



2021 LEGISLATIVE SESSION
STATE ASSEMBLY
NEW MEMBERS

12/17/2020

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Jodi Giglio (R)

2nd Assembly District (Riverhead, Southold and part of Brookhaven, Nassau County): *Seat currently held by Anthony Palumbo (R)*

Occupation: Town Councilmember, Town of Riverhead; Small Business Owner

Past Professional Experience: Land Use Consultant

Biography

Riverhead Town Councilwoman Jodi Giglio, a resident of Baiting Hollow for the last 20 years, is a committed public servant, a small business owner, and most importantly, a mother to her three children.

As a small business owner, Jodi is too familiar with the needs and hurdles of local business owners, especially during these difficult times. Jodi is a proud union member of Local 138, International Union of Operating Engineers and successfully runs a NYS Certified Women-Owned Business Enterprise. In addition to running a small business, Jodi has also served as a long-time land use consultant. With these private sector experiences, Jodi will be a fierce advocate for the small business community in New York State.

Jodi was inspired to run for Riverhead Town Council 11 years ago as a frustrated small business owner, looking for a change in local government. When reflecting back on her journey, Jodi has never lost sight of where she came from. As an elected official, Jodi has a demonstrated track record of putting the needs of her constituents above all else. Too often, people come into politics for self-serving reasons and it is important to Jodi that she proves to her constituents that she works for their benefit.

When Jodi was elected as councilwoman in 2010, her business experience prepared her to be a fiscal watchdog for Riverhead taxpayers. There she led the charge on several strategies to save Riverhead millions of dollars by implementing process improvements, eliminating wasteful spending, and creating legislation to protect the environment. With a 10-year plan, the town was able to balance the budget deficit that plagued Riverhead for years.

As Riverhead Town Councilwoman, Jodi was honored by Minority Millennials Inc. as a Woman of Distinction for her contribution to policies that have had a positive impact on our minorities and young generations. Jodi is a big promoter of STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics) for our youth. As Riverhead Town Councilwoman, Jodi lead the charge in creating a partnership between ULC Robotics and the town of Riverhead. This partnership supports onsite classes, mentoring, field trips to the research and development facility, Riverhead School engagement, and on-site programs for area homeless shelters. Jodi will advocate for STEAM initiatives in Albany, as this type of education will help develop the next generation of innovators and train our future workforce.

Jodi is resilient and values hard work, determination, and perseverance. If elected, Jodi will be committed to finding solutions to reduce the State's significant budget deficit, fix our crumbling infrastructure, protect our environment, and ensure our communities are safer. Jodi is committed to putting forward legislation that prioritizes the needs of hardworking Long Islanders and advocating that more of our taxpayer money comes home to Long Island. Jodi is determined to advocate against policies like bail reform that empower criminals and put our law enforcement officers and law-abiding citizens at a significant disadvantage.

Issues

- Public Safety: Repeal bail reform, ensure police can do their jobs safely and effectively
- Environment: Improve clean water, preserve farmland
- Infrastructure: Improve roadways, repair sewages and decrease traffic congestion
- Economy: Create high paying technology jobs, encourage companies to come to Long Island

Endorsements

- NRA



Jarett Gandolfo (R)

7th Assembly District (Brookhaven, Islip, Suffolk County): *Seat currently held by Andrew Garbarino (R)*

Occupation: Chief of Staff, Assemblyman Andrew Garbarino

Past Professional Experience: Warehouse hand and wholesale grocery delivery driver

Education: B.A. SUNY Albany, MPA Villanova University

Biography

Jarett is a dedicated public servant committed to improving Long Island. He graduated from West Islip High School before receiving a degree in criminal justice from SUNY Albany. He then went on to receive a Master of Public Administration degree (M.P.A) as well as a certificate in city management from Villanova University.

For over seven years before he decided to run for Assembly, Jarett devoted himself to serving our communities alongside New York State Assemblyman Andrew Garbarino as his chief of staff. During this time, Jarett resolved thousands of constituent cases, helped secure grants for local municipalities and nonprofits, and worked with local organizations to support their missions. He has always done his part to support initiatives which benefit our communities, while also aiding in the fight against many of the harmful policies passed down from Albany. Jarett is eager to hit the ground running and continue serving the great people of the 7th Assembly District.

Dedicated to public service, Jarett also serves on the Board of Directors of the Islip Community Development Agency. As a member of the board, he guides the agency as it works to improve communities throughout the Town of Islip. Jarett is very proud of the work the agency does - they help families buy their first homes, clean up blight in our neighborhoods, and provide financial assistance to local nonprofit organizations.

Jarett comes from a blue-collar family; his father was a life-long Long Island Railroad employee and his mother is a retired hairdresser. They instilled in him a strong work ethic, emphasized the value of education, and always stressed the importance of family. He began helping out at his grandfather's small window treatment shop at a young age. Throughout high school and college, he worked as a supermarket cashier, as well as a warehouse hand and delivery driver for a grocery wholesaler company.

Jarett and his wife, Natalia, are proud residents of Sayville where they recently bought their first home. They are excited to raise a family in this wonderful community.

Issues

- Economy: Allow small businesses to thrive, provide greater economic opportunity for all
- Environment: Protect the environment, especially Long Island's water
- Public Safety: Repeal bail reform
- Education: Fight for local control of schools, get Long Island their fair share of foundation aid

Endorsements

- Suffolk County PBA
- NYSUT
- Suffolk AME
- PBA of New York State

- AFL-CIO
- NYS Troopers PBA
- Suffolk County Superior Officers Association
- Suffolk Detectives Association
- NFIB
- Long Island Federation of Labor
- Labors International
- CSEA
- PEF



Michael Durso (R)

9th Assembly District (Massapequa, Massapequa Park and South Farmingdale, Nassau County and West Babylon, Babylon Village, West Islip and part of Brightwaters, Suffolk County): *Seat currently held by Michael LiPetri (R)*

Occupation: Sanitation Supervisor for the Town of Oyster Bay; Public Safety Officer at Hofstra University in Hempstead

Past Professional Experience: Sanitation worker

Education: BOCES Carpentry Program

Biography

Michael Durso is running for the New York State Assembly to represent Long Island's working-class families. As a husband and father that works two jobs to make ends meet, Michael knows firsthand the struggles families face in affording the high cost of living on Long Island. Michael wants to be their voice in Albany, a voice that has long been forgotten. Whether it's working to reduce the burden of unfair taxation on the working class, expanding education and technical training to improve wages and job growth or being a strong advocate to make sure our veterans and first responders are protected - no one will fight harder than Michael Durso.

If Long Islanders are looking for someone to fight for them in Albany, it helps to have someone who's one of them. Michael grew up in a blue-collar family in Massapequa Park. At an early age, Michael learned the importance of hard-work while helping his mother make ends-meet at her small restaurant. Teaching Michael the value of starting work early and staying late, his father worked the supermarket deli counter to support their family and rose through the ranks to become President of RWDSU Local Union 338 and the Long Island Federation of Labor. With the work ethic of his parents, Michael started his adult career putting in a hard day's work as a sanitation worker riding on the back of a truck. Today, Michael serves as a sanitation supervisor and helps to implement environmental policies that increase recycling initiatives. He is a proud member of CSEA Local 881. Like many other struggling families on Long Island, Michael works a second job as a public safety officer at Hofstra University in Hempstead, where his duties include helping protect students on campus. He has seen firsthand the dangers students face and knows the importance of strong criminal justice laws. Michael is also a member of the Teamsters Local 553 and served on the bargaining unit during the last contract negotiations.

As a State Assemblyman, Michael will work across the aisle to protect the STAR program, keep property tax rebate checks and increase funding for local schools. Funding for these important programs is in jeopardy thanks to a backwards agenda in Albany. As a graduate of a BOCES carpentry program in Levittown, Michael will advocate for additional funding for vocational programs to train our youth and to fill the shortage of skilled labor. As our State representative, Michael will always stand shoulder to shoulder with our police, firefighters, doctors, nurses and frontline workers. As a certified first responder, Michael understands the importance of securing the resources needed to keep our communities safe.

Michael Durso resides in Massapequa Park with his wife, Dana, and their two daughters, Nicole and Taylor. Dana serves as Trustee for the Village of Massapequa Park and PTA President for East Lake Elementary School.

Issues

- Economy: Protect the STAR program, keep property tax rebate checks, increase funding for local schools
- Education: Increase funding for vocational programs to fill the shortage of skilled labor
- Public Safety: Repeal bail reform

Endorsements

- NYLCV
- NYSUT
- CSEA
- AFL-CIO
- Long Island Federation of Labor
- NFIB
- AFSCME
- LiUNA! NY
- Local 338 RWDSU



Keith Brown (R)

12th Assembly District (Asharoken, Baywood, Centerport, Deer Park, Eatons Neck, East Northport, Northport and part of Commack, Suffolk County): *Seat previously held by Andrew Raia (R)*

Occupation: Lawyer

Past Professional Experience: Assistant Attorney General, New York State

Education: SUNY Albany, J.D. Touro Law School

Biography

Keith Brown started his law firm in 2008 with a handful of files and has grown it into a successful business with fourteen employees, based in Melville. He is a graduate of SUNY Albany where he interned during his final semester for New York State Senator Norman Levy, then Chairman of the Transportation Committee. He graduated from Touro Law School in 1990 where he remains active having started the Touro Land Use Institute. Before starting his law firm, he practiced litigation and was appointed to the NYS Attorney General's office where he served as an Assistant Attorney General in the Litigation Bureau defending the State in federal and state courts.

Issues

- Public Safety: Repeal bail reform, restore discretion to judges, repeal the "green light" law, defend law enforcement and first responders
- Education: Restore education aid to Long Island schools, teach young students about substance abuse and addiction
- Economy: Reopen Long Island businesses, spur economic development

Endorsements

- NYLCV
- NYS Troopers PBA
- Suffolk County PBA
- Suffolk County Corrections
- Local 138 Operator Engineers
- Local 1490 Electrical Workers
- Suffolk County Association of Municipal Employees



Gina Sillitti (D)

16th Assembly District (Great Neck, Port Washington, Manhasset, Roslyn Heights, North Hills, Flower Lake, Lake Success, Baxter Estates, Manorhaven and Sands Point, Nassau County): *Seat currently held by Anthony D’Urso (D)*

Occupation: Human Resources Director, Nassau County Board of Elections

Past Professional Experience: Department of Community Services for the Town of North Hempstead; Director of Legislative Affairs for the Town Supervisor of North Hempstead

Education: B.A. University of Georgia

Biography

Sillitti has worked in town and county government for the past 20 years, and was announced as the nominee for the 16th Assembly District at the Nassau County Democratic Committee Convention on February 11th.

Her career in politics began in the Nassau County Legislature in the early 2000s, working for former Nassau County Legislator Dave Mejias, representing parts of Plainview and Farmingdale, among other areas.

Sillitti later worked in the Department of Community Services for the Town of North Hempstead, where she organized “constituent-based” community events. She later worked directly for Town Supervisor Jon Kaiman as his director of legislator affairs and deputy chief of staff.

She worked with the town board members on resolutions for the public agenda, vetting items, and was the primary point of contact for the town’s lobbying in Washington and Albany.

In 2015, after five years with North Hempstead, Sillitti was recruited as human resources director for the Nassau County Board of Elections, where she has spent the past five years implementing new policies and procedures.

Upon hearing of D’Urso’s retirement, Sillitti decided to try for the nomination and her mission will be advocating for “Long Island and Long Island values.”

Raised in Mount Sinai and parts of Florida, Sillitti attended the University of Georgia, majoring in political science, and moved to Manorhaven eight years ago. Her husband, Kevin Clemency, is a native of the Manhasset-Port Washington area.

Issues

- Education: Increase state funding for schools
- Infrastructure: Increase funds for roads and municipalities
- Environment: Protect the Long Island Sound and bays, protect drinking water

Endorsements

- Nassau County Democratic Party
- League of Conservation Voters
- Working Families Party
- Planned Parenthood of Greater New York



Khaleel Anderson (D)

31st Assembly District (Far Rockaway and South Ozone Park, Queens County):

Seat previously held by Michele Titus (D)

Occupation: Supplemental Instructor in SEEK Program, Queens College

Past Professional Experience: Administrative Assistant, Research Foundation of The City University of New York; Constituent Services Representative, New York State Senate

Education: M.A. Queens College

Biography

Khaleel was born in Crown Heights, Brooklyn and raised in Far Rockaway, Queens. A part of a growing family of five, Khaleel lived in a household where his father was a member of the powerful healthcare workers union 1199 SEIU and his mother was a community organizer for ACORN (now defunct) active during the years 1996-2005. When his dad left home, the financial strain of living in a single parent home as one of three children and one on the way could be felt by all. In 2005 his family moved to Far Rockaway because rent prices became unaffordable. In his pre-teen years, Khaleel struggled with mental health and behavioral problems. This did not hinder his ability to speak on behalf of his peers when he felt things were unfair. He was able to find his activist voice while advocating for students through middle school, high school, college, and in his professional life.

In 2011 he got a start as an organizer for a nonprofit community-based organization called the Rockaway Youth Task Force. Khaleel has been involved in community activism, social justice movements, and fighting to ensure black and brown young people have better health outcomes. Under the leadership of RYTF, Khaleel has organized hundreds of young people to become more engaged civically and politically. In 2014 he led young people in his neighborhood to convert a vacant lot to build a half-acre urban farm which provides fresh produce, workshops, training(s) on healthy eating and employment opportunities for young people in the community.

Khaleel graduated Queens College from an accelerated master's program in urban studies and held a minor in cities and social medicine. He serves on Queens Community Board 14, 101st Police Precinct Council, and the local Far Rockaway Branch of the NAACP. He hopes to expand his community work and body of accomplishments to improve the lives of the over 120,000 of his neighbors that call this place home. He currently is a member of the Professional Staff Congress, serving as a supplemental instructor for the SEEK program at his alma mater. Khaleel has stated that he ran for State Assembly because now more than ever young people are being railroaded by state policy and a real voice is needed in Albany.

Issues

- Criminal Justice: Fight for equal justice
- Housing: Ending homeless shelters, supports housing vouchers to guarantee everyone has a decent home
- Transportation: Better connect Queens and Rockaway with the MTA
- Healthcare: Healthcare for all
- Environment: Fund coastal protections for Jamaica Bay, protect air quality

Endorsements

- Working Families Party
- NYSHE-PAC

- Our Progressive Future
- Citizen Action! of New York
- Citizens Union
- New York Progressive Action Network
- TenantsPAC
- True Blue NY



Jessica Gonzalez-Rojas (D)

34th Assembly District (Jackson Heights, East Elmhurst and parts of Woodside and Corona, Queens County): *Seat currently held by Michael DenDekker (D)*

Occupation: Executive Director, National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health

Past Professional Experience: Professor, New York University; Consultant, Envision Social Justice; Community Liaison, Congresswoman Nydia Velazquez

Education: B.A. Boston University, MPA New York University

Biography

Jessica González-Rojas is a life-long activist and change-maker. Jessica is a nationally-recognized expert on healthcare reform, gender and racial justice. She has a deep understanding of building coalitions on both the grassroots level and within institutions of power.

As the daughter of an immigrant father from Paraguay and a Puerto Rican mother, Jessica is a fierce advocate for people of color, immigrants, and LGBTQIA+ communities. A resident in our community since 1999, Jessica understands that the strength of our Queens community is in its diversity, and holds an unwavering commitment to progressive values. Which is why she has also worked in the fields of disability rights, higher education, and veteran's health.

Jessica was on the founding board of New Immigrant Community Empowerment (NICE), a Queens-based immigrant rights organization and a founding member of Jackson Heights' New Visions Democratic Club. She has served in leadership roles for many local advocacy efforts, including the New York City Transit Riders Council and the New York City Young Women's Initiative. For the past 13 years, Jessica has led a national organization dedicated to expanding healthcare access, building Latinx power, and advancing reproductive justice. Jessica was also an adjunct professor at CUNY City College and NYU Wagner School of Public Service.

Jessica worked as a regional advocate for the Eastern Paralyzed Veterans Association (EPVA) where she advocated for improved MTA bus and subway service for people with disabilities and fought for adequate funding for veteran's health programs for our disabled veterans.

In 2002, Jessica ran as an insurgent, against the party bosses, to become the first Latina elected committeewoman in the Jackson Heights, Corona, East Elmhurst, Woodside community to represent the community in the Democratic Party.

In 2003, Jessica was a founding member of the New Visions Democratic Club, along with Daniel Dromm, to bring new voices into the Democratic Party on the local level. The club made history when they expanded participation to include undocumented immigrants as members.

Jessica holds a bachelor's degree in international relations from Boston University and a master's degree in public administration from New York University's Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service, with a concentration in public and nonprofit management and public policy.

Issues

- Redistricting: Redraw district lines to maximize community power
- Taxes: Tax the rich, invest in healthcare, education and job creation
- Housing: Combat racial injustice in housing, more affordable housing
- Criminal Justice: Increase police accountability, protect bail reforms
- Environment: Environmental justice, combat pollution

Endorsements

- Working Families Party
- El Diario
- Make the Road Action
- Senator Gustavo Rivera
- City Council Member Daniel Dromm
- Public Advocate Jumaane Williams
- Planned Parenthood
- NARAL Pro Choice America
- New York Communities for Change
- Eleanor's Legacy



Zohran Kwame Mamdani (D)

36th Assembly District (Ditmars and Astoria, Queens County): *Seat currently held by Aravella Simotas (D)*

Occupation: Housing Counselor, Chhaya CDC

Past Professional Experience: Organizer, Democratic Socialist Alliance

Education: B.A. Bowdoin College

Biography

Zohran was born and raised in Kampala, Uganda, and grew up in New York City after his family moved here when he was seven years old. He went to Bronx Science for high school, graduated from Bowdoin College, and now works as a housing counselor, helping immigrant families facing eviction stay in the homes they worked their whole lives to earn.

'It's a difficult job, but not just because I have to negotiate with banks that value profits over people or because it takes months to make progress on a single case. It's difficult because every day I come face to face with the reality that all this suffering isn't inevitable. It's a choice — the consequence of decades of pro-corporate and pro-landlord policies in Albany.

Our representatives turned family homes into investment properties while letting public housing fall into decay and disrepair. When people are drowning, they offer stopgap solutions like small grants and low-interest loans that do nothing for the vast majority of New Yorkers struggling with housing insecurity. No matter how many families we're able to help, there are always thousands more across Queens and all of New York City on the precipice of homelessness because of an unexpected illness, job loss, or emergency.

I am running for State Assembly because it's time to guarantee housing to all New Yorkers as a right, regardless of ability to pay. It's time to desegregate our schools, fully eliminate cash bail, ban solitary confinement, fund and fix the MTA, end workplace discrimination, and fight for social, racial, economic, and environmental justice for the many, not the few.

This election isn't about a single candidate — it's about a movement. As a democratic socialist, I know that we'll never win the rights we all deserve - rights to healthcare, housing, education, nutrition, childcare, and public power - without a grassroots movement of the working class rising up to demand them. Another world is possible, but only if we fight for it together.'

Issues

- **Housing:** Enact statewide rent control, tax the rich to fix NYCHA, buy affordable units and put them under community control
- **Infrastructure:** Make utilities publicly owned
- **Criminal Justice:** End cash bail, decriminalize sex work, ban ICE from courthouses
- **Education:** Fight for the \$4 billion owed to schools, end subsidies for charter schools
- **Transportation:** Invest in public transit, increase taxes to eliminate fares and make subways and buses free, ban traffic on major roads
- **Labor:** Prevailing wage, extend labor rights to gig workers, fight against wage theft, unsafe work places, firing without just cause

Endorsements

- Cynthia Nixon
- Senator Julia Salazar
- NYC DSA
- Unite Here! Local 100
- APPAC
- NO IDC NY
- New American Leaders Action Fund



Jenifer Rajkumar (D)

38th Assembly District (Woodhaven, Ridgewood, Richmond Hill, Ozone Park and Glendale, Queens County): *Seat currently held by Michael Miller (D)*

Occupation: Professor, CUNY Lehman

Past Professional Experience: Director of Immigration Affairs & Special Counsel, Governor Andrew Cuomo; Attorney, Sanford Heisler Sharp

Education: B.A. University of Pennsylvania, J.D. Stanford University

Biography

Jenifer is proud to be born and raised in New York, as the first generation American in her family. Her mom was born in a mud hut in India. Her parents immigrated to the United States with just \$300 and a suitcase, settling in Queens where they got their start. To honor the promise of a country that gave her family so much opportunity, Jenifer decided to dedicate her life to public service.

Jenifer is a lawyer, professor at CUNY and former New York State government official. With early roots in public service and giving back, Jenifer graduated from Stanford Law School with distinction for her pro bono legal work on behalf of vulnerable individuals. She graduated from the University of Pennsylvania at the top of her class magna cum laude, phi beta kappa where she received the Alice Paul Award for exemplary service to women and families.

Jenifer has been dynamic, passionate and persistent in her efforts to make a difference in the lives of others. For Jenifer, service is a way of life. She served for years as the people's lawyer, fighting corporate fraud and excess, and advocating for workers, women, and families in vulnerable situations. Later, she served at high levels of state government, appointed by the Governor of New York as a Special Counsel and as Director of Immigration Affairs for New York State. She also proudly dedicates her time to uplifting our city's youth, as a Professor of Political Science at the City University of New York (CUNY).

But her proudest accomplishments are right here at home. For her work for the people of Queens providing access to counsel to people in vulnerable situations, and working for youth and immigrant communities, the Queens Courier honored her as a 2017 "Rising Star" and the Queens Tribune awarded her its "Glass Ceiling Award" for being a path-breaking woman serving the Queens community.

Jenifer has always advocated and stood up for working-class Americans throughout her career. Jenifer litigated class action cases on behalf of workers, tenants, and women at Sanford Heisler Sharp LLP, a public interest law firm. She collaborated with the U.S. Department of Justice on several qui tam cases combating corporate fraud and excess. The resulting settlements saved millions in taxpayer dollars. Rajkumar was also part of the legal team of *Velez v. Novartis*, ranked by the United Nations as one of the top 10 cases in the world advancing women's equality. The largest gender discrimination case ever to go to trial, the case took on big pharma on behalf of a class of 5,600 women for their gender pay and pregnancy discrimination claims, resulting in the largest ever monetary awards in the United States in an employment discrimination case.

Rajkumar was also originating counsel on an amicus curiae brief filed in the United States Supreme Court on behalf of NOW, Legal Momentum, the National Women's Law Center, and Equal Rights Advocates in *Mach Mining v. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission*, presenting arguments in favor of equality for women in nontraditional fields of employment such as firefighting, construction and law enforcement.

Rajkumar serves on the Legal Advisory Council of Sanctuary for Families, New York City's leading service provider and advocate for survivors of domestic violence, sex trafficking, and related forms of gender violence. She has spoken on public interest law and policy at Stanford Law School, CUNY Law School and Harvard Law School.

In 2015 and 2016, she was selected to Super Lawyers' New York-Metro Rising Stars List, a recognition given to no more than 2.5% of the lawyers in New York.

The Governor of New York Andrew M. Cuomo appointed Jenifer as the Director of Immigration Affairs & Special Counsel for New York State in the age of Trump. Working out of New York's Department of State and the Governor's Executive Chamber, Jenifer led the Liberty Defense Project, a first-in-the-nation \$31 million-dollar state-led public-private project to assist immigrants in obtaining legal services. Jenifer also represented New York State in litigation before Administrative Law Judges. She served as an ethics officer; handling ethics matters for the State. She was a state-wide surrogate for the Governor on the State's signature policy items. She traveled to the farms of upstate New York from her home in Queens to help New York's communities. Inspired by the people of New York, she is more motivated than ever to dedicate herself to service.

Issues

- Education: Invest more in education
- Housing: Address taxpayer subsidies for luxury developers, expand access to Housing Court, increase tenant protections
- Transportation: Get trains to run on time, expand access to transit for Queens
- Criminal Justice: End cash bail, repeal laws that allow prosecutors an unfair advantage
- Healthcare: Expand urgent care clinics, affordable healthcare for all, address prescription drug prices
- Women's Issues: Mend the gender pay gap

Endorsements

- Congressman Ro Khanna, Co-Chair of Bernie Sanders 2020 Presidential Campaign
- Stonewall Democrats of NYC
- Eleanor's Legacy
- NYC Council Member Ben Kallos
- Citizens Union
- Planned Parenthood of Greater NY
- Alliance of South Asian American Labor – ASAAL



Emily Gallagher (D)

50th Assembly District (Greenpoint, Williamsburg and Fort Green, Kings County):

Seat currently held by Joe Lentol (D)

Occupation: Master's Candidate, Baruch College

Past Professional Experience: Chairwoman, Neighbors Allied for Good Growth; Co-founder, Greenpoint Task Force

Education: B.A. Ithaca College

Biography

I was raised in a middle-class family outside Rochester, New York but it's here in Greenpoint where I've made my home for the past 13 years. I've been a renter, a roommate, a cyclist, a commuter. I've been unemployed, underemployed, and have known too many months where I scrambled to make rent. I've worked in retail, the gig economy, public education and the nonprofit sector. I'm a survivor of sexual violence and harassment. I have friends who have experienced police brutality and friends who have faced their rapists in court and watched them walk free. I've lost loved ones to traffic violence and the opioid crisis.

These experiences don't make me unique. But they're too rarely reflected or shared by our representatives in Albany. That's why I'm running for New York State Assembly.

That's no small thing. Our current Assemblyman has been in office since 1973. There hasn't been a competitive election here in a decade. And I'm only the second new Democratic candidate to run in nearly half a century. There's too much at stake to put our democracy on autopilot. I've lived, struggled, organized, and loved my life in North Brooklyn for more than a decade and I think we deserve a real choice.

Twelve years ago, I began my journey in Brooklyn activism by joining Neighbors Allied for Good Growth and in 2010, I became co-chair of the board. We worked tirelessly for the creation of new parkland, safe streets initiatives like bike lanes and traffic calming, preserving rent stabilized housing and fighting luxury development. Later, I served as Neighbors Allied for Good Growth's representative to the Mobilization Against Displacement.

In 2016, I was approached by members of the New Kings Democrats reform club to run for the position of Female District Leader in the 50th Assembly district. I challenged the machine and narrowly lost by less than 350 votes while winning 53 of 87 election districts.

During my time knocking on doors, I heard from multiple sexual assault survivors who had terrible, retraumatizing experiences with the police who handled their cases. After the election, I founded the Greenpoint Sexual Assault Task Force which organized for a trauma-centered approach to reforming the NYPD's protocol. A dismissed rape case was reopened after GTF protests and another survivor launched a lawsuit against the department. We also advocated to get our police captain replaced and, within a year, he was.

I was inspired by the transformation of the State Senate over the past year. We swept the IDC into the dustbin of history. But it takes more than one functioning chamber in a two-house system. We need to fix the Assembly and fill it with advocates, organizers, fighters and leaders. We don't need people who merely vote for bills, we need people to write them, advocate for them, and make sure they are as explicit and clear as they can be. We need to doggedly build something for the future.

It's going to take drive, fearlessness, and real initiative to prepare our district for all of the things to come. I'm asking you to join me on this journey.'

Issues

- Housing: End subsidies for luxury development, pass vacancy, luxury and pied-a-terre taxes, enforce and expand the Tenant Protection Act of 2019, invest in NYCHA, end Homelessness
- Criminal Justice: Staff 911 dispatch and emergency response with mental health professionals, reduce the police budgets, end the war on drugs, end solitary confinement, decriminalize sex work
- Environment: Strengthen the DEC, expand the CLCPA, update clean water standards, oppose new fossil fuel pipelines
- Transportation: Invest in better service and accessibility, expand fair fares, no more fare hikes, reform DMV testing process
- Voting Rights: Term limits for legislators, reform campaign finance, automatic voter registration
- Education: Fully fund schools, end reliance on standardized testing

Endorsements

- Cynthia Nixon
- The Broad Room
- StreetsPAC
- True Blue NY
- New Kings Democrats
- Brooklyn Young Democrats



Marcela Mitaynes (D)

51st Assembly District (Sunset Park, Red Hook and part of Bay Ridge, Kings

County): *Seat currently held by Felix Ortiz (D)*

Occupation: Tenant Organizer, Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Past Professional Experience: N/A

Education: A.S. CUNY Kingsborough Community College

Biography

Marcela Mitaynes migrated to New York City from Peru as a child with her family and was raised in Sunset Park, Brooklyn. She is now raising her own family in that same vibrant, beautiful community. Marcela was evicted from her rent stabilized apartment of 30 years, and began her life's work of empowering her neighbors to know their rights and find their voices to fight to stay in their homes. Through her work with Neighbors Helping Neighbors, and with tenants throughout New York State, Marcela was instrumental in the passage of the historic Housing Stability and Tenant Protection Act of 2019. This legislation dramatically and comprehensively strengthened the rights of tenants in rent stabilized apartments to defend their homes and communities.

Through this fight, Marcela realized that the housing crisis wasn't much different than "politics-as-usual" the powerful few gatekeeping critical information and decisions from families and communities seeking the stability to make better lives for themselves. She also realized that housing is about so much more than the monthly rent it is a basic human right. It is about living free from landlord harassment in a safe home with dignity. It is about educational access for our children. It is about having the collective power to be bold in protecting our waterfront from increasing climate threats. It is about taking control of the conditions that shape our health and opportunities. And it is most importantly about putting down strong roots and growing resilient communities in the face of mounting extremism.

Issues

- Housing: Fight evictions, stop displacement of people of color, create affordable housing
- Immigration: Make New York ICE-free, increase support for immigrant families – ESL classes, workforce training, legal representation in immigration court
- Environment: Turn Sunset Park waterfront into a hub for green jobs, support the Green New Deal
- Healthcare: Guarantee access to high quality healthcare
- Taxes: Billionaire wealth tax, ultra-millionaire's income tax, tax on yachts and jets, pied-a-terre tax, vacant property tax, eliminate real estate subsidies, corporate landlord tax, 21st Century bank tax, corporate tax reform, CEO pay-gap tax, stock transfer tax, stock buyback tax, carried interest fairness fee, digital advertising tax

Endorsements

- Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
- Working Families Party
- Sunrise Movement
- Senator Julia Salazar
- TenantsPAC
- Indivisible Nation BK
- Women of Color for Progress



Stefani Zinerman (D)

56th Assembly District (Bedford-Stuyvesant and Crown Heights, Kings County): *Seat currently held by Tremaine Wright (D)*

Occupation: Co-Chair, Age Friendly Neighborhood of Bedford-Stuyvesant and Crown Heights

Past Professional Experience: Volunteer, Obama for America; Director of Special Projects, Senator Velmanette Montgomery; Chief of Staff, NYC Council Member Robert Cornegy

Education: B.A. Rochester Institute of Technology

Biography

As a skilled advocate, experienced leader, and public servant, Stefani is a firm believer in the statement, “We, the People.” Her passion and dedication to justice and civic engagement have now led her to become a candidate for the New York State Assembly, representing the 56th District in Brooklyn, NY.

As a child, growing up in an apartment in Gowanus House, Stefani was a part of a village. Her parents raised her to have pride in herself and her community, where families had access to quality preschools, after-schools, and a teen canteen that prepared young people for a world of work. Stefani’s enrichment continued on the weekends, which she would spend with her grandparents in Bedford-Stuyvesant. There, she danced with Roots Dance Theater Ensemble at Bed-Stuy Restoration Corporation. She also attended Uhura Sasa Day Camp, under the leadership of Jitu Weusi. It was there that she learned and adapted to her life, the power of organizing, entrepreneurship, and the principle of Kujichagulia (collective work and responsibility).

This foundation led her to the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT), where she studied business management. After Stefani’s education at RIT, she went onto hold a position in the banking industry, become a partner in a beverage distributorship business and later serve as senior manager for a citywide adult literacy program.

In 2012, Mayor Bloomberg defunded the BEGIN (Begin Education/Employment Gain Independence Now) Program, which provided literacy and on the job training to public assistance recipients. Greatly impacted by the callousness of this decision, Stefani became directly involved with local politics. The defunding of this program robbed low-income recipients of the ability to gain independence and leave public assistance. It was then that she went back to her upbringing and the principle of Kujichagulia and pledged to use her voice to work with a diverse group of citizens to put power back into the hands of the people.

It was at this crossroad of careers that Stefani decided to volunteer for the Obama For America campaign and soon became the neighborhood team leader for Bedford-Stuyvesant. There, she recruited and trained volunteers to conduct phone banks in Brooklyn and Ohio. After President Obama was re-elected, Stefani was tapped to be the campaign manager for her local council member and went on to serve as chief of staff. Five years later, she became the Director of Special Projects and Institutional Stability for State Senator Velmanette Montgomery.

It’s with a long resume of equality activism and a passion for civic engagement that Stefani was a candidate for the New York State Assembly, representing the 56th District in Brooklyn, NY. Stefani is always fighting for the betterment of her community, whether it's serving as campaign manager to her local council member or registering hundreds of citizens to vote.

For nearly a decade, she has demonstrated the skill and commitment to serve this district in a leadership role. Stefani’s education at RIT focused on business management, but when a program geared toward helping low-income recipients was dismantled, she found herself at a crossroads, propelling her into local politics. During her political career, she’s worn many hats including, chief of staff, director of special projects and institutional stability, and Civic Engagement Chair for the NAACP, to name a few.

As the next Assemblymember, she will continue to create opportunities and secure resources.

Issues

- Education: Universal Pre-K, expand CTE programs, close the TAP gap, provide access to child care at community colleges, support SUNY's Global Cannabis Center for Science, Research, and Education and the Offshore Wind Institute
- Healthcare: Expand access to quality healthcare, school-based clinics, reproductive justice
- Housing: Fund homeless assistance grants, tenant-based rental assistance, project-based rental assistance, public housing operating funds and public housing capital grants
- Criminal Justice: Address police brutality, enhance relationships between neighbors and law enforcement

Endorsements

- Senator Velmanette Montgomery
- Senator Kevin Parker
- Senator Brian Benjamin
- Assemblywoman Tremaine Wright
- Assemblywoman Rodneyse Bichotte
- Eleanor's Legacy
- Planned Parenthood
- Brooklyn Young Democrats
- Auxiliary Police Benevolent Association
- SSEU Local 371



Phara Souffrant Forrest (D)

57th Assembly District (Fort Greene, Clinton Hill, Prospect Heights and parts of Crown Heights and Bedford-Stuyvesant, Kings County): *Seat currently held by Walter Mosley (D)*

Occupation: Head Nurse, Health and Hospital Corporation

Past Professional Experience: Staff Nurse, Kings County Health Clinic; School Nurse, NYC Department of Education; Home Health Nurse, Pellacare

Education: B.A. SUNY Geneseo, B.S. CUNY School of Professional Studies, A.A.S. CUNY City College of Technology

Biography

'I am a 31-year-old union nurse and tenant activist. I'm the daughter of Haitian immigrants, a CUNY and SUNY graduate, and a life-long Crown Heights resident. I'm running for New York Assembly to bring the voices of poor and working people to Albany.

I am committed to running this campaign without any corporate or real estate dollars so that I can say without there being a shadow of a doubt: I am running to represent my community.

I became active in the tenant movement out of necessity. Three years ago, I helped my neighbors organize meetings when we were informed that our landlord was going to convert our rent-stabilized apartments to condos. We turned to the Crown Heights Tenant Union for support and guidance, and I realized that there were tenants all over my neighborhood who were fighting back against displacement through collective action. I am now the president of my building's tenant association, and participated in mass civil disobedience in June 2019 as part of the Housing Justice for All campaign — which won some of the strongest tenant protections New York State has ever seen.

I've seen the housing crisis and experienced it firsthand in Crown Heights. I've seen the climate crisis affect my family in Haiti and destroy communities of color — both in the Caribbean and right here in New York. I've witnessed how the healthcare crisis hurts patients, disproportionately women of color, as a nurse at NYC Health + Hospitals. Through my experiences as a tenant leader and a nurse, I have learned that we need to build a mass movement for social, economic, racial, and environmental justice.

'I'm running to continue these struggles alongside the people of District 57. Together we'll make the wealthy pay their fair share and fight for free universal healthcare, quality housing, an end to police brutality, and a livable planet.'

Issues

- Healthcare: Enact safe staffing, fund our hospital system, pass the New York Health Act
- Criminal Justice: Defend the rights of protestors, pass the Safer NY Act, redirect police funds to communities of color, decriminalize sex work
- Environment: Stop construction of all new fossil fuel infrastructure, ensure all green jobs are union jobs
- Housing: Tenants not landlords should democratically control apartment buildings, pass good-cause eviction
- Labor: End at-will employment, extend parental leave, establish mandatory three weeks paid vacation, ensure the right to unionize, follow California's gig economy law, increase minimum wage for tipped workers
- Education: Fully fund public schools, end school to prison pipeline, put a moratorium on new charter schools, pay educators a living wage

- Transportation: Reduce police presence in our transit system, end fines for fare evasion, fund new subway signaling infrastructure

Endorsements

- Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
- Senator Julia Salazar
- Democratic Socialists of America NYC
- New York Communities for Change
- True Blue NY
- NYIC Action
- Our Progressive Future
- New American Leaders Action Fund
- No IDC NY
- TenantsPAC



Michael Tannousis (R)

64th Assembly District (Arrochar, Bay Terrace, Dongan Hills, Great Kills, Midland Beach, New Drop, and South Beach, Richmond County; and part of Bay Ridge, Kings County): *Seat currently held by Nicole Malliotakis (R)*

Occupation: Counsel, New York City Councilmember Joe Borelli

Past Professional Experience: Prosecutor, Staten Island District Attorney's Office; Assistant District Attorney, Bronx, NY; Aide to former New York City Minority Leader James Oddo

Education: B.A. SUNY Binghamton, J.D. Pace Law School

Biography

Michael Tannousis is a lifelong Staten Islander, and the son of Greek immigrants that came to America to seek a better life after being displaced by armed conflict in Cyprus. He attended Monsignor Farrell High School. He earned an undergraduate degree from SUNY Binghamton and his Juris Doctor from Pace Law School.

Mike began his career in public service in 2006 when he was hired as an aide to then-Minority Leader James Oddo. While there, he learned the gold standard in constituent services and helped many residents that came seeking assistance whether it was filling a pothole, getting storm drains cleaned, or fixing an issue with a property tax bill. Mike saw firsthand what government could and should look like when it works for the people it is supposed to serve. During much of this time, Mike was going to law school in addition to working and after becoming a lawyer fulfilled a long-held dream of becoming a prosecutor.

Mike began his time as an Assistant District Attorney in the Bronx DA's office in 2011 where he honed his craft prosecuting misdemeanors and later major offenses. In 2016, Richmond County DA Michael McMahon hired him to work in his office

In his tenure in the Staten Island office, Mike Tannousis successfully prosecuted serious felony cases involving violent crimes and drug sales. Two of his highest profile cases included the conviction of Ricky Dennis of a double-murder in Dongan Hills and the successful re-trial of Michael Sykes for the infamous Ramada Inn murders.

It was the radical policies coming out of Albany that made Mike first think about running to succeed Nicole Malliotakis in the 64th Assembly District (East Shore/Bay Ridge). Making prosecutions harder to achieve, giving driver's licenses to illegal aliens, and the general anti-business posture, make him realize he could take his mission of public service from the courtrooms in St. George to the Legislature in Albany.

Issues

- Public Safety: Repeal bail reform
- Economy: Reopen businesses

Endorsements

- NYS PBA
- Port Authority PBA
- Detectives Union



Chantel Jackson (D)

79th Assembly District (Concourse Village, Morrisania, Melrose, Belmont, Claremont and East Tremont, Bronx County): *Seat currently held by Michael Blake (D)*

Occupation: Social Worker, Academy for Careers in Television and Film

Past Professional Experience: Adjunct Professor, College of New Rochelle; Assistant Director, The Harlem Center for Education; College Advisor; Independent Consultant

Education: M.A. Adelphi University, B.A. CUNY City College

Biography

Chantel Jackson is a native New Yorker. Child of an immigrant mother from Belize, and an American born father, Chantel proudly claims, “Soy de Belice,” while giving honor to her African ancestors. Chantel is also a dedicated member of her community, deeply connected and engaging in work which is selfless and life-changing. She is a proud UFT member and social worker at a NYC public high school, college professor and published author.

Becoming a teen mother is never an easy hurdle to overcome, but she embraced the difficulty and managed to not only survive but to thrive. After Chantel graduated from The City College of New York with a bachelor’s degree in social science, she took action to support her adopted community, the Bronx, by serving as the youngest board member at her cooperative and organizing multiple voter registration drives. As a college advisor for low-income first-generation high school students, she has helped thousands of students get into college and receive financial aid. It was at this time, after becoming a mother, a college graduate, and a community leader that Chantel understood what spirited her passions; empowering people. She received a master’s degree in social work from Adelphi University, received her license and assists high school students in their holistic wellness. Chantel was never one to back down from a challenge, and has embraced the hardships of these students’ mental, physical and spiritual health whilst employed as a professor at The College of New Rochelle.

Chantel believes that her W.H.E.N. (Wellness, Housing, Education, Now!) mission, will genuinely and totally transform her district into an even more healthy and wealthy community. Of the 62 counties in New York State, the Bronx holds the title as the unhealthiest. Chantel wants to reduce high rates of diabetes, obesity, heart disease and asthma by addressing the environmental factors that are the causes for these issues. She wants to properly fund mental health services and increase insurance for uninsured and underinsured people. When it comes to housing, she wants to continue creating affordable housing, lower evictions and increase home ownership. Chantel wants to make sure the neediest school districts receive the funding owed to them by New York State. She wants to increase education in the RBCs; Real Estate, Business, Credit & Stocks.

Issues

- Healthcare: Address environmental factors leading to health issues, fund mental health services, increase access to insurance
- Housing: Create affordable housing, lower evictions and increase home ownership
- Education: Fund the neediest schools, increase TAP grants, increase education in real estate, business, credit and stocks

Endorsements

- Assemblyman Michael Blake
- Senator Luis Sepulveda

- Senator Brian Benjamin
- DC37
- NYSUT
- UFT
- Local 372



Amanda Septimo (D)

84th Assembly District (Mott Haven, Port Morris, Melrose, The Hub, Longwood, Concourse and Hunts Point, Bronx County): *Seat currently held by Carmen Arroyo (D)*

Occupation: Associate Director, The Council of School Supervisors and Administrators

Past Professional Experience: District Director, Congressman Jose Serrano; Community Liaison, Congressman Jose Serrano

Education: B.A. Vanderbilt University

Biography

Amanda Septimo shows what happens when we invest in our youth, and she wants to ensure every Bronx resident has the same opportunities. Amanda has been a South Bronx community activist and public servant her entire life. As a teenager, she joined the Point Community Development Corporation's teen activist program, A.C.T.I.O.N., where she learned the power of community activism. Since those early years, Amanda has played an integral role in preventing a jail from being built in Oak Point, extending six bus service to more Bronx residents, and providing local youth a floating pool in Barretto Park.

After receiving a full-tuition scholarship to Vanderbilt University and doing community-based work with the Legal Aid Society and Metro Public Defenders of Nashville, Amanda returned to the South Bronx and dedicated herself to work that would improve the lives of people living there.

As the District Director of Congressman Serrano's office, Amanda watched as policies failed her community, day in and day out. Today, she continues to help her neighbors' access social services and navigate the complexities of healthcare and housing. Witnessing her neighbors struggle to receive basic government benefits has driven home for Amanda that our current representation is absent from the community. And absent leadership is destructive leadership. When our elected representatives don't advocate for us, we lose millions of dollars for public housing and our schools, and our community suffers.

We all deserve representation that stands up for the needs of our community. Amanda Septimo is fighting to make sure the Bronx finally has the representation it deserves.

Issues

- Transportation: Tax Wall Street to fund a free MTA
- Education: Establish a State supported adopt-a-school program, guarantee access to after-school or sports programs for all students aged 10-18
- Affordable Housing: Hold landlords accountable, change the Area Median Income formula
- Gun Safety: Create no questions asked gun drop-off centers, violence interruption programs and alternatives to incarceration

Endorsements

- Working Families Party
- LiUNA! NY
- Citizen Action
- 1199SEIU



Kenneth Burgos (D)

85th Assembly District (Soundview, Clason Point, Longwood and Hunts Point, Bronx County): *Seat previously held by Marcos Crespo (D)*

Occupation: Budget Director, New York City Council

Past Professional Experience: Summer Associate, New York City Council; Deputy Chief of Staff, New York City Council

Education: B.A. SUNY Albany

Biography

Kenny was born in the Bronx, New York on June 1, 1994 and is a brother to three sisters. Kenny was raised by a single mother and is a product of public schools, aspects which have shaped his viewpoints. A lifelong Bronxite and progressive, he understands the concerns of those residing in the district he intends to serve.

As a student at the University at Albany, Kenny was exposed to the impacts of state government in everyday life. While attending school in the State's capital, he closely monitored policy issues and government action. He was instantly inspired.

Kenny's career in public service began as a summer associate for the New York City Council. He worked alongside financial analysts in various sectors, ranging from law and childcare to health and more. This opportunity catapulted him to his next role as Deputy Chief of Staff at the NYC Council. A focused and determined young professional, Kenny was promoted to Budget Director at the NYC Council just two years later, a role in which he is presently responsible for appropriating over \$5 million in capital funds all the while juggling an array of responsibilities.

He has worked on injecting over \$10 million dollars in the past several years to local schools for upgrades ranging from library upgrades, playground renovations, and state-of-the-art tech labs.

Kenny has also collaborated with dozens of NYC agencies and non-profit organizations to formulate partnerships aimed at improving community welfare. He has worked first hand on free immigration services, domestic violence aid, and programs tackling food insecurity.

Kenny is committed to serving as a voice for the most vulnerable populations while pushing to inspire a generation's desire for meaningful change, because the Bronx is home.

Issues

- **Housing:** Repeal vacancy deregulation, stop vacancy bonuses, end Major Capital Improvements (MCIs)
- **Environment:** Increase investment into sustainability projects, fight for environmental justice and strengthen resiliency measures
- **Criminal Justice:** Pass the Police Statistics and Transparency Act, end solitary confinement
- **Economy:** Fight wealth inequality, pass the Mom & Pop Rent Increase Exemption Program, secure a living wage, increase access to financial services for people of color

Endorsements

- 32BJ
- Stonewall Democrats of NYC
- Planned Parenthood
- 1199 SEIU
- CWA
- NYC Action



Chris Burdick (D)

93rd Assembly District (Bedford, Harrison, Lewisboro, Mount Kisco, New Castle, North Castle, North Salem, Pound Ridge and White Plains, Westchester County):

Seat currently held by David Buchwald (D)

Occupation: Town Supervisor, Town of Bedford

Past Professional Experience: Member, Town Board Bedford; Vice Chairman, Sustainable Westchester; Chief Underwriting Counsel, Stewart Title Insurance Company of New York

Education: B.A. University of California at Berkeley, M.A. Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, J.D. Seton Hall Law School

Biography

Democrat Chris Burdick currently serves as full-time Supervisor of the Town of Bedford, governing a town of 17,500 residents, managing 125 town employees and an annual budget of \$41 million. Previously a member of the town board, he became Bedford's first Democratic supervisor in 30 years after a hard-fought election in 2013. He has been so effective he has won re-election three times – unopposed the last two.

Working with the Bedford Town Board, Chris has delivered tremendous progress on critical issues including the climate crisis, immigration, housing, and clean water infrastructure.

A champion for environmental issues, Chris is Vice Chairman and former Co-Chair of Sustainable Westchester, where he was instrumental in launching the first community aggregation program in New York State. He is on the Executive Committee of the East of Hudson Watershed Corporation; Vice President of the Northern Westchester Watershed Committee; and chairs the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors of the Energy Improvement Corporation.

Outside of his environmental work, Chris serves as a Director of the Bedford Village Lion's Club; Vice President of the Mount Kisco Concert Association; Co-Chairman of the Woodlands Commission of St. Matthew's Church; and Emeritus Member of the Board of Directors of Katonah Museum of Art.

Chris earned his B.A. in economics and history from the University of California at Berkeley; his M.A. in international studies from the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies; and his J.D. from Seton Hall Law School. He and his wife Illyria have been married for 34 years. They have three adult children and one adorable baby granddaughter.

Before becoming town supervisor, Chris served as an attorney at Stewart Title Insurance Company of New York, where he was Chief Underwriting Counsel.

Issues

- Infrastructure: Work with DOT on I-684/84 corridor study
- Healthcare: Work for universal coverage, defend reproductive rights, support funding for Planned Parenthood
- Gun Safety: Support tougher gun safety and gun trafficking laws
- Environment: Expand offshore wind, solar farms, energy storage, increase access to community solar, electric vehicle fleets in government and electric cars for consumers
- Opioid Crisis: Support additional investments in treatment programs and prevention education

Endorsements

- Senator Pete Harckham
- Working Families Party
- NY League of Conservation Voters
- Moms Demand Action
- Bedford, Mount Kisco, North Castle and Pound Ridge Democratic Committees



Michael Lawler (R)

97th Assembly District (Airmont, Orangetown, Hillburn, Hillcrest, New Square, Monsey, Montebello, Pearl River, Nyack, Spring Valley, South Nyack, Suffern, part of Ramapo, Rockland County): *Seat currently held by Ellen Jaffee (D)*

Occupation: Town Supervisor, Town of Orangetown

Past Professional Experience: Aide to Orangetown Supervisor Teresa Kenny; Westchester Advisor, County Executive Rob Astorino; Executive Director of the New York State Republican Party

Education: B.A. Manhattan College

Biography

Mike Lawler is a lifelong Rockland County resident and graduate of Suffern High School. In 2009, Mike earned a degree in business administration, with a double major in accounting and finance, from Manhattan College, where he was named the valedictorian of his graduating class.

Mike currently serves as Deputy Town Supervisor of Orangetown under Supervisor Teresa Kenny and previously worked in the Westchester County Executive's Office as an advisor to Rob Astorino, where he dealt with issues ranging from the county budget to public policy and community outreach initiatives. In addition, Mike previously served as Executive Director of the State Republican Party, helping elect candidates to federal, state, and local office.

Mike is also a successful small businessman who founded his own government affairs and public relations firm.

Mike and his wife Doina live in Pearl River, NY.

Issues

- Economy: Reduce tax burdens
- Education: Fix the school-aid formula, increase funding, improve standards
- Public Safety: Repeal bail reform
- Ethics: Support statewide term limits

Endorsements

- Labors Local 754
- IBEW Local 363
- Rockland County PBA
- NYC PBA
- MTA PBA
- Port Authority PBA
- Rockland County Building and Construction Trades Council
- NYS Association of PBA's
- Court Officers Association



Matt Simpson (R)

114th Assembly District (Essex and Warren Counties, parts of Saratoga and Washington Counties): *Seat currently held by Dan Stec (R)*

Occupation: Town Supervisor, Town of Horicon; Committee Chair of Public Works; Committee Chair of Personnel; and Committee Vice Chair of Public Safety, Warren County; President of the Adirondack Association of Towns & Villages

Past Professional Experience: Town Board Member, Horicon; Chair, Warren and Washington County IDA; Small Business Owner

Biography

Matt Simpson was first elected to public office in 2011 for a seat on the Town Board of Horicon, New York before being elected as town supervisor in 2013 and dutifully serves in this role to this day.

During his time as Town Supervisor of Horicon, Matt created budgets that stayed under the tax cap, lowered taxes, and utilized shared services with neighboring municipalities without diminishing the level of service the tax payers have come to expect. In this role, he also works double duty with expanded responsibilities beyond the borders of Horicon to the entirety of Warren County on the County Board of Supervisors. Here, Matt served as Committee Chair of Public Works (DPW, Parks, Recreation & Railroad, Warren County Sewer, Solid Waste & Recycling) on the Warren County Board of Supervisors for four years and currently serves as Committee Chair of Personnel and Committee Vice Chair of Public Safety. He has previously served as Committee Vice Chair of Environmental Concerns, Finance, Extension Services, and Past Committee Chair of Health, Human & Social Services. Matt was appointed to the Warren and Washington County IDA in 2015 and served as Chair from 2018-2019, overseeing many projects to advance the economic viability of the area.

Matt's scope of experience does not stop at the town or county level, either. Matt volunteers more of his time, currently serving as President of the Adirondack Association of Town and Villages, being elected by his peers in 2018. The AATV represents over 101 towns and villages throughout the Adirondack Park and in his role as President, Matt works on behalf of the citizens who live inside the Blue Line to collaborate with stakeholders in the New York State Assembly and Senate as well as numerous environmental organizations such as the Adirondack Counsel to advocate for the residents inside the Blue Line to advance development and access of broadband and cellular service, infrastructure needs, as well as business and resident concerns. His current work includes collaborating with ORDA, the Assembly, Senate, and Governor's office and Adirondack environmental groups for the advancement of three State Constitutional Amendments added to the ballot on November 3rd.

Prior to public service, Matt was a small business owner of over 30 years in the construction trades industry. He knows the value of having to roll up your sleeves and working until a job is done. Over the span of three decades, Matt also learned first-hand what goes into creating jobs, making payroll, and succeeding in the face of the challenges with growing a business in the North Country.

After growing up in Warren County, Matt spent his early adult life living in Glens Falls before purchasing his first home with his wife Judy, in Queensbury where they would live until 2007 when they relocated to Brant Lake in Horicon, New York. He and Judy have been married for over 25 years and have two children.

Issues

- Broadband: Modernize cellular and broadband infrastructure
- Public Safety: Repeal bail reform, protect funding for police
- Economy: Create a Division of Regulatory Review and Economic Growth, require NYS agencies to include a small business liaison

Endorsements

- NYS Federation of Republican Women
- Governor George Pataki
- NYLCV
- UnShackle Upstate
- The Business Council



Joe Angelino (R)

122nd Assembly District (Town of Binghamton and Parts of Broome, Chenango, Delaware, and Otsego Counties): *Seat currently held by Clifford Crouch (R)*

Occupation: Retired Law Enforcement

Past Professional Experience: Police and Fire Chief, Norwich, NY; Marine Corps

Biography

A lifelong resident of Central New York, Joe Angelino is the product of parents from the Greatest Generation. From a young age, Joe's parents taught him the values of honesty, hard work, and compassion for others. All of these values made Joe an exceptional police officer, a police sergeant, and ultimately the police chief who led the Norwich Police for nearly 20 years.

During a leave of absence from the Norwich Police, Joe enlisted in the United States Marine Corps in 1985. It was in the Marines that Joe's natural leadership abilities catapulted him upward through the ranks. A three-time combat veteran over two wars, Joe served as a tank commander in Desert Storm and an infantry 1st Sgt. during the Iraq invasion in 2003 and again in 2005 when he received two Purple Heart medals. Joe retired from the Marine reserves as a Sergeant Major, the highest enlisted rank, in 2008.

While serving as the Norwich Police Chief, Joe was tapped to simultaneously act as the City's fire chief, thus responsible for over half of the city's budget and personnel.

Joe married Kendall Saber, a well-known nurse practitioner from Sherburne, New York. Together they formed a team known for helping, caring and serving others. It is this commitment to service and making things better that drives Joe to run for the Assembly.

Issues

- Economy: Support agriculture, lower taxes

Endorsements

- Senator Fred Akshar
- NFIB
- NYS PBA
- NYS Troopers PBA



Anna Kelles (D)

125th Assembly District (Tompkins County and Cortlandville, Virgil, Harford and Lapeer, Cortland County): *Seat currently held by Barbara Lifton (D)*

Occupation: Tompkins County Legislator; Owner, Kelles Nutrition and Wellness

Past Professional Experience: Lecturer, Cornell University; Program Director, The Green Resource Hub; Project Manager, American Nutrition Association

Education: B.A. Binghamton University, Ph.D. UNC Chapel Hill

Biography

Anna grew up on a dirt road outside of Trumansburg, on the west side of Cayuga Lake where her playground was the forest and her work was the farm up the road. Early on, she was taught to value every person, whether it was a hungry neighbor or refugees from Tibet. Anna learned early what it means to love the place where you live – and that you have to work hard every day to make it better, for everyone in the community.

Anna studied biology and environmental studies at Binghamton University, and after years working in South America, earned a Ph.D. in nutritional epidemiology from UNC Chapel Hill. As an educator, an environmental non-profit director, a human rights activist and now a Tompkins County legislator, she has used her public health training to advocate for our community.

Anna has effectively championed many public health issues including: access to affordable housing in walkable communities, immigrants' rights, expanded use of alternatives to incarceration, and restricting youth access to tobacco.

Anna also authored and passed environmental legislation such as an initiative to block state permitting of a proposed trash incinerator on the shore of Cayuga Lake and pushed for a federal carbon fee and dividend.

Other issues she has successfully championed include fighting against nightly fees for people staying in homeless shelters and eliminating the sale of tobacco products to youth under the age of 21 throughout Tompkins County.

The issues that Anna has been championing for years are issues that must be fought and won at the state and federal levels. Anna Kelles is ready, willing, and able to be your voice at those decision-making tables and to take her experience and our community's values and priorities to Albany.

Issues

- Healthcare: Pass the New York Health Act
- Criminal Justice: Defund the police, pass Safe and Supportive Schools bill, legalize marijuana
- Economy: Collect the stock transfer tax, support the NY Forward Loan Fund, support universal childcare
- Environment: Support programs to emphasize weatherization, no new natural gas infrastructure, invest in electric public transit
- Housing: Encourage more housing construction, prioritize transportation-efficient locations, increase funding for supportive housing for populations with special needs

Endorsements

- NYC Public Advocate Jumaane Williams
- Zephyr Teachout
- Cynthia Nixon
- Working Families Party
- Cornell Progressives
- Sunrise Movement
- Eleanor's Legacy
- 1199 SEIU
- Local 3
- Local 267



John Lemondes (R)

126th Assembly District (Camillus, Homer, LaFayette, Marathon, and Skaneateles, Onondaga County): *Seat currently held by Gary Finch (R)*

Occupation: Principal Program Manager, Saab Defense and Security

Past Professional Experience: U.S. Army

Education: B.S Penn State, M.A. Syracuse University, MBA Syracuse University

Biography

After graduating from Liverpool High, John studied agriculture at Penn State University, and was commissioned in the U.S. Army. Over a nearly 27-year career serving us in the Army, John deployed overseas numerous times including to Iraq and Afghanistan and retired in 2014 as a Colonel.

Returning home, John, Martha and family began farming 488 acres in LaFayette. He has turned longtime fallow, overgrown land to fertile productivity.

While working as a defense and national security consultant the past few years, the farm continued to grow, and Ellys Acres now hosts a growing flock of sheep and lambs, hay and forage, and John is looking at his 3,000 maple tree sugar bush with an eye to maple syrup production.

John is a leader in the farming community as well - - he is President of the Farmer Veteran Coalition of New York State, and is active nationally with the American Sheep Industry Association. He was also appointed to the Board of Directors of the Onondaga County Soil & Water Conservation District by the county executive, and is a member of NYS Farm Bureau.

Recently, John was asked by local community leaders to run for the Assembly seat currently held by retiring Assemblyman Gary Finch. He was the endorsed Republican, Conservative and Independence party candidate.

Issues

- Economy: Oppose tax increases, freeze & reduce spending, stop over-regulation and business-killing taxes
- Individual Rights: Protect the second amendment
- Pro-Life: Oppose state funding of abortion
- Environment: Protect clean water and natural resources

Endorsements

- Assemblyman Gary Finch



Jeff Gallahan (R)

131th Assembly District (Canandaigua and part of Ontario County; Romulus, Seneca Falls, and part of Seneca County): *Seat currently held by Brian Kolb (R)*

Occupation: Town Supervisor, Town of Manchester; Small Business Owner

Past Professional Experience: Business Owner

Biography

'My high school sweetheart and wife of 42 years, Lynn, and I are lifelong Ontario County residents. We raised our two kids in local schools and worked to teach them the lessons that we were taught. If you work hard, play by the rules, and always do your best, you should be able to achieve your American Dream.

Out of school I began my trade as a journeyman machinist at General Railway Signal. Over the years, I took on various leadership and management roles and worked my way into management roles overseeing teams of 50+ across the East Coast. I know what it means to work hard, balance a checkbook and do a payroll. Those skills are in short supply in Albany, which is one of the reasons I am running.'

Issues

- Public Safety: Repeal bail reform, opposes defunding police
- Economy: Reduce income taxes for existing businesses and farms, grow jobs

Endorsements

- MIPAC
- AFSCME
- NYS Professional Firefighters
- NYS State Police Investigators
- NFIB



Josh Jensen (R)

134th Assembly District (Hilton, Greece, Spencerport, Monroe County): *Seat currently held by Peter Lawrence (R)*

Occupation: Town Councilmember, Town of Greece

Past Professional Experience: Director of Communications and Director of Community Affairs and Public Policy, Senator Joseph Robach

Education: B.A. Niagara University

Biography

Josh Jensen currently serves as a Town of Greece councilman representing the residents of the 3rd Ward. He has spent his career serving his community through public service. He has a record of hard work ensuring that our families and neighbors have an affordable and safe town that provides the services they need. Josh has proudly supported town budgets that lowered the tax rate while keeping a cap on spending, increased resources for police and public safety, and prioritized measures to improve and maintain vital infrastructure.

Previously, Josh served in various capacities for New York State Senator Joseph E. Robach, including as director of communications and director of community affairs and public policy, as well as a volunteer with the Hilton Education Foundation and Rochester area chapter of the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation. Jensen is a lifelong resident of the Town of Greece and graduate of Hilton High School and Niagara University. He currently lives in Greece with his wife, Casey and children, Margot and Brendan.

Issues

- Economy: Keep taxes low, cap spending, property tax relief, maintain vital infrastructure
- Public Safety: Increase resources for police

Endorsements

- NYSUT
- NYS Investigators Association
- NFIB
- Unshackle Upstate
- Rochester Police Department
- The Committee for a Strong Economy



Jen Lunsford (D)

135th Assembly District (East Rochester, Fairport, Webster, Monroe County): *Seat currently held by Mark Johns (R)*

Occupation: Lawyer, Segar & Sciortino

Past Professional Experience: Mediator, Rochester Teen Court; Paralegal, Sullivan & Cromwell

Education: B.A. Hartwick, J.D. Boston University

Biography

Jen is a 38-year-old resident of Perinton, NY. She moved to Rochester in 2009 with her husband, Scott Hildebrandt, a graduate of Pittsford-Sutherland High School. Jen was raised by a working mom and a stay at home dad, which was certainly not the norm on Long Island in the 1980s. Jen's mom worked first as a secretary and later as a sales manager at a lamp and lighting manufacturer. Her father, a Vietnam Vet and former NYPD Officer, returned to the workforce as a retail manager once Jen started public school.

'My mom would get up at 5:00 in the morning, drive 25 miles to her job, work all day, come home at 5:00 and make dinner every night. She made real mashed potatoes from scratch at least three nights per week! As a working mom myself I am so grateful to her for showing me how to be an attentive and present mother while juggling so many other stresses and responsibilities. That is why I am so passionate about helping working parents find ways to balance their home lives with their work lives, financially, practically and emotionally.'

Jen graduated from Patchogue-Medford High School and then went on to major in political science and philosophy at Hartwick College in Oneonta, New York, where she graduated with honors. After college she moved to Los Angeles where she worked as a paralegal at the international law firm Sullivan & Cromwell where she had the good fortune to work on a major wrongful conviction case. Jen returned to the east coast to attend law school at Boston University where she concentrated in healthcare law. While in law school, Jen won the Dean's Award for Constitutional Law and was appointed as an editor to the American Journal of Law and Medicine.

Following law school Jen settled in Rochester to start her family and legal career. Soon after she was admitted to practice law, Jen began volunteering in the community with the Rochester Teen Court acting as a mediator for cases involving first time, nonviolent teen offenders. A staunch defender of those most vulnerable in our community, Jen has continued to dedicate her time to helping lift up her neighbors and make Rochester a better place to live. She was a regular volunteer at the Center for Youth's Crisis Nursery where she cared for children whose parents were undergoing great hardship such as escaping domestic violence or recovering from unexpected illness. She has volunteered her time with many local charities including the Young Entrepreneurs Academy, Volunteer Legal Services Project, Empire Justice Center and the American Lung Association.

'Shortly after moving to Rochester my father passed away from complications post-surgery. He had been disabled for several years following a heart attack which left him severely weakened. A lifelong asthma sufferer, like myself, my dad later developed COPD which ultimately contributed to his death at age 63. That is why I sought out the American Lung Association. I needed to do something meaningful with my time to help me cope with my father's untimely death and working for a group that advocates for people like us, for whom clean air and access to quality pulmonary healthcare is so important, went a long way towards helping me heal.'

Jen has dedicated her legal career to working with injured and disabled people, like her father. She is currently an attorney at Segar & Sciortino where she advocates for people at some of the most difficult times in their lives. She also serves as the Co-Chair of Lawyers for Good Government, a progressive legal activist group, and sits on the

board of the Anthony Poselovich Memorial Foundation, which helps families of young children diagnosed with cancer.

'In my field I work directly with people from all walks of life: old and young, men and women, gay and straight. I work with immigrants and refugees; construction workers, nurses, waitresses, doctors, truck drivers and teachers; people from every race, every major religion. I read their medical records and tax returns. I talk to them-- really talk to them-- about their lives, their families, their dreams and their hardships. Doing a job like mine really blurs the lines between liberal and conservative. It is so easy to just stick a label on someone and write them off, but when you take the time to get to know people one to one you see that we are far more alike than we are different.'

Issues

- Economy: Invest in infrastructure to help put people to work in their communities, create 0% interest loans for small businesses to help with debt associated with COVID-19
- Environment: Invest in projects that will reduce carbon emissions, address climate change
- Taxes: Place a 2% tax on wealth above \$1 billion, create an ultra-millionaire tax, impose a pied-a-terre tax, restore sales tax on yachts and private jets
- Education: Fully fund schools
- Healthcare: Create a healthcare system based on patients and outcomes

Endorsements

- Senator Chuck Schumer
- Senator Kirsten Gillibrand
- U.S. Congressman Joe Morelle
- NYSUT
- Planned Parenthood
- NYS AFL-CIO
- IronWorkers Local 33
- National Association of Social Workers-NY
- CWA
- NYLCV
- Vote Mama
- New Yorkers Against Gun Violence



Sarah Clark (D)

136th Assembly District (Parts of Rochester and Irondequoit, Monroe County): *Seat previously held by Jamie Romeo (D)*

Occupation: Deputy State Director, U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand

Past Professional Experience: Office of U.S. Senator Hillary Clinton

Education: B.A. SUNY Stony Brook

Biography

'I am a proud graduate of East High School, and attended college at SUNY Stony Brook. During college, I interned at City Hall for then Mayor Bill Johnson. That opportunity allowed me to see how government impacts communities, sparked my dedication to public service, and I have been doing it ever since. For the last two decades, I have worked for the United States Senate; first, for Senator Hillary Clinton; and then, for Senator Kirsten Gillibrand. In the Senate, we have focused on issues that affect communities everyday like affordable healthcare, the high cost of prescription drugs, college affordability, a living wage for all, and protecting our seniors from fraud, while also working on our national priorities to reform the justice system, combat climate change and ensure clean air and water for all.

Through this work, I have had the privilege of making countless connections with so many organizations, activists, community members, companies, small businesses, elected officials, labor groups, schools, children, parents, and neighbors. I have learned firsthand we have amazing people in this community, and if we all work together, we can accomplish so much.

Today I live in the Maplewood neighborhood in Rochester with my husband John and our three children, Jack, Sean, and Grace. The values instilled in me from my parents, my family and my career taught me to work hard, listen often and never be afraid to speak up for what is right.'

Issues

- Healthcare: Pass the New York Health Act
- Environment: Expedite green shovel-ready projects, invest in green jobs and clean energy
- Housing: Ensure vulnerable populations have access to affordable housing
- Women's Issues: Expand reproductive rights, maternal healthcare, paid family leave, affordable childcare, anti-sexual harassment laws

Endorsements

- ROCITIZEN
- Eleanor's Legacy
- Citizen Action!
- Vote Mama
- Planned Parenthood
- Working Families Party
- National Institute for Reproductive Health



Demond Meeks (D)

137th Assembly District (Part of Rochester and Town of Gates, Monroe County):

Seat previously held by David Gantt (D)

Occupation: Administrative Organizer, 1199SEIU

Past Professional Experience: Member, Rochester Chapter of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists; Member, Parent Leadership Training Institute Civic Design Team

Education: B.A. SUNY Brockport, A.A MCC

Biography

Demond Meeks is a Native of Rochester, New York. Demond and his wife Cratrina raised their children in the 19th Ward. Demond and his family worship at Aeon Missionary Baptist Church. Demond's educational background includes an A.A from MCC and a B.A. from SUNY Brockport. He has received additional labor related training and certifications from Cornell University.

As a servant leader in the Rochester community, Demond has been an advocate for quality education, fair wages, workers' rights and social justice. As an administrative organizer with 1199SEIU, Demond represents nearly 800 healthcare sector employees, in which he takes on an array of tasks inclusive of bargaining contracts. Demond has mobilized workers around workplace issues, such as improved wages, benefits, as well as dignity and respect. Shortly after achieving employment with 1199SEIU in November 2010, he became an active member of the Rochester Chapter of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists.

Demond has been an active member of the Parent Leadership Training Institute Civic Design Team since its induction in 2013, they're committed to teaching parents how to become practiced change agents for the next generation to improve the lifelong health, safety, and learning of children. Demond is an active member of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Incorporated. He was initiated into the brotherhood in the spring of 2010. Demond currently assists his fellow fraternal brothers with "Project Stride," a youth mentorship program at School #4 as well as mentorship at the Boys & Girls Club of Rochester.

With the assistance of his family, Demond commits to braving the elements on Rochester "Cold Blue" weather days and feeding those in need of a hot meal. As a formal member of the Regional and Statewide Coordinating Committee of the Poor People's Campaign, Demond worked with groups such as Metro Justice and the Social Welfare Action Alliance (SWAA) building coalitions as part of "A National Call for Moral Revival."

Driven by his passion for people, Demond holds dear to heart "The King will reply, Truly I tell you, whatever you did for the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me (Matt. 25:40). As a vested member of the Rochester community, Demond is an advocate for social justice and the empowerment of youth. Demond's good works have been recognized by the community at large. In 2017 he was awarded the Black Men Achieve Awards "Civil & Human Rights and Brother of the Year" awards. In 2018 he was awarded the Frederick Douglass Award from the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists. In 2019 Demond was awarded the "Civil & Human Rights Activist of the Year." Demond was also awarded the Dr. Walter Cooper Community Service Award by the Rochester Black Bar Association as well as the "Superior Community Service Award" from the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Incorporated.

Demond is running for office in order to improve the standard and quality of living for all Rochestarians. He is committed to educating, organizing, and mobilizing people around community issues. We cannot continue the practice of going to Albany, seeing bills passed to the benefit of New York City and not the Rochester community. We must meet with our communities and take into consideration their views on the issues in which we the representative will vote on.

Issues

- Education: Fully fund public schools
- Healthcare: Expand access to equitable and affordable healthcare
- Economy: Support living wages

Endorsements

- 1199 SEIU
- AFSCME Council 66
- Citizen Action
- NYSUT



William Conrad (D)

140th Assembly District (Tonawanda, Erie County and North Tonawanda, Niagara County): *Seat currently held by Robin Schimminger (D)*

Occupation: Social Studies Teacher, Kenmore Tonawanda UFSD; Member, Tonawanda Town Board

Past Professional Experience: Athletic Coach

Education: B.A. SUNY Fredonia, M.A. SUNY Buffalo

Biography

'My name is Bill Conrad and I am the endorsed Democratic candidate for the 140th Assembly seat. As lifelong residents of the Town of Tonawanda, my wife and I could not think of a better place to raise our family. I have been active in our community throughout my life and I currently have had the honor of serving on the Town of Tonawanda Town Board for the past four years.

My vision for serving is based on my core values and commitment to building strong communities through sustainability, innovation, and education. As a social studies teacher and coach for the past twenty years, I have firsthand knowledge of our educational system and have engaged on a daily basis with our most precious asset: our children. They deserve a strong educational system that is reflexive and responsive.

The Town of Tonawanda was faced with many challenges in the past four years. As a team, we successfully navigated the closure of our biggest tax payer: the NRG Huntley plant. We helped to build a coalition of government, community activists, business and labor. Together, we fought for a state mitigation fund and wrote a plan for our future. As one of the facilitators for this plan, we rethought what the Tonawandas' could become through innovation and civic engagement.

Over the past four years, we have fought for the closure of polluters and worked with companies to develop and create good paying jobs. As leader, I led our team to further our commitment to sustainability by achieving NYSERDA's clean energy community designation and running a solarize campaign to help educate residents of not only the Town of Tonawanda but our neighbors as well. We have taken a landfill and partnered with a private solar company to create a "bright-field" by placing solar panels on its surface and generating low cost, clean energy.

I believe that my core values and vision for our community, along with your support would make me a successful candidate to be our voice in the NYS Assembly.'

Issues

- Economic Development: Position Erie and Niagara communities to be centers of sustainable domestic manufacturing and trade
- Education: Strengthen career pipelines through local workforce network
- Placemaking: Create access to our waterways and connect recreation and tourism attractions to regional initiatives

Endorsements

- Assemblyman Robin Schimminger
- AFL-CIO
- CWA
- NYSUT
- 1199SEIU



Jonathan Rivera (D)

149th Assembly District (Grand Island and part of Buffalo, Erie County): *Seat currently held by Sean Ryan (D)*

Occupation: Special Assistant to Commissioner of Public Works, Erie County

Past Professional Experience: Community Affairs, Congressman Brian Higgins; Licensed Sales Professional, HSBC Bank; Liaison to the County Legislature, Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz

Education: B.A. Buffalo State College

Biography

Jon Rivera is a life-long resident of Buffalo's West Side, where he resides with his wife, Stephanie, and their young daughter, Ana. Growing up as the son of a police officer and teacher aide, his family demonstrated the value and honor of serving the community.

Jon is a proud graduate of the Buffalo public schools, and went on to earn his bachelor's degree from Buffalo State College in business administration. After graduating, Jon began his own public service career in the office of Congressman Brian Higgins during his first term in office, where he represented Congressman Higgins in the community, and advocated for constituent needs in Washington.

Jon then turned his career to the private sector, where he worked for HSBC Bank. There, he quickly moved from customer service to branch manager and Licensed Sales Professional (LSP) by the time he was 23. In this role, he managed multiple branches, including the one in his home neighborhood of Grant & Ferry on Buffalo's Westside.

After growing a career in banking, Jon sought a return to public service and accepted a position in the office of the Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz as the liaison to the County Legislature. After a few years, Jon was promoted the Special Assistant to the Commissioner of Public Works of Erie County, where he currently serves.

As a volunteer, Jon has been an active member of the community, serving as the board chair of Open Buffalo, a board member of the Massachusetts Avenue Project and Hispanics United of Buffalo, as well as Chair of the Erie County Commission of New Americans.

Issues

- Individual Rights: Build more affordable housing, welcome immigrants and refugees, legalize marijuana, fight for women's rights
- Economy: Defend unions, invest in MWBEs, free college tuition for all
- Environment: Put an end to sewage discharges that contaminate shorelines and communities, invest in renewable energy
- Transportation: Ensure NFTA can best serve the community, work to make neighborhoods walkable

Endorsements

- Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz
- Assemblyman Sean Ryan
- Assemblywoman Karen McMahon
- Assemblywoman Monica Wallace

- Erie County Democratic Committee
- Working Families Party
- The Buffalo News
- Latino Victory Fund
- Planned Parenthood
- Stonewall Democrats WNY
- NYS AFL-CIO
- Buffalo Building Trades
- CWA
- Laborers International Union of North America
- Laborers International 210
- NYS Conference of Operating Engineers
- Local 17
- SEIU 1199
- District Council 4