

Professional Biography



Mayor William D. Rawls, Jr.

Mayor William Rawls, Jr. is devoted to improving the overall quality of life for every man, woman and child, residing in Brownsville. His zeal to provide solutions to various issues facing today's society can be seen, as well as felt, through the many opportunities that have been afforded to this city through his leadership. Mr. Rawls has been a partner in Rawls Funeral Homes, a third generation family owned business, since 1933 and continues to assist with the management of the family business. He has also worked for Golden Circle Life Insurance Company for 12 years as a licensed insurance agent and was responsible for managing the company's municipal bonds portfolio.

Mayor Rawls is a proud 1989 graduate of Morehouse College in Atlanta, GA where he received his B.A. degree with a concentration in Banking and Finance. He is a businessman born and raised in Brownsville, Tennessee and is an attested product of the Haywood County public school system, graduating High School in 1984. He also honorably served in the United States Army Reserves for eight years.

Mayor Rawls is currently the President of The West TN Mayors Association and graduate of Leadership TN Class V. He recently received the Be More Visionary Award from UT Extension for implementation of Healthy Moves. Mr. Rawls also completed the Harvard Kennedy School Executive Educator of Authentic Leadership and the Elected Officials Academy Levels 1 & 2. He is also a graduate of the 2015-2016 Delta Regional Leadership Institute Executive Academy and The Naifeh Center for Effective Leadership Institute for Public Service (Local Government Leadership Program). He is a recipient of the William H. Graves Humanitarian Award and 2017 St. James C.O.G.I.C. Friend of the Year Award. Mayor Rawls currently serves on several boards: United Way Board of West TN; Governor's Rural Task Force Committee; Memphis Regional Mega Site; Rotary Club where he was named a Paul Harris Fellow; Southwest Tennessee Development District. He is also an active member of the Tennessee Public Health Association.

His term as City Mayor of Brownsville, Tennessee is his first public office. Mayor Rawls has a wealth of knowledge in regards to budget and finance and has built a vast network. This allows for knowledgeable and essential decisions to be made regarding education, health & wellness and industrial development that directly translate into the continued growth and flourishing of the city and its citizens. As a result, several initiatives have been created and successfully implemented. The "Healthy Moves" initiative provides quarterly mini-wellness clinics for free preventative health screenings for the entire community. Along with health, education remains to be a priority through the continued support of EEOG (Equal Education Opportunity Group), Gear Up and the newly implemented "Leader In Me" program. The "Skills to Build" is another successful program that was developed to be utilized as a mechanism towards workforce development. In addition, the SOS (Save Our Streets) initiative was also created and implemented in the city of Brownsville to help prevent and bring awareness to violence.

Mayor Rawls continuously strives to create unity for the entire community of Brownsville. He strongly believes that **"synergy"** is the key that unlocks the doors of opportunity to the future. To back his belief, he formed the "Unity Breakfast" which consists of ministers, churches and leaders to help in connecting the community beyond differentiation. Mr. Rawls is also the proud father of two sons, Terry and Evan Rawls.

His past interests include: Board Chair for Living for Christ Emergency Homeless Shelter; Board Chair for Memphis in May Cultural Program Committee; and Board Chair for South West Community Service Agency; Board Chair for Tennessee Opportunity Programs.