

**Bernard and Audre Rapoport Center
for Human Rights and Justice**



ANNIVERSARY GALA

**Sissy Farenthold Fund
for Peace and Social Justice**

April 24, 2025

The Bullock Texas State History Museum

HOST COMMITTEE

George E. Farenthold, II (co-chair)

Abby Rapoport (co-chair)

Madison Alvarez	Robert & Michael Leleux
Scott Atlas	Rick Levy
Joe Bailey, Jr.	Robin Mardemootoo
Sofia Bonilla	Marta Mattox
George Christian	Hon. Garry Mauro
Rick Diegel	Becky Moeller
Maddy Dwertman	Carol Adatto Nelson & Eric Nelson
State Senator Sarah Eckhardt	Ambassador Carrin F. Patman
Harris County Commissioner Rodney Ellis	Barbara Radnofsky
State Representative Lulu Flores	State Representative Richard Peña Raymond
Lisa Fuentes & Thomas M. Cohen	Eddie Shore
Barbara Hines	Michael Tigar
Kristin Hook	Congressman Sylvester Turner (in memoriam)
Susan L. Karamanian	

HONORARY COMMITTEE

Congressman Greg Casar
Francisco & Graciela Cigarroa
Congressman Lloyd Doggett
Hon. Tom Harkin
Congressman Jamie Raskin
Darren Walker

WELCOME

Susan C. Morse
Associate Dean for Academic Affairs,
The University of Texas School of Law

OPENING REMARKS FROM EVENT EMCEES

George E. Farenthold, II
Abby Rapoport

SPONSOR'S WELCOME

Lori Pelletier
Vice President, American Income Life

POETRY READING

Mónica A. Jiménez
Assistant Professor, African and African Diaspora Studies

DINNER

REMARKS FROM RAPOPORT CENTER CO-DIRECTORS

Karen Engle, Minerva House Drysdale Regents Chair in Law
Neville Hoad, Associate Professor, English

ANNIVERSARY VIDEO

KEYNOTE

Congressman Jamie Raskin
U.S. Representative
Maryland's 8th Congressional District

Introduced by Karen Engle

CLOSING

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George E. Farenthold, II

Lisa Fuentes & Thomas M. Cohen

Robin Mardemootoo

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American History

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Susan L. Karamanian

Marta Mattox

Hon. Garry Mauro

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Jim & Sylvia Phillips

Barbara Radnofsky

Abby Rapoport & Sam Baker

Waters Kraus Paul & Siegel

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The Mike DeGeurin Family

Cheryl George & Michelle Bonilla

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Husch Blackwell

Inman Foundation

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Ambassador Lyndon Olson

State Representative
Richard Peña Raymond

Blake & Nisha Rocap

Arwa & Aziz Shaibani

Texas Appleseed

Tomblin Family Foundation

Vela Wood

CONGRESSMAN JAMIE RASKIN

is serving his fifth term representing Maryland's 8th Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives. He is the ranking member of the House Judiciary Committee and a co-chair of the Rapid Response Task Force and Litigation Working Group of the House Democratic Caucus.



From 2019 to 2023, Rep. Raskin was Chair of the Oversight Subcommittee on Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, where he zealously defended voting rights, free speech, the rights of labor and working people, and reproductive freedom and the rights of women. In addition, he was the lead impeachment manager in the second impeachment trial of President Donald Trump and served on the Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on the U.S. Capitol.

Rep. Raskin is Vice-Chair of Organizing for the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee and the founder and leader of Democracy Summer, the Democratic Party's acclaimed nationwide program that has engaged thousands of young people in training for political activism and leadership for strong democracy and freedom.

Before being elected to Congress, Rep. Raskin was a Maryland State Senator. In his three terms, he rose to become Majority Whip and became well-known for building bipartisan coalitions and leading complex floor fights to pass major legislation, including marriage equality, abolition of the death penalty, restoration of voting rights to former prisoners, and the first National Popular Vote measure in America.

Rep. Raskin was a professor of constitutional law for a quarter-century at American University's Washington College of Law. He has written dozens of articles and several notable books, including, most recently, New York Times #1 best-seller *Unthinkable: Trauma, Truth and the Trials of American Democracy* (2022). He graduated from Harvard College and Harvard Law School, where he was an editor of the Harvard Law Review.

We are proud to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the **Bernard and Audre Rapoport Center for Human Rights and Justice** at The University of Texas School of Law, whose mission is to promote the economic and political enfranchisement of marginalized individuals and groups both locally and globally. Actively collaborating with communities outside the academy to produce innovative and enduring change, our motto is “Partners for Change at the Intersection of Academics and Advocacy.” Students at the Center work side by side with scholars and practitioners across disciplines to produce groundbreaking research and advocacy, as well as globe-spanning convenings.

IN 2005, the Rapoport Center was inaugurated due to the generosity of **Bernard (“B”) and Audre Rapoport**, who were passionate supporters of the University of Texas. B graduated from UT in 1939 and served as chair of the UT System Board of Regents from 1993-1997. In 1951, B founded American Income Life in Waco, Texas, with the aim of ensuring that labor union members have access to affordable insurance. He remained chair and CEO for over five decades and became a major philanthropist for progressive causes.



Bernard and Audre Rapoport

B and Audre were lifelong supporters of immigration justice, labor rights, and reproductive rights. Over the past two decades, the Center has reflected these commitments, working on issues ranging from inequality and the future of work to the rise of xenophobia globally. We were fortunate to benefit from B’s participation in many of the Center’s events until his passing in 2012 and were guided by him frequently reminding us that “when too few have too much and too many have too little, we do not have a sustainable society.” To honor Audre’s support for women’s reproductive health, the Center established the Audre Rapoport Prize for Scholarship on Gender and Human Rights.



Bernard Rapoport meets with Rapoport Center students in 2005.

Frances Tarlton “Sissy” Farenthold

served on the Center’s advisory board from our early years and has long been an important inspiration for our work and role model for our students. A 1949 graduate of the UT School of Law, she was an esteemed lawyer, politician, educator, and local and global activist who devoted her life to exposing and responding to injustice and inequality.



Sissy Farenthold at 2015 celebration of her life and career

IN 2015, the Center celebrated Sissy’s remarkable life and career by launching four short films and a digital exhibition of her papers. The films and exhibition feature her trailblazing work as a Texas legislator representing Nueces and Kleberg counties, her 1972 galvanizing campaigns for Texas governor and U.S. vice president, her service as the first chair of the National Women’s Political Caucus, and her long-time human rights and peace work, including as a key organizer of the Peace Tent at the 1985 UN World Conference on Women in Nairobi. With the Rothko Chapel in Houston, we also launched an annual speaker series in Sissy’s name, bringing internationally renowned scholars and activists to Texas to inspire audiences to think and act creatively in response to the greatest challenges of the 21st century.

After Sissy passed in 2021, her friends and family established the **Sissy Farenthold Fund for Peace and Social Justice**, which has allowed the Center to expand its research, advocacy, and programming on issues to which Sissy was committed, including peace, reproductive justice, and environmental justice. In 2022, in the wake of *Dobbs*, we began the Sissy Farenthold Reproductive Justice Defense Project.

OVER THE PAST TWENTY YEARS, the Rapoport Center has come a long way. In 2005, we had a single director working with a handful of students and collaborative faculty, and one donor. Today, we have several directors, significant administrative, research, and mentorship capacity across campus, and the support of many generous individuals and foundations. We also have nearly 400 alumni and have hosted or collaborated with over 600 practitioners and scholars from more than forty countries, on topics ranging from immigration and reproductive rights in Texas to labor, natural resources, and inequality around the world.



LEARN MORE ABOUT US
law.utexas.edu/humanrights

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*"The Rapoport Center is one of the
best investments I've ever made."*

— Bernard Rapoport

"The Rapoport Center is the most vibrant point of multidisciplinary, socially-conscious dialogue on the UT campus. It was an indispensable part of my law school and doctoral studies, from funding an internship at the UN hybrid tribunal in Cambodia to inviting me to participate in a cutting-edge research project on impunity and human rights. My involvement with the Center will long have an impact on my career as a constitutional law and human rights scholar."

— **Kyle Shen**, Assistant Professor, Cleveland State University
College of Law and former Human Rights Scholar

"The Rapoport Center has provided me with invaluable mentorship and support since I was an undergraduate intern. Today, as a law student committed to a public interest career, I can't overstate the importance of the opportunities the Center has given me to engage first-hand with leading lawyers and academics from around the world."

— **Angelina Ramirez**, Human Rights Scholar and former Barbara Harlow Intern in Human Rights and Social Justice