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# THE BROADWAY DEMOCRATS

◆ District Leaders: Curtis Arluck, Paula Diamond Román ◆ President: Pat Almonrode◆

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## **The Quality of Life Around 125th Street**

A Town Hall Meeting for Residents of  
Grant Houses, Manhattanville & Morningside Heights

### **Invited:**

Congressman Adriano Espaillat (13th District)  
State Senator-elect Brian Benjamin (30th District)  
State Assemblyman Danny O'Donnell (69th District)  
Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer  
Councilman Mark Levine (7th District)  
Police Department  
Sanitation Department  
New York City Housing Authority

Speakers will make brief presentations and take your questions.

**Thursday, June 8**

7:45 p.m. Sign-in & Refreshments

Meeting starts at 8:00 p.m. sharp!

**Manhattan Pentecostal Church**

541 West 125th Street  
(between Broadway and Amsterdam)

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PhotoCredit: ©Steve Friedman 2017

Left to right: Assemblymember Danny O'Donnell; Club President Pat Almonrode; Laura Friedman, President of Morningside Heights Historic District Committee (Ida and Jesse Frankel Award recipient); District Leaders Curtis Arluck and Paula Diamond Román; Congressman and honoree Adriano Espaillat

## Spring Fling 2017

On May 7 we gathered to celebrate our accomplishments and to look towards the future at our 2017 Spring Fling fundraiser. Almost 100 members and friends turned out as we honored Congressman Adriano Espaillat and the Morningside Heights Historic District Committee. Thanks to all our generous supporters, and special thanks to Fundraising Chair Noah Feldman, photographer Steve Friedman, and to Juan Fuentes and his crew at 107 West, our hosts for many years.



PhotoCredit: ©Steve Friedman 2017

Congressman Espaillat, Public Advocate James,  
Assemblymember O'Donnell



PhotoCredit: ©Steve Friedman 2017

Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer,  
District Leader Paula Diamond Román



Curtis with Comptroller Scott Stringer and his Campaign Manager, Max



The ever-dapper Ed Sullivan



Our new State Senator, Brian Benjamin

All Photos: ©Steve Friedman 2017

## District Leader's Report

Curtis Arluck

### Congratulations to:

- Judges **Peter Moulton**, **Anil Singh**, **Cynthia Kern** and **Jeffrey Oing** on their appointments to the Appellate Division, to Justice **Rolando Acosta** on being named its chief, and to **Gov. Cuomo** for picking these outstanding jurists. In addition to their sterling qualities of scholarship and activism, Peter and Anil are fellow Upper West Siders, and Rolando was a star pitcher for Columbia.
- Mayor **Bill De Blasio** and 7<sup>th</sup> District Council Member **Mark Levine** on their overwhelming endorsements by the Broadway Democrats. 6<sup>th</sup> District Council Member Helen Rosenthal received a majority of the votes cast, but since we didn't have ten voting members who live in the district—most of our area is in Mark's district—she was not officially endorsed.
- Our new State Senator **Brian Benjamin**, elected May 23 with an amazing 92% of the overall vote:

	Our district	Total district
<b>Benjamin (D)</b>	<b>1033 (93%)</b>	<b>7059 (92%)</b>
Simmons (R)	24 (2%)	223 (3%)
Vargas (Reform)	29 (3%)	165 (2%)
Write-ins	22 (2%)	299 (3%)

Most of the as-yet unidentified write-ins presumably went to perennial candidate Joyce Johnson, who ran against the (legally mandated) County Committee process which selected Brian Benjamin. Johnson besmirched the electoral process by littering building doors with campaign signs about herself. Broadway and Three Parks Democrats work very hard in every election putting up *nonpartisan* hall cards which simply tell people when and where to vote (claiming thereby the moral high ground against building managers who would seek to remove them). Johnson's self-serving dross undermined, and in some cases actually covered up, our efforts. Happily the voters saw through this, and voted for the candidate running on a well thought-out Democratic platform, who will fight against the scourge of the IDC and for the people.

*DZ*

## Thanks for the Nanny State!

Dan Zweig

When it comes to food, there have been lots of complaints about government, even progressive government, intruding into our lives. Of course, regulations protect our food supply and are crucial, but sometimes they can go too far. For example, there are many who think former Mayor Bloomberg's attempt to ban large soft drinks was simply an assault on personal freedom. However, I believe we

should be thankful for “nanny state” efforts to limit trans fats in foods – and we can thank NYC and New York State for leading the way.

As documented in the New York Times (Personal Health, May 23, 2017), Denmark was the first country to ban trans fats from food products in 2004. This ban has been shown to have saved an average of 14.2 lives per 100,000 people in that country over the following three years.

In 2007, our City and State pioneered trans fat bans in this country. Comparing counties in NY that banned trans fats to surrounding counties that did not, it was found that bans resulted in 13 fewer deaths from cardiovascular disease per 100,000 people annually and a savings of about \$3.9 million.

Trans fats are deadly and we will continue to save lives by keeping them from our diets. We can thank New York for being a leader in reducing and removing these deadly components from our food supply. The lives saved may be those of your loved ones, or even your own.



## **Recycling Styrofoam?**

### **Sounds good, but ...**

Katie Hanner

*The following is an edited excerpt from testimony by Brendan Sexton, former DSNY Commissioner and fellow member of the Manhattan Solid Waste Advisory Board (SWAB) regarding two bills before the City Council: Intro 1480, which would require the city to recycle polystyrene (aka Styrofoam), and Intro 1596, which would ban polystyrene in NYC. He spoke for the Manhattan SWAB.*

We are, as the Council knows, enthusiastic advocates of recycling. But we must speak strongly in opposition to the bill before the committee today, Intro 1480 .... Polystyrene ‘recycling’ is, we have good reason to believe, a fake, wish-fulfillment slogan advanced by the chemical industry to obscure the truly

disruptive role this material plays in the waste management process. That is why the Manhattan SWAB is thrilled that a bill to ban polystyrene in NYC, Intro 1596, was introduced by Council Member Lander just two days ago.

We have two separate concerns about Intro 1480. First, polystyrene presents a health risk – there have been many studies documenting the migration of styrene molecules from foam cups and other packaging – foamed or not – into food and drinks.

The second concern, fundamental to the legislation being debated today, is that the “business” of recycling plastic foam simply does not exist. In 2016 I completed a review of plastic foam “recyclers.” Of the 100+ companies or municipalities I contacted, *none* had managed to create *and* maintain an ongoing polystyrene foam recycling program.

Polystyrene foam is like asbestos in that it is highly friable. In the recycling plant the material breaks up, flies around, and requires ventilation and OSHA compliance measures to prevent or reduce inhalation.

In New York City, some of the polystyrene currently collected does not even get landfilled – it is burned in Essex County, NJ, immediately upwind of Harlem and the West Side of Manhattan, then on to Brooklyn and over to Queens. There is no obvious purpose to subjecting our residents to this health hazard, and complicating the operations of our recycling partners with this unmanageable, unrecyclable contaminant.

There are polystyrene food container bans in effect in over 100 municipalities nationwide, including Washington D.C. Let’s make New York City next on that list. **The Manhattan SWAB urges the Council to take swift action and pass Intro 1596 to ban polystyrene.**

*Councilmember Helen Rosenthal is a co-sponsor of Intro 1596. Please write or call Councilmember Mark Levine and ask him to co-sponsor this legislation as well.*

## President's Corner

Pat Almonrode

The IDC – the so-called “Independent Democratic Conference” – has gotten a fair amount of what is, I’m sure, unwelcome attention recently. Let’s hope that increases.

The IDC is a group of NY State Senators – now nine in total – who were elected as Democrats but align with the Republicans in the Senate, keeping the leadership in Republican hands and effectively strangling much of the progressive legislation passed each session by the Assembly. Recently, IDC Leader Sen. Jeff Klein was reported to have vowed that **“if I have anything to do with it, [GOP Majority Leader] John Flanagan is going to be the leader for a long, long time.”** Hardly the words of a *Democrat*.

Why does the IDC do this? The NY Times recently shed light on some possible motives, with stories about benefits including “larger staffs, bigger offices, and in many cases, richer stipends” for their roles on various committees. According to the Times,

[E]ight senators — including three members of the I.D.C. — [have] received tens of thousands of dollars for committee chairmanships that they did not hold, payments that were authorized by John J. Flanagan, the Republican leader in the Senate. Those payments were approved in documents sent to the state comptroller by Senate staff falsely listing the senators as chairmen, when each actually served as vice chairman, an amorphous position with [few] if any defined duties and no pay explicitly enumerated in state law.

[“Stipend Scandal Fuels Divide Among New York’s Democratic State Senators,”](#) NY Times, May 23. These payments are now under investigation by NY Attorney General Schneiderman and the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Eastern District of NY, in Brooklyn.

It should be noted that Sen. Marisol Alcantara, one of the newest members of the IDC and the only one whose district overlaps with our club’s catchment area, is **not** accused of receiving an improper stipend – the additional pay she receives as chair of the Labor Committee is clearly authorized by law. But many believe she is tainted by association, nevertheless, and are already working hard to see that she is not re-elected in 2018.

The Broadway Democrats have formally resolved to endorse only those candidates who pledge to caucus with the Democrats. And, it should also be noted, Sen. Alcantara already has a strong challenger for 2018: former Councilman and longtime friend of the club Robert Jackson.

Alcantara won her seat in a 2016 four-way race against Jackson, Micah Lasher, a former chief of staff for AG Schneiderman and aide to Mayor Bloomberg, and Luis Tejada, a community and civil rights activist. Lasher has already declared he will not run again and instead will support Jackson’s 2018 challenge.

*In other words – the 31<sup>st</sup> Senate District will be one to watch in 2018!*

## Summer Internship Opportunity

*Work and Learn  
with North Shore Strategies*

We were recently contacted by North Shore Strategies, an NYC-based firm working on a variety of local races this summer. NSS is accepting applications to their campaign training program, providing real world exposure to the inner workings of a political campaign.

The program is designed for anyone interested in learning about political campaigns and getting hands-on experience in grassroots politics. Those interested should send resumes to Rurik Baumrin at [asher@nsstrategy.com](mailto:asher@nsstrategy.com). Call 917-444-0210 for more information.

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FIRST  
CLASS

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District Leaders: Curtis Arluck,  
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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED