

UDC Membership Meeting

June 22, 2023

Rambling House, Woodlawn

Approximately 38 people in attendance, plus others on Zoom.

Betsey Knapp opened the meeting at 6:40 and welcomed everyone there.

Ramdat Singh set our intentions with a few words about Pride Month. He reminded us all about the Lavender Scare of earlier times queer people were purged from Federal government work. Today, we have the gayest Congress in U.S. history with several openly gay members of the House and Senate. A goal of the movement is to elect the first trans member of Congress. The future belongs to those who believe in an inclusionary society.

Betsey introduced a bylaws amendment that will allow the endorsement process flexibility in dealing with changes in the BOE calendar and specifics of each race. Betsey circulated a white paper prepared by Michael Villanova specifying the need for the changes and the principles behind a more flexible process for endorsements. A more detailed process, allowing for flexibility will be forthcoming. A motion to change the bylaws was introduced and passed by acclamation.

Next, Madeline Ritter introduced two [summer training classes](#) open to Club members (each class will be offered twice. Members are encouraged to take both parts of the training, the first of which will present the UDC Electoral Strategy for the next several electoral cycles, based on the analytical work of Michael Villanova. The second part, an indepth workshop on Deep Listening, will prepare us to organize in new neighborhoods through shared story-telling and relationship building. By organizing in key electoral districts, we hope to expand the voter (and membership) base and elect representatives who address the concerns of voters throughout the 81st AD.

Part 1: UDC's Electoral Strategy; Intro to Deep Canvassing
(via zoom; offered on 7/24 and 8/3)

Part 2 Deep Listening Workshop
(in person, offered on 7/31 and 8/10; locations TBD)

Next, we welcomed Congressman Ritchie Torres, our guest for the evening. Congressman Torres reminded us that he represents several areas in the Bronx, including many in the room: Woodlawn, South Bronx, Riverdale and the Southeast Bronx.

Congressman Torres explained his "no" vote on the debt limit bill as one based on principle. The Republican position held the debt limit vote hostage to policies that stereotype and scapegoat the poor. As the elected representative of the So. Bronx, the poorest area in the country, he could not in good conscience vote for the bill that would hurt his constituents. He favors the continuation of the American Rescue Plan in FY '24 budget, which would expand the child tax

