

# Politicians: Donald Trump

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Donald Trump Photo: Wikimedia Commons

**Synopsis:** Real estate developer Donald Trump was born in 1946, in New York. In 1971, he began making money with large building projects. He became New York City's best-known and most controversial developer. In 2004, Trump began starring in the hit NBC reality TV series "The Apprentice." Trump next turned his attention to politics. In 2015, he announced he was running for president of the United States. On July 19, 2016, Trump was named the Republican candidate for the presidency.

## Early Life And Education

Donald John Trump was born June 14, 1946, in the New York City borough of Queens. He was the fourth of five children of Frederick and Mary MacLeod Trump. Frederick Trump was a builder and real estate developer. Donald was an energetic, assertive child, and his parents sent him to the New York Military Academy at age 13. They hoped the strict school would teach him to channel his energy in a positive direction.

Trump did well at the academy, both socially and academically, becoming a star athlete and student leader. After graduation, he entered Fordham University, and two years later transferred to the Wharton School of Finance at the University of Pennsylvania. He graduated in 1968, with a degree in economics.

## **New York Real Estate Developer**

Trump was influenced by his father in his decision to make a career in real estate development, but his own goals were much grander. As a student, Trump worked with his father during the summer. He then joined his father's company, Elizabeth Trump & Son, after graduation from college.

In 1971, Donald Trump began running the company, which he later renamed the Trump Organization. He also moved to Manhattan, the main borough of New York City, and began making connections with important people. Trump soon became involved in large and controversial building projects that made him huge profits.

## **Expanding His Empire**

In 1977, Trump married Ivana Zelnickova Winklmayr, a New York fashion model and Olympic skier. The couple had three children.

Meanwhile, Trump entered the casino gambling business. He either built or bought hotel casinos in Atlantic City, New Jersey, and Las Vegas, Nevada.

## **Ups And Downs Of Business**

Trump expanded his empire and bought the Eastern Air Lines Shuttle for \$365 million. He renamed it the Trump Shuttle. It went out of business in 1992.

In 1990, however, the real estate market was not doing well. Trump had claimed that he had a fortune of about \$1.5 billion. A Forbes magazine investigation revealed that he owed a lot of money and his fortune was closer to \$500 million. In September 2016, Forbes said Trump's fortune had grown to \$3.7 billion.

## **Personal Life, Politics And Reality TV**

In 1991, he and Ivana divorced. He married two more times and has a total of five children.

In 1999, Trump ran for president, but lost the California primary and left the race.

In 2004 Trump began the NBC-TV reality series "The Apprentice," which quickly became a hit. The show was so successful that he starred in a spinoff, "The Celebrity Apprentice."

## **Presidential Contender**

On June 16, 2015, Trump announced he was running for president as a Republican. At the time, there were already more than a dozen major candidates. He made the announcement at Trump Tower in New York City, boasting, "I will be the greatest jobs president that God ever created."

Trump was a controversial candidate from the beginning as he made negative remarks about Mexicans and immigration, women and Muslims and a disabled reporter. NBC dropped him from "The Celebrity Apprentice" and stopped airing the Miss Universe and Miss USA beauty pageants, which Trump owns.

## **A Controversial Candidate**

On July 18, 2015, Trump set off another media firestorm when he said that Senator John McCain, a former Republican presidential nominee, was not a hero. McCain had been taken prisoner during the Vietnam War and was tortured. "He's not a war hero. He's a war hero because he was captured. I like people who weren't captured," Trump said.

Trump became the leading Republican presidential candidate, although he said he would stop Muslims from immigrating to the United State and supported a form of torture. There were also many protests at his political rallies, and several of them turned violent. Some people said Trump did not try to stop the violence.

## **GOP Presidential Nominee**

On July 21, 2016, Trump accepted the presidential nomination at the Republican National Convention. Trump spoke about issues he would tackle as president. They included violence in America, the economy, immigration, trade, terrorism and the appointment of Supreme Court justices.

Trump also promised supporters that he would defend gun rights, reduce taxes and repeal President Barack Obama's healthcare plan, also known as Obamacare, a law that gave health insurance to millions of people. He said he would build a wall between the United States and Mexico to stop illegal immigration.

In an historic moment, he became the first Republican nominee to mention lesbian, gay, transgender and bisexual Americans in an acceptance speech.

Trump came under heavy criticism when he attacked Khizr Khan, the father of U.S. Army Captain Humayun Khan, who was killed in Iraq. Khan had spoken at the Democratic National Convention. He criticized the billionaire on a number of policies including his promise to ban Muslims from entering the United States. The emotional speech affected many people across the country including on social media and traditional news media.

Trump later questioned why Mrs. Khan stood silently at her husband's side. Trump suggested that perhaps it was her religion, Islam, that forbids her from talking.