

Jamin Raskin is a professor of Constitutional Law, the First Amendment, Local Government Law and Law of the American Political Process at American University's Washington College of Law and directs its Program on Law and Government. A *magna cum laude* graduate of Harvard College and Harvard Law School, where he was Editor of the Harvard Law Review, Professor Raskin served as assistant attorney general in Massachusetts before coming home in the late 1980s. He then served as the General Counsel of the National Rainbow Coalition. In 1990, he became a law professor and later academic dean of the law school. He has published several books and dozens of articles. In 2000, Raskin was named Scholar-Teacher of the Year by American University, receiving the university's highest award for teaching and scholarship.

A champion of strong democracy, Raskin has been an active civil rights and civil liberties attorney and one of the nation's leading voting rights advocates. His clients have included Greenpeace, the Service Employees International Union, United Students Against Sweatshops, students in the Communication Arts Program at Blair High School in Montgomery County, Maryland, Global Exchange, the people of Washington, D.C., Ross Perot and the National Voting Rights Institute. He has also worked as a legislative consultant to the ACLU's national office in Washington. He is a member of the Board of FairVote in Takoma Park, Maryland, the nation's leading electoral reform group, and the Public Justice Center, Maryland's leading public interest legal advocacy group.

Professor Raskin's 2003 book, *Overruling Democracy: The Supreme Court versus The American People*, which became a Washington Post Bestseller, documented the Rehnquist Court majority's assault on voting rights in the 2000 election and placed *Bush v. Gore* in the context of a series of Supreme Court decisions undermining the participatory rights of the people. Focusing on the Rehnquist majority's statement that the "individual citizen has no federal constitutional right to vote" for president, Raskin proposed a constitutional amendment guaranteeing the right to vote (and to get one's vote counted) to all Americans, including nearly 600,000 Washingtonians not represented in Congress and more than 4 million Puerto Ricans who have no voting rights in Congress or presidential elections. He has worked closely with Congressman Jesse Jackson, Jr. (D-Ill.) to advance a voting rights amendment in Congress and Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC) to advance a voting rights agenda for the people of Washington. The D.C. City Council—Democrats, Republicans and Independents-- unanimously praised his "passionate advocacy" for the voting rights of the disenfranchised. Raskin's law review article and book, *The Wealth Primary: Equal Protection and Campaign Financing*, coauthored with John Bonifaz, have become classic statements of egalitarian and democratic principles in the campaign finance field.

Professor Raskin has been a passionate champion for the Bill of Rights and for constitutional education of young people. In 1999 he wrote *We the Students: Supreme Court Cases for and about America's Students*, a book sponsored by the Supreme Court Historical Society. It collects and analyzes the 50 most important Supreme Court decisions about the rights and responsibilities of America's students. It has sold more than 25,000 copies and has been praised by educators and leaders from across the

political spectrum, including Professor Randall Kennedy at Harvard Law School, Marian Wright Edelman of the Children's Defense Fund, Mary Beth Tinker, Judge Kenneth Starr and former Congressman and Judge Abner Mikva.

In 1999 Professor Raskin founded the Marshall-Brennan Constitutional Literacy Project, a project at the Washington College of Law that he organized with the widows of the late Justices Thurgood Marshall and William Brennan. This project sends law students who have done well in Constitutional Law into public high schools in Maryland and Washington to teach the U.S. Constitution through cases that affect students most directly, such as those dealing with drug testing, locker searches, censorship of student newspapers and yearbooks, segregation and desegregation, Title IX, sexual harassment and student disabilities.

Through the Marshall-Brennan Constitutional Literacy Project, hundreds of law students at AU have now taught the Constitution to thousands of local high school students. The more than 20 local high schools that have been part of the project include Blair High School, Kennedy High School, Richard Montgomery High School, Anacostia High School, Wilson High School, Banneker High School, Woodson High School, Springarn High School, Cesar Chavez High School, Maya Angelou High School, Coolidge High School, Duke Ellington School of the Arts and many others. The Marshall-Brennan project has spread to Howard Law School, Rutgers Law School, Arizona State University School of Law, the University of Oregon School of Law and the University of Pennsylvania School of Law.

Professor Raskin has often defended the free speech rights of students, for example representing in 1997 a class at Montgomery Blair High School's Communication Arts Program whose television debate program "Shades of Grey" was censored when the students produced a debate about gay marriage. Organizing a community-wide defense of the First Amendment in Silver Spring and Takoma Park, Raskin helped the students win an important 4-3 reversal of the censorship by the Montgomery County School Board.

Professor Raskin has been deeply involved in local, state and national government and politics. In 1999 Governor Parris Glendening tapped Raskin to become the first Chairman of the Maryland State Higher Education Labor Relations Board, which the legislature created to secure the right to organize on campus. In this position, Raskin and his colleagues developed the most professional and comprehensive code of labor relations of any state university system in America. Under his leadership of the Board, thousands of employees at institutions of higher learning in Maryland have achieved collective bargaining rights for the first time in state history.

In 2004 Raskin was elected as a Kerry-Edwards Delegate to the Democratic National Convention, where he organized with Congressman Jesse Jackson Jr, and FairVote a day-long hearing on the state of democracy in America and current threats to the right to vote.

In 1990, Raskin served on Takoma Park's Redistricting Task Force and introduced a creative proposal to equalize the numbers of voters in the city's different wards. His suggestion was to give all adult residents of the city the right to vote in local elections regardless of nationality. Although the idea was unfamiliar to many people, Raskin founded and co-chaired the Share the Vote campaign which led the successful campaign for non-citizen voting in Takoma Park. The New York Times called Raskin "the intellectual author of a new grass-roots movement" to revive the 18th and 19th century practice of giving all local residents the right to vote. Raskin's lengthy article in the University of Pennsylvania Law Review on the constitutional and historical meaning of alien suffrage won a prize from the Association of American Law Schools and has prompted numerous cities across America, from New York to San Francisco, to take up the issue.

Professor Raskin introduced in the pages of *Slate* magazine the sweepingly popular idea of Internet "vote trading" in the 2000 election to convince Ralph Nader supporters in swing states like Florida and Wisconsin to vote for Vice-President Al Gore and to have equal numbers of Democrats vote for Nader in Republican states like Texas and Alabama. This tactic picked up at least 35,000 votes for Gore in swing states before Republican state attorney generals and secretaries of state threatened criminal prosecution of the Website organizers for conspiracy to engage in vote-buying and selling. The ACLU (with Professor Raskin and Professor Laurence Tribe as co-counsel) went to court in California to establish the legality of Internet vote-trading under the First Amendment. In 2005, Professor Raskin contributed a chapter to the post-election collection of essays by progressive Democrats called *What We Do Now*, whose other contributors include Donna Brazile and Howard Dean.

Professor Raskin and his wife Sarah Bloom Raskin, former Counsel to Senator Paul Sarbanes on the Senate Banking and Urban Affairs Committee, live with their three children in Takoma Park, Maryland.