailto:info@begoldenjourney.com) or from Jane Koenecke at [jane@begoldenjourney.com](mailto:jane@begoldenjourney.com) or 972-669-9346. Additional information on the City’s role is available from Liz Cedillo-Pereira, Director of Welcoming Communities & Immigrant Affairs for the City of Dallas, at [liz.cedillopereira@dallascityhall.com](mailto:liz.cedillopereira@dallascityhall.com) or 214-671-5087.

