



**Downtown Independent Democrats**  
**Submitted: Saturday, November 7, 2020**

Dear DID Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to introduce myself and present the views and principles of my campaign.

My name is Leslie Boghosian Murphy. I am running for the open City Council seat in District 3 and supremely excited about our campaign, a grassroots campaign born out of the great support from my fellow residents and community members.

I've been a resident of this district for over 16 years living in the same prewar apartment - first as a single working young woman, then married and now raising our 7-year old daughter, Cecelia.

I am the very proud granddaughter of immigrants. All four of my grandparents fled Armenian genocide and ended up here in NYC, not knowing a stitch of English. Both my grandfathers ended up getting "immigrant jobs," one a factory worker, the other a window washer.

My parents grew up in the area, my mom was an office assistant here in the city and my dad, from Queens, went to Stuyvesant High School and then City College for free as an in-need student. All of this forms me and my core Democratic principles.

I spent over 20 years as an investigative journalist fiercely defending the first amendment - asking hard questions, getting to the root of problems and giving a voice to those who do not have one. These same qualities also make for a good representative and part of the reason I am uniquely qualified for this position.

As my daughter started to grow, I acutely recognized the need for community involvement and shifted from journalism to neighborhood advocacy. For the past years I have fully dedicated myself to the betterment of my community. I serve on both Midtown North and Midtown South precinct councils, I am a member of the Hudson River Park Trust Task Force, our district's Budget Task Force, and Community Board 4's Executive Committee.

In addition to serving on boards and committees, I get the greatest joy from my community boots-on-the-ground work. From almost 20 years ago when I started as an in-class teacher's aide for the Children's Aid Society to more recently as shelter volunteer for Homes for the Homeless, I contend the best way to serve your community is to know your community. Two summers ago I organized neighborhood children from 6 schools to build the Columbus Circle Lemonade Stand. Working with companies including Whole Foods, Home Depot, Costco and Kraft Foods to receive all our necessities for free, we sold thousands of cups of lemonade to benefit The Young Center for Immigrant Children's Rights fighting for kids separated from their parents at our border.

This past spring our family experienced the unbearable situation of distance learning. Seeing the writing on the wall, myself and others urged our local elected officials and the DOE to start forming a plan for September. We all understood there would be some form of distance learning in the fall that schools were not prepared for. But it seemed every time I called an office, sent a letter or wrote an email the response would be the same - "Leslie, what are we supposed to do... Leslie, this is bigger than us...Leslie, we don't control the DOE." So I decided to help fix it myself. I called every college from Columbia to

Pace to SUNY and Fordham and asked what their student teacher status was. I formed the Student Teacher Virtual Learning Initiative to have student teachers instruct small pods of children on virtual learning days giving greatly needed relief to our educators and at the same time training our future teachers. This was a win for parents, a win for schools, a win for students and it was free. The DOE approved my initiative in one day. We now have hundreds of students getting live, synchronous learning in our district's Title I schools serving our most vulnerable student population.

I encountered the same resistance fighting to reduce the effects of climate change here in our district. I kept hearing, "The problem is too big." But when I heard the docked cruise ships at the Manhattan Cruise Terminal each spew out diesel emissions equivalent to 34,000 idling tractor trailers a day, I researched a greener path forward. Working with State Senator Brad Hoylman's office, I brought ConEd, the EDC and major players together to the table and we are now taking the first steps to realizing electric shore power on the west side.

I've taken on these projects as a volunteer; imagine what I can do as our representative.

We are in this unique time of COVID19 and the economic hurdles ahead are not getting easier, they are getting harder. But this is also a remarkable opportunity allowing us to press the restart button and implement progressive change we all want and need.

Growing up my parents owned a small cheese store and I remember my mom waking up before dawn to head to the store and my dad coming home way after dark. I know the hard work and razor thin margins that come with most small businesses. These are the establishments, along with our Arts community, hit hardest during this pandemic.

Concentrating on recovery, I'm starting with immediate attention to restaurants and small businesses.

We will disincentivize commercial spaces to sit vacant for months and years on end.

We will reexamine obligatory permit and fine charges.

We will eliminate DOB expeditors.

And that is just to start.

This is the time we need a representative who understands and empathizes with her constituents.

We will be in rebuilding mode and City Hall will be making tough choices. We need representation who has the experience and wherewithal for tough decision making, not solely for an immediate fix but for solving real long-term problems. And not just ideas on how it should be but a deliberate, methodical plan on how to get there.

I am ready to work hard to find solutions for the issues facing our district and be proactive when it comes to issues in the future.

Please feel free to contact me anytime with any thoughts and questions.

To learn more about me and my positions, I will provide my website link below:

[www.LeslieforNYC.com](http://www.LeslieforNYC.com)

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'LB Murphy', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Leslie Boghosian Murphy

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