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# THE BROADWAY DEMOCRATS

♦ District Leaders: Curtis Arluck, Paula Diamond Román ♦ President: Mary Peppito ♦

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## **April General Meeting:**



## **Pizza and Politics!**

Join us for an in-person pizza party! Let's meet up for inspiring conversation about how the Broadway Democrats can initiate and activate at this crucial time! We would love for all club members to attend!

**Thursday, April 18**  
**7:00pm**

Location Provided Upon Registration

Register here: <https://tinyurl.com/Pizza-n-Politics>

for more information: [bwaydemsdistrictleaders@gmail.com](mailto:bwaydemsdistrictleaders@gmail.com)

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## President's Corner

Mary Peppito

### Trump and the GOP's "Project 2025"

"Never, ever give up: words are our most effective weapons." This advice comes from the Rwandan survivor Paul Rusesabagina, whose 1992 survival story was featured in the movie *Hotel Rwanda*. He continues to speak to the global community about lessons from Rwanda, writing in *The NY Times* that, "we are being confronted with the rise of authoritarianism and the co-opting of institutions meant to support basic liberties, such as the freedoms of press, speech and association. Throughout the world, politics is being used as a tool to promote division, and in some cases violence, in order to gain or maintain power. We continue to see the fundamental human rights that we fought so hard for being upheld only for certain people in certain circumstances."

I have been thinking about how to speak to young adults in my life who either feel that there is no difference between the democratic and republican presumptive presidential candidates, or who have expressed pro-Trump opinions. It takes my breath away when I hear my young relatives in Oklahoma or some of my young clients in the South Bronx criminal justice system say that they think Trump is the better choice. They say that Trump is a better businessman, or a badass, or better on the economy. First, I want to address why a Trump presidency would be catastrophically dangerous and how it would eliminate rights and protections that we take for granted now. Then, I'll speak to the myths that Trump is successful in business and better on the economy.

Trump, and a coalition of extreme right conservative groups are well-organized to quickly make drastic changes to our country and our democracy, should he prevail in 2024. Project 2025, ([project2025.org](https://project2025.org)), a public document, details a blueprint for autocracy through the recruiting and training an "army" (in their words) "of conservatives to staff the federal government in a next conservative administration." The plans detail a 180-day plan to enact and enforce "Christian" values.

Under the plan, Trump will eliminate health care coverage for millions, eliminate environmental safeguards, and strip the rights of women, the LGBTQIA community, and every person of color. Here are some "highlights" of what Trump would do, according to Project2025.org and Trump's campaign website.

- Drastically change Medicare, Medicaid and the ACA (eliminating the ACA is on Trump's campaign website):
  - Doing away with the ACA would eliminate the healthcare coverage currently available to individuals up to 26 years old under their parents' insurance and would remove all requirements that insurers cover pre-existing conditions.
  - Project2025 would eliminate the \$35 cap on the price of insulin for seniors. Part D would eliminate all recent price controls. (p.465).
  - Medicare Advantage (which has much higher out-of-pocket costs for most seniors) would be the default enrollment plan for seniors (p. 465).
- Eliminate climate change regulation and environmental protections. Trump is an unapologetic climate change denier who called climate change a "hoax" and slashed environmental protections (p.582).
- Ban contraception, IVF and abortion care (pp .458, 483, 585). Project2025 proclaims that, "the *Dobbs* decision is just the beginning," noting that "life begins at conception" (p 450).
- Ban "pornography" and prosecute as sex offenders librarians and educators who "purvey" what they deem pornographic (p.5). [The project2025 definition of pornography includes anything depicting gay or lesbian relationships.]
- Eliminate the Department of Education, including all scientific standards, and institute prayer in all schools.
- Eliminate all school loan forgiveness (p.53)
- Change labor rules to allow companies to avoid paying overtime (p 592).

- Allow discrimination against women, people of color and LGBTQIA persons in the workplace (p. 584).
- Eliminate all experts, scientists, accountants, intelligence personnel, etc. in administrative agencies who do not take a loyalty oath.
- Have DOJ *investigate Trump* critics, including journalists, and prosecute *DOJ and FBI officials* and *President Biden* and his family.
- End the separation between the White House and DOJ that prevents presidents from using prosecutions as a tool for political advantage or personal revenge.
- Institute deportation conducted like a war, with the military rounding up immigrants and putting them into mass holding camps (pp.133, 549).
- Draft an executive order to permit the military to be deployed in the United States pursuant to the Insurrection Act. That would permit soldiers to be used against American protesters.

[Project2025.org](https://www.project2025.org/)'s 920-page plan to create an authoritarian Christian Nation is designed to efficiently consolidate power in the presidency and eliminate all opposition, quell any protests and maintain power. It is unsurprising that Trump openly admires and studies former and current autocrats, including Putin, Orban and Hitler. He does not hide it. He openly brags that "I am your retribution," because he is planning to be a dictator out for revenge.

But for some, these glaring warnings will be insufficient to persuade them against Trump because they don't believe that this could happen here, or they are willing to disregard his authoritarian promises and plans because they think Trump was a good businessman or perhaps believe that he was better for the economy. Let's debunk those myths.

Trump has a dismal track record as a businessman. He has declared bankruptcy six times; he's failed at casinos, hotels, steaks, vodka, water, a board game, an airline, a mortgage company, and a magazine; and he was found to have committed fraud in both his "university" and his "charity." In 1990, six months after Trump Taj Mahal opened, this "brilliant businessman" defaulted on his loan payments. In 1991 he filed for bankruptcy; in 1992, two Atlantic City casinos and the Plaza Hotel all went bankrupt. In 2004, Trump Hotels and Casinos filed for bankruptcy after amassing \$1.8 billion in debt. He did it again in 2009. And recently, he was convicted of massive loan fraud.

Trump is also dishonest and dishonorable in business – he stiffes his contractors. The latest example is of course, Rudy Giuliani, who says in his bankruptcy filings that trump stiffed him on legal fees. But Guillani is just the latest in a string of contractors that Trump has cheated. While Donald Trump often portrays himself as a savior of the working class, as of 2016, he had been involved in more than 3,500 lawsuits — and a large number of those involve ordinary Americans, who say Trump or his companies have refused to pay them. <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/elections/2016/06/09/donald-trump-unpaid-bills-republican-president-lawsuits/85297274/>

Finally, let's talk about the economy under Trump versus under Biden. Recent polls make clear that people credit Trump for a better pre-pandemic economy, rather than crediting Biden for averting a post-pandemic recession. But when you look at some of Trump's signature economic policies, they have been found to have had little to no measurable effect on the economy — and a few might have even hurt. According to Vox, multiple studies have shown that the Trump tariffs at best had a neutral effect on the economy and at worst cost America hundreds of thousands of jobs and higher prices for consumers. And his 2017 tax cuts, which increased investment in the economy and contributed to modest wage growth in the short term, fell far short of Republicans' promise that they would pay for themselves, while significantly raising the federal debt and increasing income inequality. Biden entered office on the brink of a recession as the country started to bounce back from the pandemic. Under his policies, the U.S. did recover from that pandemic economic slump and curbed inflation faster than other economically developed countries, while also maintaining much lower levels of unemployment and record-breaking wage growth.

But if the naysayers are still unconvinced, some of Trump's closest advisors have stern warnings for us and are outspoken in their refusal to endorse Trump. Here is an incomplete list of what some of his top advisors have said:

- **Mark Milley**, who served as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff between October 2019 and September 2023, called Trump a "wannabe dictator," noting "we don't take an oath to an individual. We take an oath to the Constitution, and we take an oath to the idea that is America—and we're willing to die to protect it."

- **John T. Kelly**, the former chief of staff who once believed he could rein in Trump's excesses, now says his former boss has "no idea what America stands for and has no idea what America is all about." He later said that Trump was "a person with nothing but contempt for our democratic institutions, our Constitution, and the rule of law." He has since spoken out angrily about Trump's repeated professions of admiration for dictators like Adolf Hitler, recounting an incident in which he had to tell him: "Sir, you can never say anything good about the guy. Nothing."
- **John Bolton**, a prominent foreign-policy hawk, served as U.S. national security adviser from April 2018 until September 2019, and said there will be "celebrations in the Kremlin" if Trump is elected in November, adding: "Putin thinks that he is an easy mark." Also, "Donald Trump wants Americans to treat him like North Koreans treat Kim Jong Un. Get ready..."
- **Cassidy Hutchinson**, former White House assistant to Chief of Staff Mark Meadows said, "If Donald Trump is elected president again in 2024, I do fear that it will be the last election where we're voting for democracy because, if he is elected again, I don't think we'll be voting under the same Constitution."
- **James "Jim" Mattis**, a retired four-star general nicknamed "Mad Dog," who served as Secretary of Defense from January 2017 to January 2019, said, Trump's "use of the Presidency to destroy trust in our election and to poison our respect for fellow citizens has been enabled by pseudo political leaders whose names will live in infamy as profiles in cowardice." Mattis called Trump "a person who admires autocrats and murderous dictators. A person that has nothing but contempt for our democratic institutions, our Constitution, and the rule of law."
- **Trump's VP Mike Pence** said that he "cannot in good conscience" endorse Trump.
- **Mark Esper**, who served as Trump's Secretary of Defense, said, "there's no way" that he'll support Trump in November because he believes that his former boss "is a threat to democracy."

We must educate ourselves about the issues at stake and have conversations with our family, friends and acquaintances who may not be aware of what a second Trump administration would mean.

As Robert Hubbell recently wrote, "We do not have the luxury of indifference ... we do not have the luxury of being 'just' journalists, lawyers, elected officials, educators, students, co-workers, entertainers, parents, family members, or citizens. In this moment we must be defenders of democracy in everything we do."



## 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)



## District Leader's Report

Curtis Arluck

### Who's On the June 25th Primary Ballot, and Who's Not

Petitions have now been filed, and the shape of the June 25th, and to a great extent the November 5th ballots in our area are now known. In primary, though not in general elections in New York, if there is only one candidate for a particular office that candidate is deemed the winner, and their names are not listed on the ballot. If all the races up for election on primary day are unopposed, the polls do not even open. Our polls will open on June 25th, because of the Assembly race, but there will be little or nothing else to vote for.

### Primary Election Races Which Will be on the Ballot (1): 69th AD State Assembly.

The candidates are our endorsed candidate **Micah Lasher**, two who also spoke impressively at our Candidate's Forum, Eli Northrup and Melissa Rosenberg, and two others, Carmen Quinones and Jack Kellner.

### Primary Election Races Which May Be On the Ballot (1): 69th AD Judicial Convention Delegates.

Our slate, consisting of 16 members of Broadway, Three Parks, and West Side Democrats, is opposed by Carmen Quinones, who runs for everything, everywhere, all at once, and nine of her

neighbors. (Quinones is also running for District Leader in the special election to fill the term of the late, beloved Cynthia Doty in the Three Parks district to our south, meaning she is running for three different offices this year.) Since there are 16 vacancies for JD, if this election takes place, six of our candidates will win, but up to 10 could conceivably lose. To prevent this charade, Quinones' petitions for District Leader and Judicial Delegate, which historically have been full of unregistered voters and suspiciously-gathered signatures, are being challenged. We should know the results of these challenges in a few weeks.

**Unopposed and Therefore Elected Party Position Candidates: Congratulations! (3):**

**State Committee** candidates incumbent **Lynn Thomas** and **Doug Kellner**, and all 16 **Judicial Convention Alternates**.

**Unopposed in June but on the Ballot Against Republicans in November (2):**

**Congressmembers Jerry Nadler** and **Adriano Espaillat**.

**Unopposed in Both June and November: Congratulations! (5)**

**State Senator Cordell Cleare**, **Judge Lou Nock**, **Judicial Candidates Malaika Scott-McLaughlin** and **Allison Greenfield** (Countywide) and **Ralph Wolf** (5th District).

**MEMBERSHIP**

Become a member of  
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 join online at

[www.broadwaydemocrats.org/pay-your-annual-dues.html](http://www.broadwaydemocrats.org/pay-your-annual-dues.html)

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



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

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

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**SAVE-THE-DATE!**

**2024 SPRING FLING**

**Sunday, May 5th  
3:00pm to 6:00pm**

The Ellington  
2745 Broadway  
(corner of West 105th Street)

Presenting

The Excellence in Democracy Award

**Councilmember Shaun Abreu**

&

The Ida and Jesse Frankel  
Community Service Award

**West 111th Street**

**Block Association**

&

In Recognition of his Commitment to his Community  
and his Longevity in Public Service

**Assemblymember**

**Daniel J. O'Donnell**

For more information,

[BwayDemsFundraiser@gmail.com](mailto:BwayDemsFundraiser@gmail.com)

## The Broadway Democrats Newsletter April 2024

FIRST  
CLASS

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED