



IDCCA
November
2017
Newsletter

Issue #22

NEWS FROM AROUND THE ASSOCIATION

IN THIS ISSUE



President's Message

By: Doug House, President IDCCA
 Chairman, Rock Island County Democratic Party

"The elections in Virginia and New Jersey were not a Democratic wave.... They were a tsunami!"

Tom Perez- National
 DNC Chair

Our National Chairman sounded the battle cry signaling the resurgence of our Democratic Party!

A trend that started in Illinois last spring with the victories in our municipal elections continued into this fall and there are now strong indications that this resurgence will continue well through the next election cycle.

Victories in Virginia and New Jersey are now sending a clear message to Republicans that there is no office that they hold that is safe from being taken back by Democrats who are now going on offense!

This could be the beginning of an

amazing rise of Progressive Democratic leadership in our country.

Here in Illinois I have been calling for quality candidates for every office on the ballot. Still many Democrats are demoralized from the devastating 2016 downstate losses of many local county board, countywide, judicial and state legislative races. While many great individuals have stepped forward to run, there are still too many races where we do not have candidates. Remember we cannot replace an incumbent Republican with nothing. We need good candidates.

There is no reason that we should not find candidates for every office, especially offices that we have previously held. There is a new energy and a new vitality in our party! We have our swagger back!

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Precinct Committeeman Recruiting
 We are recruiting Democratic Precinct Committeeman statewide to assist with the grassroots effort to build the Democratic Party in Illinois. If you are interested in being a part of this grassroots effort, please email dan@ildcca.org with your name, address, phone, email, county and precinct. Your County Democratic Party Chairman will contact you immediately!

The Illinois Democratic County Chairman's Association is a state wide, grassroots Democratic political organization. It is made up of the elected Democratic County Chairman in all 102 counties in Illinois. The mission of the IDCCA is to help elect Democrats in each county while continuing to grow the Democratic Party in the State of Illinois. Rock Island County Chairman Doug House is the President of the Illinois Democratic County Chairman's Association.

Paid for by the Illinois Democratic County Chairman's Association. A copy of our report is (or will be) available for purchase from the Illinois State Board of Elections, Springfield IL

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Democrats that have been considering local office should feel emboldened and step forward. In Illinois, the Democratic Party is stronger than ever. We have more Precinct Committeepersons trained and ready to help get out the vote. The electorate is hungry for what we have to say and our vision to fighting for the Middle Class.

While filing will quickly be upon us there is still time to circulate for precinct committee persons, county board and countywide offices. Many of these positions only require a handful of good signatures. We need to get busy and do all that we can because these local offices are the backbone of our Democratic Party and the farm team for tomorrow's higher offices that we will need candidates for.

I am confident that 2018 will be a good year for Democrats in Illinois. Make no mistake though, we will be in for a battle. This should not stop us and any open seat that we do not have a Democratic candidate running for will be a missed opportunity. Let's get going!

Doug House
IDCCA President
Rock Island County Democratic Party
Chairman
@ILDCCA @RICoDemocrats



Update from Susana Mendoza

By Comptroller Susana
Mendoza,
@susanamendoza10

One year ago, I was proud to be elected and sworn in as Illinois Comptroller. Since that time, I am proud of the long list of accomplishments that our office has been able to achieve. Democrats should be proud as well as we prepare to take the fight to Governor Rauner.

Earlier this month, members of the Illinois House and Senate voted a combined 164-3 to override Governor Bruce Rauner's veto of the Debt Transparency Act. The bipartisan

legislation, which I helped introduce in January, will require all state agencies to disclose on a monthly basis all bills being held by their office. Previously, agencies were required to disclose these numbers just once a year. The law, which was supported unanimously in the Illinois House, will provide unprecedented transparency and assist with long-term financial planning. State agencies, which hold as much as half of the massive \$17.5 billion bill backlog, are required to begin sharing that information with the public beginning Jan. 1st 2018.

I have been an outspoken advocate for a short-term borrowing plan outlined in the FY2018 budget helped direct immediate relief for hundreds of thousands of Illinoisans, doctors and healthcare providers and long-term relief to taxpayers. The bond deal, which swaps out interest rates of up to 12 percent for a rate of 3.5 on the state's massive bill backlog, will save billions, according to the state's budget office. My office is using federal matching funds to further help Illinois taxpayers.

Beginning in December, I have spent thousands of miles on Illinois highways and byways, as I tirelessly travel the state to highlight the human cost of the unprecedented two-year budget stalemate that ended in July.

My candid discussions with legislators from both parties about the fiscal crisis in early July helped lead to a common-sense bipartisan budget solution.

I helped bring attention to the lack of transparency under the Rauner Administration for the largest procurement in the history of the state, a \$36 billion overhaul of a state program that provides healthcare to over 2.5 million people. The bidding process was completed with no independent oversight and outside the purview of the legislature and general public.

I have sought public disclosure of the true cost of Rauner's failed Enterprise Resource Program, a \$300 million technology initiative that has failed to meet critical benchmarks and eliminate legacy applications.

It is important to know what elected Democrats have been doing on your behalf. I hope that when you are out knocking on doors and talking with your friends, that you'll share some of these accomplishments. Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your Illinois Comptroller.



Illinois Democratic Women

By Jennifer Lee, Co President
@ildemwmm

Illinois Democratic Women (IDW) is a statewide grassroots organization that works for more equitable representation

and participation of Democrat women at all levels of the Democratic Party and government. IDW members are a diverse group that have shared values and one common goal – to support the Democratic Party and involve more women in the political process.

We recently held our 45th convention in Springfield this past September and I was honored to be installed as the new Co-President of the organization. I have large shoes to fill stepping in for former Co-President Pam Monetti who is a tireless champion for women. I'm excited to join my fellow Co-President Kim Savage and the wonderful board of IDW.

At the convention we were pleased to honor Comptroller Susana Mendoza and SEIU Healthcare Vice-President Jaquie Algee. These two women exemplify the best of us as Democratic women. Susana is a fierce advocate for everyone in our state as she daily takes on the challenges of being an officeholder who must make hard decisions in this political climate and prioritize those who most need help. She's also an outspoken critic when government isn't working for the people and shows us a way forward as we look to improve Illinois for everyone. We were grateful to her to be on hand to receive the Hillary Rodham Clinton award to thank her for her work. Jaquie Algee received the Eleanor Roosevelt award and on a personal note it was an honor to have shared such a special evening with her. Jaquie has been a mentor and example to me of how to lead with integrity and personal grace since I first met her. She's a powerful organizer who leads with her heart, and she's someone Illinois Democratic Women is proud to have on our side.

As we head into a new year and primary season, IDW is looking forward to getting more involved with female candidates throughout the state and helping them in their races.

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We'll start by holding a fundraiser in Chicago for the Illinois State Senate Democratic candidates who are involved in their newly formed Wings program which helps promote their female candidates. This event will be the night before Women's March Chicago holds a March to the Polls anniversary march of last year's Women's March. We want to continue to highlight all the ways that women have made a difference in the last year through their political activism and that the product of that must be electing more women to office.

We are also participating in Chicago Women Take Action's upcoming Gubernatorial Forum in December. We're excited to be partnering with more than forty women's organizations for this event to amplify the issues women care most about.

After the election of 2016, after the grieving that was to be done, many of us realized that it was an opportunity to rebuild. With the help of our board and other stakeholders, IDW is looking ahead to how we can best serve Democratic women in Illinois by making it possible for more women to run for office, to provide resources to them once they do make the decision to run, and to continue to provide to support to the elected officials who help advance our causes. We're excited for what the next year will bring and the increased opportunities that are opening up for women to lead. For more information on how to get involved with IDW please go to our website www.illinoisdemocraticwomen.org



Digital: The Great Equalizer

By Jessica Ellison Thomas

If you are confused by the vast world of advertising, you are not alone. As a candidate, you know that you need to have an impact on the constituents in your district. That's the obvious part. The question, then, is: How do I make an impact in the most efficient, cost-effective way? Enter digital advertising.

Now, you might be thinking, "But, Jess, traditional advertising was confusing enough before. Now you want to throw digital into

the mix?" Yes, I do. Let's start with the basic tenant of marketing -- reach times frequency plus the message equals impact. I'm not a mathematician, but we can all do this math once we define what each of these elements means.

Reach: the total number of different people or households that are exposed to the message

Frequency: the total number of times a person is exposed to the message

Impact: having a lasting psychological effect on viewers so they remember the message

In traditional advertising -- newspapers, TV, radio, direct mail -- ad pricing is based on the reach that your preferred medium has. A newspaper has a certain number of subscribers, and that's the reach. If your ad is in every Sunday paper for a month, then you have a frequency of four. With a strong message, your ads will have an impact.

Can you have a strong political message if the audience (in this case, those readers of that same newspaper) have varied perspectives and beliefs? There are some people who will love you, others who will hate you, still some who are apathetic. Couldn't you create a stronger message if you could craft a specific message for each type of person in your district? With digital advertising, you can do just that.

Instead of being at the mercy of the medium's audience, digital advertising allows you to create the audience that you want to reach -- and you only pay for the audience you choose. In this way, you can have targeted messaging aimed at specific constituents in your district. This targeting can be as broad as "people who lean Independent or Democrat" or as specific as the households on your walk list from VoteBuilder. By removing the targets that are not ideal for your message, you remove waste from your advertising campaign. Removing this waste allows your advertising dollars to go further. Your reach is now targeted to people who are more receptive to your message, and your budget can now be used to increase the frequency of your messaging. That's smart advertising.

Digital advertising can be used to present specific messaging to constituents that identify with your message. Think of a digital advertising campaign in layers of strategic messages. The base layer would be a general message that could be presented to a broad

target. An example of this could be, "Jane Doe for State Representative" which is a very non-specific message that can appeal to many constituents within a district.

Now we add in the next layers which include specific messages tailored to target audiences -- just like you do when speaking with these constituents or interest groups in person. This strategy could include pro-labor messaging to union members, Women's Rights messaging to feminists, and balanced budget messaging to Independents. All of these messages would include a call to support you in the upcoming election, to knock doors for you, or to donate to your campaign.

Unlike traditional media, digital advertising allows these many messaging layers to be run simultaneously so you can get your targeted messages out to many types of people all at the same time. Because digital is trackable, you are able to see the effects of your messaging in real time. You may have a gut feeling about which examples I gave above would go well in your district and which would fall flat. As we say around my office, a gut feeling is not data, and the data doesn't lie.

Take a peek behind the campaign at the data it provides. You may be under the assumption that a Women's Rights message doesn't perform well in your district -- but you could be wrong. Does that position fall flat because of the constituents don't like it? Or is it because previous candidates were so scared to talk about it that you don't really know how constituents feel? Digital advertising tracks audience engagement which provides us with data that will show us what people really think and feel. Remember, people are more honest on social media than they are even with their spouse.

Digital advertising is smarter, more strategic, more efficient, and more cost-effective than traditional media. If you're not scared to put yourself out there as a candidate, why are you scared of digital media? Now is the time to start building your brand -- and that includes a strong digital presence.



Voter Contact

By Natasha Smith,
@traindems

Campaigns can seem daunting to people who have difficulty with small talk. Just the thought of approaching strangers and striking up a conversation with them can seem daunting. More people have problems with casual conversation than you might think. And many who appear good at it have just had time to practice.

The first step in getting over your distaste for small talk is realizing that it doesn't need to be impersonal or vaguely alien. In fact, it can be quite comfortable. If you have the right questions to ask, you won't need to spend five minutes chatting aimlessly about the weather.

One of the NDTC tenants is time and people are two of the three most valuable resources to your campaign. By efficiently using your time, you can establish strong relationships with people (your voters, volunteers, and staffers). If you struggle with small talk, here are some tips I've found to be helpful in developing the casual conversation skills that will benefit you on the campaign trail.

Body language says more than your voice.

Visual cues dictate the tone of a conversation, and the way you present yourself will convey more information about you than your words will. I've had more than a few people ask me if my day was going badly because of my resting state of crossed arms and a scowl on my face even if my day was going perfectly.

Being aware of the image you're projecting and your body language habits helps you make adjustments as needed. If you catch yourself looming intimidatingly over someone or staring at the ground instead of making eye contact, try to open up your body language. You'll look more inviting and foster a better conversation.

Draw the other person out.

While you are the candidate, the spotlight doesn't always need to be on you. I've found that the best way to make a conversation more

engaging is by asking people questions and letting them talk about themselves. Ask people about their interests, what they do when they're not working for your campaign, or what they do outside of their day jobs.

Establishing a vested interest in the people who volunteer their personal time for you is especially crucial in maintaining the important resource of people. In the long run, these people will feel more committed to your campaign's success.

Don't be afraid to get personal.

You don't need to tell people your deepest, darkest secrets, but revealing a bit about yourself can go a long way. By talking about your personal life — maybe about your dog, what recipes you like to cook, that parasailing is actually your secret passion — the people you're conversing with will start to like you more because you've established that you trust them enough to reveal this information.

Let the other person speak.

Some people like to ramble on and on once they get going in a conversation. If you're one of those people, check yourself. Recognize if you're dominating the conversation with your stories.

A good way to practice giving other people space to speak is having a drink in hand, a bottle of water or a coffee, and making yourself take a sip when you realize you're monopolizing the conversation. It gives the other person a chance to jump in and talk, too.

Ask the right questions.

There's a difference between personal and invasive. You don't want a conversation to sound like an interrogation. If you're talking to someone you're not too familiar with, ask that person a couple of follow-up questions to keep the conversation going and be more friendly.

People like to talk about themselves, especially when they're being asked to. Where did they go on their most recent vacation? Is that a tradition or a something they did for the first time? What's the best memory from that trip? Through this kind of dialogue, you can learn

about that person's interests and maybe even a little bit about his or her family and friends.

Sometimes a little bit of homework can help.

Try Googling 'small talk questions.' Having a list of conversational icebreakers in your back pocket can help kickstart a conversation or revive a dying one. There are plenty of lists online full of questions to help you carry a conversation.

Put the phone away if you can.

We know how important it is to be connected 24/7 during the heat of a campaign. We get it — but phones hinder good conversation and can leave a bad impression with your conversational partner.

If you want to participate in a stimulating conversation and really engage the other person, leave your phone in your pocket or bag. Make eye contact and pay attention to what that person is saying. It makes a world of difference.

As with any other social skill, small talk gets easier with practice — which you will be getting plenty of as your campaign goes on. Don't be afraid to approach people, especially your volunteers. They're there to see you succeed and want to get to know you.

Casual conversation is a skill we can improve together every day. And like with anything and everything campaign-related, NDTC is here to help you.

Natasha Smith is the user experience and communications manager for the National Democratic Training Committee.