
THE BROADWAY DEMOCRATS

♦ District Leaders: Curtis Arluck, Paula Diamond Román ♦ President: Joe Nunley ♦

January General Meeting: CLUB ELECTIONS

Elections of Club Officers and Steering Committee Members

and

Invest in Our New York (IONY) and the 2023 New York State Budget

IONY is a state-wide coalition of activists, volunteers and non-profits working to enact laws to protect the most vulnerable and build our State's potential, and to increase revenue from our State's wealthiest 0.4% to pay for it. Come hear from volunteer leader Becky Saletan about IONY's call for \$40 billion in new investments for our State.

Please join us on Zoom

Thursday, January 19 at 7:30pm.

Register here: bit.ly/broadwaydems-january-2023-club-meeting

for more information: DistrictLeaders@BroadwayDemocrats.org

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January 2023

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Club Elections / IONY and the Budget

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Vice President's Corner

Richard A. Siegel

Dr. Anthony Fauci and LGBTQ relations

The NY Times recently published a very nice article about the relationship Dr. Fauci established with the AIDS activists in the 1980's through to today. That relationship developed over time, and was enhanced by the fact that he listened to their urgent needs. He is a rare individual that learns of the impact of policy on real world experience, and actively seeks solutions to make changes that make the policy better. He respects the emotion, and uses it to guide the objective science to be as effective as possible.

I was also reminded that John Cardinal O'Connor – who very publicly preached the church's opposition to homosexuality – also privately was different. He would go to the AIDS unit at Terrence Cardinal Cooke Nursing Home (one of the first to have an AIDS unit) at least weekly. He would spend hours meeting with the residents and their families, in order to provide some comfort. As most of us know, at that time AIDS was a terminal illness – and no one lasted more than a month or so on that unit.

It is a very good thing that these two leaders did something to help people with AIDS. It is unfortunate that the efforts were not publicly known at that time. If it had been, the journey of that community towards acceptance, affirmation and marriage equality might have been shorter.

This is important for several reasons today. That journey is not complete. There needs to be more pushback against the anti-gay and anti-trans legislation in Florida, Texas and around the country. We all need to call out and work to overturn these laws and policies. There has been a lot of progress

in acceptance of the LGBTQ community since the 1980's. We must make sure that progress continues.

Also, there is a chance that the Republican House will 'investigate' Dr. Fauci for his work during COVID. That is such a wasteful, misguided effort. We watched as Dr. Fauci and public health officials scrambled to prevent the deaths of as many people as possible. We watched them "build the plane as they were flying it." Restrictions on individual freedom and liberty were proposed (masks and vaccines) when the science clearly found it to be necessary. COVID didn't care if you were liberal or conservative, Republican or Democrat; it infected all with the same lethality. The suffering and death were real. Anything that lessened either was a good thing. As Mr. Spock famously said, "The needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few... or the one."



RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

It's that time of year again: renew your membership in the Broadway Democrats!

Dues are \$25/year (seniors and students \$10/year), and help defray the costs of presenting forums and our monthly newsletter.

send a check to:

BROADWAY DEMOCRATS

P.O. BOX 1099 CATHEDRAL STATION
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10025

or renew online at

www.broadwaydemocrats.org/pay-your-annual-dues.html



District Leader's Report

Curtis Arluck

Happy New Year! 2023 is, conventionally, an “off” year, a time for all of us to recharge, and think more locally about our political and personal lives. But in this era of 24 hour news cycles, constant political, international and climate crises, and the Republicans’ constant assaults on our democracy, is it ever possible to “recharge”? What do you think?

Even if the rest of the year will be politically quiet locally, we start with more of a bang than a whimper. The club endorsement meeting for City Council, Democratic District Leader, Civil Court Judge, and Judicial Convention Delegates is next month, and petitioning for these offices plus Democratic County Committee begins in early March.

While I can't say I *always* feel supercharged about being District Leader, I most definitely *usually* do. Sure, setbacks to the Democrats are disappointing, and the occasional disagreements that even Broadway Democrats is subject to are disheartening, but we almost always come back stronger and more determined. Notwithstanding all the criticisms and hatred coming from the other side, President Joe Biden and his fellow Democrats had a pretty good year. I, and we, should be proud of our small part in this. With voices old and new leading and steering our club, we can make 2023 even better.

The statewide issue I most want to talk about is Governor Hochul's nomination of Justice Hector LaSalle to be Chief Judge of the New York Court of Appeals, the state's highest court. As most of you know, progressive and many moderate Democrats and labor unions oppose this nomination. Last week, The Broadway Democrats Steering Committee joined the opposition. The specific reasons are clear: Justice LaSalle has a voting record more conservative than about three quarters of NY judges in similar positions, and has cast some key votes seen as anti-union, anti-women's reproductive rights, and more in favor of prosecution than defense attorneys. I completely share these sentiments.

The contrast between our President nominating the dynamic Ketanji Brown Jackson and our Governor, in a much more liberal and Democratic jurisdiction, nominating the tepid Hector LaSalle, is immense. President Biden did us proud; Governor Hochul did not. That said, we have to be careful how we frame our opposition. In terms of resume and intellect, Justice LaSalle is more than “qualified” for the position. He would be the first Latino to head our state's—and possibly any state's?—highest court.

This is an important milestone. I think the problem is that even Democrats need to be more honest that we are seeking ideologically simpatico nominees, not merely “qualified” ones. A judge of sterling mind and character whose rulings are to the right on most issues is barely better for justice than a stinker who rules the same way. At least for the higher courts, the Republicans specialize in picking right wing jurists who on paper look, and in most cases are, “qualified.” Then in ruling after ruling they make decisions on abortion, guns, campaign finance, the environment, and most outrageously, the “religious freedom” to discriminate that ruin people's lives. Justice LaSalle is not nearly this reactionary. But the people of New York deserve much more than “not reactionary.” We should say to Justice LaSalle: “We admire you, but we're concerned about some of your rulings. Let's see how you do on the Appellate Court. Maybe your subsequent rulings will be more in line with our state's progressive values, and you can get a future appointment to the Court of Appeals.” And to Governor Hochul: “President Biden consulted with the people who elected him and picked a Justice who embodies our ideas and values. You did not. Please reconsider.”



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Club Elections

Please join us to elect club officers and twelve Steering Committee members. Nominees are listed below, and additional nominations may be made from the floor.

Nominees

The following persons have been nominated as Broadway Democrats officers and Steering Committee members for 2023:

President: Mary Peppito
Vice President: Laura Danford Mandel
Recording Secretary: Luis Román
Corresponding Secretary: Allison Downing
Treasurer: Dan Zweig

Steering Committee (vote for 12):

Pat Almonrode	Mercedes Estrada
Gretchen Borges	Peter Flom
Amy Brundage	David Isaacson
Susan Crawford	Noah Kaufman
Shelby Drescher	Susan Mehlman
Liam Elkind	Angela Rooks
	Barbara Trelstad

To vote in Club Elections you must have attended at least one of the previous nine meetings and you must be current on your dues (seniors and students \$10; \$25 all others). Vote in person or by proxy.

In these days of COVID when all our meetings are still virtual, paying your dues and voting in club elections are both more complicated than they used to be. The good news is **you can now pay your dues online**. Details on how to do this are below. Also keep in mind:

- The January 19 meeting is your **last chance** to establish eligibility to vote in the all-important February 9 endorsement meeting. If you have not attended a club meeting in 2022, you won't be eligible to vote at the February meeting.
- At both meetings, you'll be able to participate by phone, even if you can't use the Zoom video features.

We look forward to seeing you January 19 and February 9!

Eligibility to Vote in Club Elections

To vote in club elections (endorsements, elections of officers, judicial convention delegates, amendments), you must be an eligible voting member of the Broadway Democrats:

- You must live in the 69th Assembly District, or an area that used to be in the 69th AD before redistricting;
- You can't have voted in any elections in any other club in this calendar year;
- You must have attended at least one of the previous nine monthly public meetings; and
- You must be current with your dues.

Dues are \$25 (\$10 for students and seniors), and may be paid by check mailed to Broadway Democrats, P.O. Box 1099, New York, NY 10025 or www.broadwaydemocrats.org/pay-your-annual-dues.html, using PayPal or a card. When you pay your dues, please include your email address and telephone number. If you have questions about your eligibility or your dues status, please contact District Leaders Paula Diamond Román and Curtis Arluck at districtleaders@broadwaydemocrats.org

We'll be conducting the vote electronically. We'll be sending out further instructions closer to the vote. If you won't be able to vote electronically, write to districtleaders@broadwaydemocrats.org to make arrangements for a paper ballot.



IONY and the NY State Budget

Allison Downing

On Thursday, January 19, after the election of officers and Steering Committee members, the Broadway Democratic Club will host Becky Saletan, a volunteer leader of the Invest in Our New York (IONY) Campaign to discuss the 2023 New York State budget.

IONY is a state-wide coalition of activists, volunteers and non-profits which has been working collectively for more than three years to get our State government to enact laws to protect the most vulnerable and build our State's potential, and to increase revenue from our State's wealthiest 0.4% to pay for it.

Governor Kathy Hochul and the State Legislature can pass a budget this year that drives down costs, funds critical programs, and transforms the lives of millions – but to do so, we need a bold spending package that reflects the needs of our communities. New Yorkers are being crushed by rising costs and an uneven COVID-19 recovery. Corporate landlords have driven up the cost of housing (40% in the last two years), essentials like food & energy are more expensive than ever, and employers continue to deny workers fair wages despite historic profits.

We must fund programs that will put money back in people's pockets in the short term, and ensure that the state invests long-term in our communities. The Invest in Our New York Campaign calls on the Governor, the Senate Majority Leader, and the Speaker to fund \$40 billion in new investments:

\$10.5 billion toward public education and childcare, including:

- \$2.8 billion toward a statewide, high-quality, free childcare system that meets the needs of children and families, invests in the childcare workforce, and ensures all children can access care, regardless of immigration status.
- \$2.7 billion in Foundation Aid to fully fund NYS public schools.
- \$4-5 billion to fully fund our public higher education systems and restore free tuition for New York State residents.

\$10.4 billion toward housing to increase access for New York’s most vulnerable and to drive down the costs of rent and utilities. This includes:

- \$200 million toward providing rental assistance to New Yorkers who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless through the Housing Access Voucher Program.
- \$200 million toward ensuring that tenants are able to purchase their buildings when landlords decide to sell by funding the Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act.
- \$5 billion to make all buildings statewide fossil-fuel free and energy efficient, creating hundreds of thousands of green jobs.
- \$5 billion towards improving New Yorkers’ housing conditions, through progressive code enforcement and the creation of new Social Housing, via acquisition, construction, and rehabilitation.

\$10.5 billion toward addressing the climate crisis in New York State, including:

- \$500 million to build publicly owned, large-scale renewable energy systems and fully implement the Build Public Renewables Act.
- \$10 billion toward the Climate and Community Protection Fund to fully fund the landmark Climate Act. Its core investments would include community benefits and green jobs.

\$9.1 billion toward workers, wages and public benefits. This includes:

- \$4-8 billion to fund public costs of increasing the minimum wage & indexing wages to living costs and productivity gains.
- \$800 million for the Unemployment Bridge Program to provide unemployment insurance to workers who don’t presently qualify for the state’s UI, including freelancers, undocumented workers, and formerly incarcerated individuals.

- \$345 million toward expanding the state’s essential plan to include New Yorkers, regardless of their immigration status.

New York has the resources to fund this plan. Our state has one of the largest economies in the world – and the highest concentration of wealth in the country: New Yorkers earning \$30 million and above, just 0.4% of our population, are holding \$7 trillion in wealth here in NY. New York’s wealthiest have profited from doing business in New York - from our workers, our communities and our public infrastructure. It’s time they pay what they owe. We can raise over \$50 billion in public funds by:

Transforming New York’s tax system to make the ultra-rich and wealthy corporations pay what they owe. We must:

- Extend and strengthen existing corporate tax reforms.
- Restructure our state’s income tax to make it more progressive & raise rates on the top 5% earners.
- Overhaul the broken inheritance tax to create an Heirs Tax.
- Create a capital gains tax to ensure that investment profits are taxed like personal income is taxed.
- Establish a mark-to-market Billionaires Tax to ensure the wealthiest New Yorkers pay what they owe.

Ending New York’s failed “economic development” corporate giveaways and shifting those public resources toward the Invest in Our New York spending plan.

- New York State spends tens of billions of dollars every year in corporate giveaways that economists agree don’t benefit our communities in the form of better wages or work.
- Whether it’s billions in giveaways to corporate landlords to build luxury buildings that drive all of our rents up or billions taken from our local schools to give to big business – the state government has a long and ugly history of prioritizing corporate giveaways over real investments in the public good.
- If we end corporate giveaways, we’ll have an additional \$10 billion in the coming years to reroute toward critical public investments.

Come and learn more on January 19, and bring your questions!

Stay in touch!

visit us at

<http://www.broadwaydemocrats.org>

or

join us on Facebook at

[facebook.com/groups/BroadwayDemocrats/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/BroadwayDemocrats/)



“Smart” Composting? You Betcha!

Not too long ago – and without any fanfare – the orange box depicted below appeared on the southwest corner of 112th Street and Broadway:



With that, “smart” composting arrived on the Upper West Side. The robot bin takes *all* food waste, including meat, fish, and dairy – items *not* accepted at the Greenmarket drop-offs – plus yard and other plant waste, along with food-soiled paper (napkins, towels, uncoated plates, bags, trays, boxes). *And* it’s open for business 24 / 7 / 365. What’s not to love?

The smart composting program was launched in late 2021, with sidewalk bins in Lower Manhattan. It’s now expanded to Astoria.

There’s a bit of technology involved: in order to use the bin you’ll need to download an app to your phone, enabling you to unlock it (this technology keeps the naïve from unwittingly tossing in non-compostable trash).

You can get the app by searching for “NYC compost” where you get your apps (or just scan the QR code on the bin next time you pass by). Follow a few simple instructions, and you’ll be all set.

The bin has a sensor inside that tells DSNY when it needs to be emptied. The organic waste collected is taken to local and regional facilities, where it is composted on a large scale. Finished compost is used in NYC parks and gardens. According to DSNY, a portion of the organic waste collected is converted to renewable energy.

Critics have called the program much ado about nothing. In a December 2021 interview with Gothamist, Eric Goldstein, the New York City environment director for the Natural Resources Defense Council, said the bins “aren’t designed for broad public participation, they’re designed for composting aficionados.”

Goldstein said “You’ll never get the widespread participation in this program by focusing on bins that city residents have to drag scraps of food to on a regular basis,” and advocated instead for the aggressive expansion of DSNY’s residential curbside composting program. That program [is already available](#) here in Community Board 7, so our smart bin may be, in some sense, overdoing it.

But surely every bit helps. Right now, organics comprise almost a-third of the waste that DSNY collects. Composting is a great way to minimize waste and your carbon footprint, while creating a natural fertilizer that can be used to help grow food and enrich the soil in our parks and green spaces. The more options, the better!



Watch This Space!

Susan Crawford

Well, not this *exact* space, but check out the homepage of the Broadway Democrats website (<http://www.broadwaydemocrats.org>) in coming months for listings of community events and community actions in which you can participate. We’ll feature everything from blood donations to yard sales to clean-ups and beyond.



We Want To Hear What *You* Have To Say!



Email submissions to the editor (in MS Word, please) at palmonrode@gmail.com.

Please note that we will consider all submissions,
but we reserve the exclusive and final right to determine what to publish.