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Senate Hopeful Lily Tang Williams on Libertarian, Green Party Town Hall at CU

Thursday, September 15, 2016 at 8:26 a.m.

By [Michael Roberts](#)



Lily Tang Williams. Additional images and a video below.
[Facebook](#)

In our recent [Libertarian Party of Colorado profile](#), state chair Jay North and communications director Caryn Ann Harlos talked about the difficulties of getting attention for a so-called third party, particularly when it comes to candidates such as Lily Tang Williams, who's running for the U.S. Senate against incumbent Michael Bennet and GOP nominee Darryl Glenn.

But Williams, a native of China who came to the United States at age 24 with \$100 to her name, is making progress. She was on stage for the first big senatorial debate of the season this past weekend, and she'll be at CU Boulder tonight (details below) to take part in an unusual town hall alongside another competitor: Arn Menconi, the Senate nominee for the Green Party.

"Even though we have a lot of differences between our messages, we work well together," Williams says of Menconi. "So we decided to do a college tour and invite the public to come and check us out."

In this way, Williams and Menconi are taking control of their own destinies, as opposed to waiting for the political and media establishment to give them a shot.



Arn Menconi.
Facebook

The Saturday, September 10, debate, which was sponsored by Club 20 and held in Grand Junction, demonstrates the risks and rewards of the latter strategy. Club 20's rules for the event stated that candidates would only be allowed to participate if 1 percent of registered voters in Colorado pledged support to their party. "They told me no twice because the numbers were just short," Williams notes. "But then, right after Labor Day, the numbers went up because of new registration, and Club 20 said, 'Now you're invited.'"

Williams traveled to Grand Junction with four volunteers and took part in the first college town hall meeting with Menconi the night before the debate at Colorado Mesa University. As for the big event itself, Williams says, "It was my first time doing a debate like that, since I'm not a politician. But I was very excited to get a chance to talk about our message of freedom, prosperity and the American dream, and even though I was the underdog and a third-party candidate, the people gave me a very warm reception."

Indeed, Williams received some of the evening's loudest applause for a line she shared during her closing remarks. "I told people I support term limits and I will not become a paid lobbyist — and then I suggested that politicians wear body cameras," she recalls. "The people just loved that."

Here's a video of the complete debate, as shared by Williams on her YouTube channel.

Despite her participation in the debate, Williams tended to get only brief mentions, if any at all, in subsequent press reports — and the media's continuing reluctance to cover their campaigns on the level of Bennet's and Glenn's convinced her and Menconi to stage their own gatherings.

"We've been talking about how to take our messages directly to the public," she says. "So we decided to do forums where we can introduce ourselves and the public can ask questions — and since the Green Party and the Libertarian Party are popular on college campuses, we decided to do it there."

She's not giving up on future debates with the other candidates. At the Club 20 event, she challenged Bennet to face off against her at a *Denver Post*/7News debate that's currently in limbo because Glenn (who's angry with the *Post* for the way it reported about a domestic-violence episode involving his father circa 1983) has said he won't be there. Bennet was non-committal, Williams points out.

In the meantime, Williams and Menconi expect to combine forces at more college town halls; she says appearances at CSU and the University of Denver have yet to be pinned down but are definitely on her wish list. "I just want to go out and talk to voters directly," she emphasizes. "I don't want to be silenced just because I'm a third-party candidate."

Tonight's town hall will be moderated by Corey Hutchins of the Colorado Independent. Here are the details, as seen in an announcement from Williams's Facebook page.



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**Join Green Party Candidate Arn Menconi
& Libertarian Candidate Lily Williams
For U.S Senate Candidates' Town Hall Tour**

Sponsored by Free and Equal Elections Foundation &

Progressives Students Alliance at CU Boulder

Moderated by Corey Hutchins

of the Colorado Independent

At CU Boulder

Old Main Chapel

1600 Pleasant St. Boulder, CO 80302

Thursday, September 15th at 7 PM

(doors open at 6:30)

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