



2019-2020 Assembly Candidate Questionnaire

Completed questionnaires will be public documents available on our website, so put your best foot forward. If we ultimately hold an endorsement vote in your race, your questionnaire will be circulated to our membership before the vote.

Name	Genesis Aquino
Preferred campaign contact information: name, email address, phone number	Please contact candidate/campaign via email genesis4NY@gmail.com Preferred contact person: Somia El-Rowmein - 347-666-7722
How long have you lived in your district?	I grew up and live in the district. I have been living in Sunset Park since I first migrated from the Dominican Republic as a child, and the community has been home to my family since 1967.
What civic and political organizations are you involved with in the district?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Vice-Chair of Neighborhood Advisory Board 7 - where I work to bring and appropriately allocate federal funds to our community based on our real needs. ● Member of Community Board 7 - I sit on the housing committee, and committee of economic development and waterfront. ● I am the Chair of Community Services Committee of 51 Assembly District ADC - formed after my 2018 campaign for district leader, and the work done in collaboration with RepYourBlock. As the chair of the community services committee I lead social justice advocacy efforts to ensure county committee members are engaged with our community behind elections and party politics. ● NKD - As a member of NKD I have worked with my neighbors to promote RepYourBlock and reform and ensure that the 51st AD has better representation in the Brooklyn Democratic Party.
What have you accomplished in public life that you are most proud of?	<p>As a community organizer I have worked with various social justice movements and grassroots campaigns. What I am most proud of is the work done as Co-Chair of the Laundry Workers' Center to improve the living and working conditions of low wage laundry, warehouse, and food service workers in New York City.</p> <p>After a long year of fighting on June 2019 we won one of our biggest campaigns to protect laundromat workers at TYS Laundromat fighting against wage theft, exploitative working conditions, harassment. Our hard work paid off and we won increased protections for these laundry workers. Workers were compensated for years of wage theft, and able to return to their jobs without fear with guaranteed labor protections. This was a huge victory for laundry workers across the city, the Despertar Campaign stands as an example of the power of worker leadership. This inspires me to continue organizing and building a movement where our working class communities have not only safe</p>

	sustainable jobs, but guaranteed affordable housing conditions, and access to health care and education.
Why do you want to serve as a member of the Assembly?	<p>I want to serve as a member of the Assembly to bring the demands of the working class, people of color, immigrants, and LGBTQI communities from 51st to the State Assembly, by centering their struggles and bringing their voices in the decision making process. As a community organizer I see the very act of campaigning and giving voice to these demands as part of the struggle to define a new sense of being a New Yorker, i.e., diverse, inclusive, democratic.</p> <p>I believe the disaffection of many people in my district with politics has to do with the lack of new leadership and new proposals. We have an incumbent so entrenched in his titles that has become a gatekeeper between State and resources and the communities he represents. As part of that disenfranchised community my goal is to work with allies in the labor, civil rights, and religious movements from my community and statewide to bring our issues and solutions to the State legislature. I plan to take the Assembly seat as mechanism to challenge the status quo, while empowering the rights of my fellow citizens and my communities.</p>
Why do you want New Kings Democrats' endorsement?	NKD has been leading the fight to resign the Brooklyn Democratic Party and make local politics more accessible, inclusive, and accountable. The #RepYourBlock campaign has been instrumental in activating local civic engagement and led to the creation of the Assembly District Committee in the 51st AD where I currently serve as Chair of the Community Services Subcommittee.
Would you be willing to run on a slate with District Leader candidates?	Yes!
If endorsed by NKD, would you be willing to carry County Committee candidates running through our #RepYourBlock campaign on your petitions, if these candidates canvassed for you?	Yes. I will give priority to long term residents/POC who want to run.
What are your District's greatest strengths and struggles?	<p>The greatest strength of our district is its cultural diversity. We also have historically been a walk to work neighborhood, with a working waterfront that stretches from Red Hook to Sunset Park and provides jobs to new immigrants, public housing residents, and other working families. People in my district work hard to make our neighborhoods safe and a sanctuary for all.</p> <p>Some of the greatest struggles we are facing in the district include the underfunding of public housing that has many NYCHA residents living under inhabitable conditions affecting their health and safety. The development along our waterfront has also eliminated many jobs for local residents. This along with gentrification, real estate pressures, and lack of universal rent control laws have threatened many longtime residents with displacement and homelessness. Another major struggle in the district is educational inequality; our public schools have been historically underfunded and are extremely overcrowded. Overcrowding has forced our community to accept the building of new schools in zones that are not environmentally safe nor healthy for our</p>

	children.
What is your vision for the Brooklyn Democratic Party?	I envision a Brooklyn Democratic Party that inspires our communities with both its message and its organizing work. I want the Brooklyn Democratic Party to be a transparent, inclusive institution that is accountable to the people and truly represents all of us.
If elected, how will you support the work of New Kings Democrats and its partners to make New York State government more transparent, accountable, or inclusive?	<p>As Assemblymember, I plan to push for automatic voter registration, public financing of campaigns, and reform the Joint Commission on Public Ethics (JCOPE).</p> <p>I plan to host public forums/townhalls in my district to engage our constituency around our legislative agenda and gather community feedback to share it have their voices heard in Albany.</p> <p>I will continue to show up and collaborate with our ADC/County Committee members because I believe all politics is local and we have a lot of work to do to reform politics in Brooklyn. As well as collaborate and meet with community and grassroots organizations to visualize the issues facing our communities and listen to our people's solutions.</p>
What is one important way you think the State Assembly should be reformed, and what is your plan for trying to implement such reform?	One of my priorities as Assemblymember will be to reform to reform JCOPE's structure, scope, and voting procedures to boost public confidence in how Albany operates.
If elected, what will your top three legislative and budgetary priorities be while in office?	<p>Passing the New York Health Act - I believe healthcare is a human right, and I will work to pass the New York Health Act (NYHA) an advocate for universal health care that is free of cost, independent of immigration status, and comprehensive. I will work to ensure that insurance companies are mandated to cover trans related healthcare, as well as reproductive health, mental health and prescription drugs.</p> <p>Expand tenants protection by passing a real Universal Rent Control - It is very important that I fight for universal rent control to guarantee that people in my district have safe and healthy homes. The majority of the people in my district do not live in rent stabilized/rent control apartments, and the current fall very short and don't offer them real protection. This displacement in my district is fast paced and somewhat silent because it's happening to tenants of market rate apartments since many landlords are increasing rents as they speculate major rezoning and big real estate led development. Everyday I fight for housing justice at forefront by working with tenants in the who are facing eviction in the Housing Courts. I see first hand how gaps in our current laws impact our working class people in the courtrooms and our neighborhoods, so my fight also includes ensuring that the Democratic Party is transparent and accountable to ensure the judges that rule our courts are accountable to the everyday people that elect them.</p> <p>Repealing Penal Law 240.37 aka Walking While Trans Transgendered and cisgender women of color have the right right and should have the freedom to walk, talk , or stand in the streets or flash a card without being targeted as criminals. This law has contributed to the over policing of the most vulnerable</p>

	<p>bodies in our communities, undocumented and black transgendered women of color, black women, therefore increasing our risk of poverty by due to involvement with the criminal justice and immigration system.</p> <p>Economic Development and Environmental Justice - My district has been one of the most impacted by environmental injustice, with high asthma rates, and economic development that does not center human improvement/wellbeing. NYS just passed one of the most progressive environmental justice legislation, as an Assembly member I will fight to ensure funding in relation to decarbonization and rehabilitation and creation of green infrastructure is prioritized for my district, and bring resources to increase sustainable green jobs accessible to the working class population. I am will continue to be outspoken for development without displacement.</p>
<p>Please review NKD's rent regulation platform, adapted from the Housing Justice for All platform: https://bit.ly/32dVcM9 If elected, will you fight for the passage of the planks of this platform that were not enacted in 2019, including but not limited to universal rent control?</p>	<p>Yes, as a community organizer I have supported Housing Justice for All's platform and mobilized hundreds of tenants in the 51st AD, by organizing teach ins, workshops, phone banking, and lobbying meetings for the passage of a Universal Rent control legislative package in Albany. In order to stop displacement of our working class communities we must continue the fight to expand tenants' protection until we achieve a statewide universal rent control, not only to preserve rent stabilized units but by also regulating rent increases in 2-3 families dwellings, and other market rate units, and by passing Good Cause eviction bill to protect tenants from harassment and retaliation.</p> <p>I believe housing is a human right and everyone should have a safe home guaranteed. Including current tenants of the New York Public Housing Authority (NYCHA). Although not part of this platform, I am committed to prioritizing funding for the preservation and rehabilitation of NYCHA and public housing statewide. That means preventing its privatization and supporting tenant-lead initiatives.</p> <p>We need to move our state to a society where land and housing is decommodified. I want to work on taking land out of the speculative economy/ real estate market. I would support models of collective land ownership that lead to permanent affordability and help communities have self determination. I also will work to address the shelter industrial complex and predatory lending practices.</p>
<p>NKD is a proud member of Communities United for Police Reform. Please review CPR's Safer NY platform: https://www.changethenypd.org/safer-ny If elected, will you fight for the passage of these bills?</p>	<p>Yes. Criminal Justice reform is a priority of my campaign.</p>
<p>Please review NKD's voting rights platform: https://www.newkingsdemocrats.com/voting_rights If elected, will you fight for the passage of the planks of this platform that have not yet been enacted, including but not limited to full enfranchisement for people with</p>	<p>Yes!</p>

criminal records?	
NKD is a proud supporter of the Sexual Harassment Working Group. If elected, will you commit to working side-by-side with the SHWG to fight for changes to the culture of sexual harassment and abuse in Albany?	Yes. I have been a supporter the Sexual Harrassment Working Group from the beginning, and attended their public hearings held over the spring and summer 2019. I am willing to work with side-by-side with SHWG to passing a Harassment Free Albany package of legislation to protect staff of elected officials and all workers from sexual harassment.
What funds have you raised for this campaign? What are the major sources of your campaign funds?	We have raised \$5K from small dollar donations. Our campaign is independent and not taking real estate interested money.
What endorsements have you received from publications, electeds, community leaders, or political organizations?	We have not received endorsements from elected officials. I have the support of the Union of Arab Women, Lamda Independent Women, Dominican Pride Encounter, and community organizers and faith leaders of Sunset Park & Red Hook.
What areas of the district do you see as your biggest sources of votes and support?	I expect full support throughout the district, but particularly in Sunset Park, where I grew up. As someone whose life work is devoted to helping public housing residents avoid eviction and homelessness, I also anticipate warm support from Red Hook, which has the largest public housing development in New York City.
Which member of the State Assembly do you admire most and why?	I admire the trajectory and commitment of Assemblymember Diana Richardson. Ran an independent campaign and has been fearless in calling out maneuvers of the corrupted democratic chachine and in fighting for passage of a universal rent control. She has been accountable to the people that elected her, and used various mechanisms to ensure she is accessible to them.
What is one fun fact about you?	I love to dance bachata and cooking which a find very healing.

I have reviewed this questionnaire and agree that the responses set forth in this document are accurate:

Candidate Signature 

Date: November 4, 2019

You must sign this questionnaire! When complete, please e-mail your signed and scanned questionnaire to politics@newkingsdemocrats.com