
THE BROADWAY DEMOCRATS

◆ District Leaders: Curtis Arluck, Paula Diamond Román ◆ President: Amy Porter◆

ELECTION 2020!

What Do the Results mean?
Where Do We Go From Here?
Who Did What?



Thursday, Nov. 12, 7:00 p.m.

For more information (including Zoom details) contact
District Leaders Paula Diamond Román or Curtis Arluck at
districtleaders@broadwaydemocrats.org

-OR-

Check our website at www.broadwaydemocrats.org

THE BROADWAY DEMOCRATS

◆ District Leaders: Curtis Arluck, Paula Diamond Román ◆ President: Amy Porter ◆

Volume 45, Issue 11

November 2020

BIDEN AND HARRIS MAKE HISTORY!

District Leader's Report

Curtis Arluck

Victory!—But At A Price

The calls started coming in from the news outlets at 11:24 AM Saturday that Joe Biden and Kamala Harris had been elected. By the time they were finished, only about 15 minutes later, hundreds of thousands of people were already out in the streets celebrating. There were at least 500 of us at 111th and Broadway; many, probably most people in big cities first heard the news from the noise outside rather than from their phones or TVs.

Of course, all that emotion was justified. For nearly four years, Donald Trump had assaulted our immigrants, our minorities, our environment, our humanity, and most of all, our democracy. With his active encouragement, thousands of white supremacists and neo-Nazis actively took to the streets, many brandishing assault weapons, and millions more cheered them on from the sidelines. Reason, justice, compassion and most of all the truth count for nothing with Trump and his rabid supporters. They were far right on every issue, but mostly, this is a cult of personality, with a Supreme Leader in the mold of Hitler or Mussolini.

Of course, it was most important to get Trump out. It would have been the end of American democracy if we hadn't. And in Joe Biden we had the perfect antidote: calm, decent, knowing how to make government work, most of all, a "we" leader rather than an "I" leader. While he staked our more moderate positions than some of his Democratic rivals on issues like climate change and a single payer health insurance plan, he never once faltered—at least, not since the murder of George Floyd—in acknowledging that there is systemic racism in this country that has to be addressed, that,

while those of us who aren't black or brown can never walk in the shoes of those who are—especially black men—we have to try to be aware of what it is like to be in those shoes. Too many Democratic politicians, especially the moderates, avoided this truth, or skirted it with generalities about all racism being bad, or the need for justice for everyone. Not Joe Biden: he confronted it, even if it meant losing some white votes as a result.

So the defeat of Trump was the condition precedent for saving our country and very possibly the world. Mission accomplished. But that doesn't mean that all is well, or that we can wave a magic wand and make Trumpism go away. Democrats lost seats in the House, races for state legislatures did not go well, and we've only, so far, netted one seat in the Senate. It's an uphill fight, but winning the two Georgia runoff seats which would give Democrats control of the Senate would make a tremendous difference. See the article in this issue from our Go Blue 2020 Committee about ways you can stay involved!

Though significant majorities of the country agree with us on most of the major issues—health insurance, getting assault weapons off the streets and all guns out of the hands of criminals, the need to listen to science as we fight climate change and the pandemic—Democrats, both of the left and the moderate variety, have not been able to explain why our economic policies are better for the country than the Republicans'. And we need to recognize that the dreadful "Defund the Police" slogan cost us a few million votes, a dozen or so House seats, and probably control of the Senate. Even at our daily 111th St. Black Lives Matter rallies, this slogan and concept were negatively received. I will defend the Black Lives Matter motto and movement until the day I die, but I will always regret not being more of a leader in speaking out against the Defund the Police

movement. Its leaders had more of a real grievance than the Naderites in 2000, but they had much the same effect.

We also need to acknowledge a strong decline in Democratic percentages in many Latino communities. The Democratic vote cratered in Miami and the Rio Grande Valley (though not, interestingly, in adjacent parts of Nevada, Arizona and Colorado). Even here, in both Manhattan Valley and Grant Houses, Trump got less than 5% in 2016 and 11% in 2020. I'm not completely sure how to explain this. I don't think it's especially because of some Latinos' cultural conservatism; this has been the case for years. Probably, there is a lot of identification with the incumbent, which won't be the case in four years, and a lot of feeling of being taken for granted, which must be addressed, and soon.

There is much work to be done. But thanks to Joe Biden, Kamala Harris, several million devoted volunteers around the country and countless organizations like the Broadway Democrats, this work will not be in vain. Without this victory, we couldn't have taken back our country, at least for many years. Now, we can do it, guided by President Biden and Vice President Harris. It's up to us.



District Leader's Report

Paula Diamond Román

I've written and re-written this opening paragraph several times, not because of changes in the results but because of changes in my reactions from exaltation to exhaustion to exasperation. We've avoided four more years of the current president, we haven't heard a concession speech, and we're still stuck with the divisions in the country. Quite frankly, I won't relax until the Federal Election Commission publishes the official, certified election results but I'm still jubilant.

Let me start with this. Woot woot! Joe Biden and Kamala Harris won!!! All the work our Go Blue 2020 committee has accomplished, helmed by the indefatigable Mary Peppito and Meiki Mustrangi, the 'phone banking and fundraiser organized by President Amy Porter and supported by the rest of our Steering Committee and membership, all the work done by Democratic activists all across the country paid off. I thank each and everyone of you. I am so grateful.

Let's Talk About the Division

My sister refers to us as her queer Jewish Puerto Rican family. (That's only because she doesn't

include all my in-laws, many of whom are Black descendants of enslaved Americans.) For a while now, I've been worrying if my husband, my nieces and nephew and their fathers are going to be harmed by the police; more recently, I've added worrying if my sister and my niece's marriages are going to be invalidated. I'm aware of how the current president has given permission to the previously hidden segment of our country that hates everyone in my family. However, there is so much more to these election results.

First of all, there aren't really Blue states and Red states. There are Blue counties and Red counties, and some states have more of one or the other. In most cases, the Blue counties contain a city. (Fun fact: Most cities are a small part of a county, although there are a few that are an entire county. New York's the only city that's multiple counties.) The majority of the land mass of the country is outside of the cities and is Red, but roughly 80% of Americans live in urban areas, resulting in a Blue popular vote. Urban areas tend to be more diverse and more tolerant of diversity but even the Latinx vote is less Blue in rural areas.

Unemployment in urban and rural areas suffered equally from the "Great Recession of 2007" but urban areas have recovered at a much higher rate. In addition, the rural labor-force participation rate is significantly lower than in urban areas; in other words, more people of the "prime-age labor-force" have given up looking for jobs. Also, rural areas are more likely to have only one or two main businesses supporting most of the people than urban areas and when that business closes, including coal mines and prisons, the entire area dies.

In many of these states, the previous generation of the work force was conned out of joining unions, resulting in low-paying manufacturing jobs. In the South, the history of pitting working-class whites against Blacks dates back to the 1676 Bacon's Rebellion in Virginia which resulted in the creation of different rights for white indentured servants and enslaved Blacks. Later uprisings resulted in the hiring of poor whites as overseers, creating a further division between two groups with common class interests. President Reagan further exacerbated these divisions by lowering the cut-off point for entitlements so that most working poor no longer qualified. Even today, differences between corporations, many of whom were better able to access the stimulus package, and small businesses, often owned by immigrants, have been transformed into conflict between different generations of immigrants.

I can hear what you're thinking at this point. Part of the answer is that someone who hasn't personally experienced losses due to COVID-19 but fears losing their business or job because of the shutdowns is more likely to blame the Democrats. In the same vein, someone who doesn't have a queer Jewish Puerto Rican family is more likely to be worried about losing their business or job and being able to take care of the family they have.

However, bigotry, greed, and hate aren't the only forces in this division. The biggest divide is in media consumption. One of the interesting opportunities I've had in Facebook is to become FB friends with people whose politics are everything I disagree with. One of the interesting things I've learned is they absolutely, completely believe in a different set of facts than I do. They have an over-reliance on the current president's talking points and fraudulent, deceptive news sources. They identify the mainstream media with "fake news."

Tearing Down the Wall

We won. The White House will be Blue again, the House stays Blue, and there is still a possibility of turning the Senate Blue. The Democrats get to set policy for the next four years but there is more than one way to go about it.

As part of the global economy, as lovers of efficiency-increasing automation, we are facing the looming problem of maintaining a full-employment economy. Democrats try to ignore the situation, while Republicans court votes by lying about it. Andrew Yang had a point; job displacement by automation will have to be responded to by some form of income supplement. Truck driving is the last refuge of the under-employed rural resident but, according to the Los Angeles *Times*, 1.7 million American truckers could be replaced by self-driving trucks over the next decade. We **must** address this problem, even if it means convincing rural voters that they might like a taste of Socialism.

The coastal elite need to stop being so damned snobby about people who live other places. We need to stop talking about "fly-over states" and equating Southern accents with stupidity. We also have to stop being condescending to the people who we feel are voting against their class interests but who have the weight of history and the ongoing con of the power structure to contend with. We have to recognize that, as important as it is to defend the rights of the non-coastal gay couple shopping for a wedding cake, we also need to make sure the LGBTQ+ people in rural areas have jobs that allow them to **have** a wedding and afford a house for them and their new spouse to raise a family in.

We also need to commit to the mainstream media. It isn't only the right; I also know plenty of people on the Left who promote "news sources" that confirm their bias, over the dreaded "mainstream media." Shop around for the ones that you can stand watching and incorporate some of the news sources more on one fringe or the other but read, watch, listen to news sources that the majority of people acknowledge are factual. Read past the headline or the coming attractions. Don't engage in confirmation bias to the exclusion of uncomfortable and new information. Just remember that we won't have to see the current president's face or hear the current president's voice for much longer.

In Conclusion ...

While we celebrate, we **must** keep in mind a few things. We **must** keep an eye on the ongoing shenanigans of the current president. We **must** work on those special elections in Georgia. Most important, we **must** give President-elect Joe Biden and Vice-President-elect Kamala Harris an opportunity to heal this country. In the words of Bill and Ted, let's work on being excellent to each other.

If you're interested in joining the Broadway Democrats' Racial Justice Committee, please email your specific areas of interest, if any, and your availability (evening/morning; never on Tuesday) to racialjusticecommittee@broadwaydemocrats.org. If you'd like to discuss this article, email me at valleygirl109@rocketmail.com.



HELP THE BROADWAY DEMOCRATS GROW!

*Pass this newsletter on to a friend
or a new neighbor*

DUES: SENIORS \$10/yr, ALL OTHERS \$25/yr

SEND TO: **BROADWAY DEMOCRATS**
P.O. BOX 1099 CATHEDRAL STATION
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10025

or join online at

[http://www.broadwaydemocrats.org/
sign-up-to-join-the-club.html](http://www.broadwaydemocrats.org/sign-up-to-join-the-club.html)



President's Corner

Amy Porter

Members and friends,

I sat down to compose my thoughts for you this morning. Then I remembered I'd already prepared this piece right after the presidential debate. Why did I write most of this before I knew the outcome of the election?

Because when I watched the last debate, I had a flash into the future that I sensed Joe Biden was seeing. I saw a man who, as he stood before us, knew that he would be President and was already planning and ready to start on the first day with a Cabinet of wise and competent members who represent the diversity and the best of America. I saw a man who, standing before us, knew that he was ready and experienced and able and yet bowed his head with humility for the task he saw before him. I saw him feeling compassion for the suffering that his nation has endured under and as a result of the administration of a president whose character and experience was exactly the opposite of his. I saw a man who was unafraid to speak with and listen to people who disagree with him. This is, after all, the man who chose Kamala Harris as his vice-president, a powerful woman who had challenged him during the primary debates. I saw that Joe Biden was the man who was going to lead us out of this dark time and that this was his moment.

And this is our moment. I am so proud to be a Democrat and I am proud to be the president of Broadway Democrats. I am proud of what we accomplished this past year, as we all in our own individual ways worked so hard.

At our last Zoom forum, our wonderful Broadway Dems Go Blue 2020 Committee gave a great presentation of the work still to be done. Go Blue 2020 did so much important work on our local and statewide elections as well as around the country on the most important Democratic races this year. Go Blue has already started to organize this weekend for work remaining to be done in Georgia.

Every Monday night we held phone banks with New York for Joe Biden. Then Broadway Democrats came together with a coalition of other Manhattan clubs to make calls for one whole day. And then our members joined to make calls with people and organizations throughout the whole state in the final days before the election.

Broadway Democrats was not able to have our in person fundraiser this year. So we decided to take advantage of this digital time to organize a virtual

fundraiser with Village Independent Democrats. Many other clubs joined with us to contribute directly to the Biden/Harris campaign and the most important Democratic elections this year. We raised \$12,000. Everyone had a wonderful time and enjoyed hearing and seeing so many of our elected representatives and wonderful music from performers from all over our city.

Heather Ducharme and John George organized and ran a wonderful debut for Broadway Dems first Book Club meeting. The book is titled "How to Be an Antiracist." The conversation was very personal and meaningful for all of us. We want it to continue and are looking forward to that.

Every night Broadway Democrats came out on the street with neighbors and friends to support Black Lives Matter. Indeed, some of us found each other on that same corner yesterday in a tumultuous celebration of relief and joy.

Every weekend and more, many of us joined Curtis and Paula as they gave out important information about the election and sold buttons. And we all stood in long lines and voted!

When we first scheduled our Zoom forum on the election for Thursday, which Paula and Curtis are organizing, we all had no idea what outcome we would be facing. We now know we have a lot to understand about our country. And I am relieved and ecstatic that we also have much to celebrate! I look forward to seeing you there. To join us, register at broadwaydemocrats.org

We can all celebrate that we, as Broadway Democrats, each in our own way, contributed to being a part of this historic election. And those of us who wrote letters, made calls, texted and canvassed door to door have learned that every vote counts. Thank you, everyone. Every person who worked toward getting out these votes made a difference.

For those of you who have lost loved ones and who have suffered this past year, my heart goes out to you. I hope you can take some comfort that your sisters and brothers in your country have voted to correct the atrocities and insults to human dignity of these last four years. Our work will not end and is just beginning. Yet let us take our moment to celebrate and acknowledge that we live in a city and in a country that offers refuge to the tired, the poor, the homeless, the tempest-tossed. Let us celebrate that greater unity and better times are coming.



State Committeeman Report

Daniel Marks Cohen

We close this year's chapter of the Tales of the New York State Democratic Party story with a meeting late last month that – sadly – ended up largely with more of the same. The forces of reform were united in pushing back against the state party machine, but trying to launch a (albeit minor) rebellion on Zoom is just not practical. Despite an effort by progressives to make both the process of electing representatives to the DNC, and the representatives themselves, more transparent, responsive, and representative, the party-controlled slate was elected to four more years. There was a minor adjustment, in that lobbyist Jennifer Cunningham voluntarily withdrew, and former state party chair June O'Neill was elected (making it THREE current or former chairs – including current chair Jay Jacobs (ex officio), Buffalo Mayor Byron Brown (immediate past chair) and now former chair O'Neill). With two exceptions (Brown and O'Neill), the entire 11-person DNC cohort is still from downstate (NYC and Long Island), and again has no Latinx or Asian representation.

We got close to electing Dutchess County Democratic Party chair Elisa Sumner, she came in first – immediately after the entire slate. But close does not count. This includes the rogue's gallery of Michael Reich and Gerard Sweeney, two of the Queens threesome – along with former Queens County chair Joe Crowley – who control Queens County politics. And the governor's sister was re-elected too. Reformers might have had a better chance if we had been live and in person, but with Zoom the ability to communicate and express dissent was tightly controlled, and muted – both literally and figuratively – by our being in a virtual format. To be honest, Jay Jacobs ran the meeting fairly – the forces of reform just did not have the votes. But it was not helped by the fact that we were pushing a rock uphill with Zoom.

I believe that even as this current skirmish is lost, the larger fight for reform is still on, and we have set the stage for a better response four years hence. The Progressive Caucus is the main vehicle for dissent, and we have run the table with resolutions this year. When we are better organized, offline and in person, we often win. The pandemic, the recession, the looming national elections have all – appropriately, for sure – distracted us from smaller battles. But with time, some luck and a winning 2020 election, we will be in a stronger place in four years, and that will allow us to push forward again with a better result next cycle. There will be other scuffles

to come in the next few years, with the Governor up for reelection in 2022, so more interesting days are clearly ahead of us. I can't wait.

IMADEMOCRAT!

Ed Sullivan

America – Half Empty

A few minutes before noon today, Saturday, November 7th, I was working at my computer when I heard some young voices cheering outside my window and some young hands clapping and some young car horns honking. So I looked out my window onto the street (I live near Columbia University) and what I saw prompted me to turn on my TV and then I learned that the Biden-Harris ticket had won the Presidential election.

Wow! The dream has come true, or at least partially true. Yes, we have rid our country of the worst President we have ever produced, and we did so democratically and methodically. And we did so with the awe-inspiring hard work of thousands of courageous election workers who faced down gangs of Trump's bully boys and did their job of counting the votes rapidly and fairly.

And the thought occurred to me: AMERICA WORKS! I feel like a bridegroom waking up in his honeymoon bed at three in the morning and, seeing his wife asleep beside him, suddenly realizing: "My God you're beautiful!"

But there is work to be done. We are still in the throes of COVID19 with thousands dead, tens of thousands very sick, and no one in charge. Dealing with this is now Job One, and it can't wait til Inauguration Day.

The President-elect has to start forming his cabinet and key members of the White House staff right away. There are so many talented, charismatic Black women on the top rungs of Democratic politics that the entire executive department could be staffed with Black women without missing a step in quality. That wouldn't be good politics and I don't recommend it, but Black women should be in on serious decision making in Washington DC from now on.

The Democratic Party did not make an appropriate approach to our Hispanic brothers and sisters during the campaign. Hispanics were not a clear part of the Democratic National Convention. This mistake could have been partially remedied if Joe Biden had taken a two-day "listening tour" of Puerto Rico during the campaign, staying overnight there in a Puerto Rico household. I tried to get through to the Biden campaign leadership on this,

but did not succeed. Yes, I realize that Puerto Rico residents can't vote for President, and, yes, I realize that there are many Hispanic groups, Dominicans, Mexicans, Cubans and others, besides Puerto Ricans. But the TV coverage of a Biden trip to the island would have been watched minute by minute by all Hispanics in the States. It would have been considered an appropriate genuflection to Hispanic Americans, which is merited by their numbers. Maybe, before Inauguration Day....

It is very important that the Democratic Party be considered by ourselves and others around the world as the natural home for those who have suffered discrimination and need a haven. A relevant ceremony should be held in New York harbor at the Statue of Liberty, "the Mother of Exiles," symbolizing our continued commitment to immigration policies that are consistent and humane. Immigration is the mother's milk of our creative genius here in America. Let's keep it flowing, and let's start by opening up the DACA program for immigrant children, brought here by their parents without papers. These are a few ideas on how to get the American renewal of the 21st century up and running. Future issues of *I'm A Democrat!* will discuss higher education, health care coverage, infrastructure renewal, public education, transportation, environmental protection, civil rights, fairer taxation, and so forth. I welcome your comments.

Is the American glass half empty or half full? It's half empty.

Let's fill it.



Go Blue 2020!

Mary Peppito and Meika A. Mustrangi

**Celebrating our historic win –
but our fight is not yet over!**

A heartfelt **Thank You** to all the volunteers who helped us secure this historic Biden-Harris victory! Republicans are now counting on us being "fat and happy"¹ but the energy among Democrats couldn't be farthest from that. If anything, this election has proved that we cannot take anything for granted and we need to stay engaged and active to defend our Democracy.

As you know, we've still got work to do for this election. Both US Senate races in Georgia will be decided in a runoff election on January 5, with Early

¹ www.nytimes.com/2020/11/08/us/politics/georgia-politics.html

Voting starting on December 14. Democrats' control in the US Senate hangs on these two races.² Wouldn't it be fantastic to demote Mitch McConnell and finally return to getting things done in the Senate?

We will be postcarding and phonebanking to get out the vote and support the two great Georgia US Senate Democratic candidates: Rev. Dr. Raphael Warnock and Jon Ossoff.

Help us write postcards to voters of color in Georgia to give them information on voting and make sure that their votes are counted in this important election. Postcards should be mailed between Dec 1 and Dec 7. Postcard packets, including stamps and printed labels with specific voting information, will be available for pick up soon. **Please reserve your postcards ASAP at <http://bit.ly/ROVpostcards4Georgia>.**

We'll be back to phonebanking soon. Stay tuned for details! Meanwhile, if you can, please donate to the Warnock and Ossoff campaigns:

Rev. Dr. Raphael Warnock:

<https://secure.actblue.com/donate/warnock-for-georgia-web>

Jon Ossoff:

https://secure.actblue.com/donate/ms_hp_ossoff



Tear Down That Wall!

Daniel Zweig

I cannot begin to describe how thankful I am that we've been able to elect a new president who can begin to return some normalcy to our country. I truly believe that in Joe Biden, we have the right man at the right time.

I thought there would be more of a difference in the vote for president than there was and that we would win more seats in the Senate. But the voters told us something different and we need to work hard to listen to understand why.

Fortunately, by a thread, we have dispatched a truly damaging individual from the highest office in our country.

So what is this wall I'm referring to?

It is not the current president's wall. There is a second powerful individual whose policies and

² www.nytimes.com/2020/11/07/us/politics/georgia-senate-runoff-explainer.html

actions have been truly damaging for the last decade, longer than our current president has been in office. And he is still there. In charge of the Senate for the last decade, he has built and perpetuated a Wall of Obstruction in the Senate that has prevented the passage of any legislation that might help anyone but the absolute wealthiest individuals in our country. His Wall has blocked legislation to help millions to mitigate and survive the pandemic related economic difficulties of this last year. His Wall prevented the appointment of federal judges at all levels until only the most conservative individuals could be appointed – and there were scores appointed to slant the balance of our federal courts for a lifetime. And he will use this Wall to block any meaningful change our newly elected administration may try to bring to our country.

He must be stopped.

On November 3rd, we picked up two seats and lost one in the Senate – not as much as we had hoped, not as much as we need. But we still have an opportunity to stop Individual #2 and eliminate his power in the Senate. With a special election two months from now, there is a chance to pick up two Senate seats in Georgia and with Vice-President Harris in office to break a tie, move the Senate power effectively into Democratic hands.

So let's shout throughout the country:

“GEORGIANS – TEAR DOWN THAT WALL.”

In Georgia and throughout the country, we have worked for months to elect our new president. Let's all work hard for the next two months to win the special elections in Georgia, remove the Senate obstructionist from power, end the gridlock in Congress, and give our new president the ability to move our country forward.

“GEORGIANS – TEAR DOWN THAT WALL.”



We want to hear what *you* have to say!
Please email newsletter submissions to bdemsnewsletter@gmail.com (in MS Word format if possible, please).

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



Stay in touch!

visit us at

www.broadwaydemocrats.org

or

join us on Facebook at

facebook.com/groups/BroadwayDemocrats/

Disclaimer: unless otherwise indicated, items herein reflect the views of their authors only. They are published as a part of our club's commitment to the free and open exchange of ideas on topics of interest, but their publication should not be construed as an endorsement by the editor, the Steering Committee, or the Broadway Democrats club.

Send to: The Broadway Democrats, P.O. Box 1099, Cathedral Station, New York, NY 10025

Special Interests: _____

E-mail: _____

Telephone: _____

Address: _____

Name: _____ (title, honorifics, and pronouns optional)

To join the Broadway Democrats, please fill out the form below and mail with your check (made out to "Broadway Democrats") to the address at the bottom. Welcome!

In order to vote in club elections (endorsements, elections of officers, judicial convention, amendments), you must be an eligible, voting member of the Broadway Democrats. You must have attended at least one of the previous nine monthly public meetings and you must pay your dues. Dues partially defray the costs of presenting forums and putting out this newsletter. Dues are \$25; senior dues are \$10.

Membership

The Broadway Democrats Newsletter – November 2020

FIRST
CLASS

P.O. Box 1099
Cathedral Station
New York, NY 10025

Assemblymember: Daniel O'Donnell
District Leaders:
 Curtis Arluck,
 Paula Diamond Román
President: Amy Porter
Newsletter Editor: Pat Almonrode

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED